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PRINT VERSIONS OF TODAY'S PREP:

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WELCOME TO THE SHOW!

Here it is Christmas Day and the lights still aren't working right on the tree. Honest. Last year I didn't find the burned out light bulb until Easter.

Mannheim Steamroller Christmas songs have a mixed effect on me. Some get me in the mood for Christmas, others get me in the mood to fight the Russian from Rocky IV.

PRESIDENTIAL WIT & WISDOM ([click here to buy the book](#))

(None on the weekends.)

"Far and away the best prize that life has to offer is the chance to work hard at work worth doing." – Theodore Roosevelt

BIBLE VERSE OF THE DAY

"For God loved the world so much that He gave His only Son, so that anyone who believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life. God did not send his Son into the world to condemn it, but to save it." --*John 3:16-17*

But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people."
— [Luke 2:10](#)

HEARTLIGHT DAILY VERSE, PRAYER & THOUGHT

(From VerseOfTheDay.com)

God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you." — [Luke 1:26-28](#)

Thought: Wow! Such a familiar sentence packed with emotion. An angel comes to Nazareth to visit and speak with a young woman engaged to be married. Before the history shattering news is announced, she is given one key reminder that will be truer than she could imagine, "The Lord is with you."

Prayer: My request, O God, I've sung many times: "Be with me Lord, I cannot live without Thee. I cannot bear, to take one step alone." Father, I need your abiding presence to face the challenges of life. As you have upheld your children through the ages, I am thankful to greet each day knowing that I will not face it alone. In Jesus' name. Amen.

The Thoughts and Prayers for Today's Verse are written by [Phil Ware](#). You can email questions or comments to phil@heartlight.org.

"BIRTHDAY VERSE" OF THE DAY (*The chapter and verse correspond to the month and day!*)

Proverbs 12:25 NIV = An anxious heart weighs a man down, but a kind word cheers him up.

TODAY IS MONDAY – DECEMBER 25, 2017

(NOTE: Some holidays may be duplicated due to various calendars reporting conflicting dates)

WEIRD, WACKY, STRANGE, ZANY, ODD, BIZARRE, QUIRKY, UNUSUAL HOLIDAYS!

THERE ARE ONLY 365 SHOPPING DAYS UNTIL NEXT CHRISTMAS.

Today is **CHRISTMAS DAY**. Commemorating the birth of Jesus – God in human form. Christmas is celebrated in at least 105 countries.

Today is **A'PHABET DAY**. ***Also known as "NO 'L' DAY". Get it? NOEL?!?! Lame, I know.

Today **GRAVITY DAY** (always on the birthday of Sir Isaac Newton who was born in 1642). ***They say Sir Isaac Newton discovered gravity... if that's true, how did we stay on the ground before he discovered it?

It's **NATIONAL PUMPKIN PIE DAY**. ***Whether it's fresh from the oven or leftover from Thanksgiving, it's still worth digging into!

Today is **PLAY IT AGAIN SAM DAY** - celebrated on the birthday of Humphrey Bogart, who is said to have uttered these words in the classic movie Casablanca (which he never did say). ***So today is the day to go out and do something again that you've done before and enjoyed. Like eating pumpkin pie!

TODAY IS ALSO...

A'Phabet Day or No "L" Day
Christmas
Christmas Pudding Day

COMING UP NEXT (*Just a list, we are not endorsing the holidays posted below. Find more holidays and link to their websites at BrownieLocks.com*)

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 26

Boxing Day (Canada)
National Candy Cane Day
National Thank-you Note Day
National Whiner's Day

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 27

Free Balloon Day (SpongeBob Squarepants)
Howdy Doody Day
Visit The Zoo Day

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 28

Holy Innocents Day
Endangered Species Act Day
National Chocolate Day
Pledge of Allegiance Day

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 29

Tick Tock Day
YMCA Day

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 30

Bacon Day
Falling Needles Family Fest Day
No Interruptions Day

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 31

First Nights
Global Champagne Day
Look On The Bright Side Day
Make Up Your Mind Day
New Years Eve
New Year's Eve Banished Words List
New Year's Dishonor List
Universal Hour of Peace Day
World Healing Day
World Peace Meditation Day

MONDAY, JANUARY 01

Copyright Law Day
Commitment Day

Divorce Monday
Ellis Island Day
Euro Day
First Foot Day
Global Family Day
Mummer's Parade
New Years Day
New Year's Dishonor List Day
Polar Bear Plunge or Swim Day
Public Domain Day
Rose Bowl Game
Tournament of Roses Parade Day
World Day of Peace
Z Day

ON THIS DAY

336: This is the earliest known year that Jesus' nativity was celebrated on December 25th, as mentioned in the Philocalian Calendar of A.D. 354. Jesus' birth was commemorated on January 6th in Greek Orthodoxy, although by the 400s most of the Eastern churches had accepted the Roman date. (Almanac of the Christian Church, William D. Blake, Bethany House, Minneapolis, 1987)

1223: St. Francis of Assisi assembled one of the first Nativity scenes, in Greccio, Italy.

1621: Governor Bradford of Plymouth Colony ordered all "articles of play" confiscated, ruling that playing games on Christmas Day was not appropriate. ***Blast that Burgermeister Meisterburger!

1938: After auditioning hundreds for the role, producer David O. Selznick chose British actress Vivien Leigh to play Scarlett O'Hara in "Gone With The Wind."

1961: Using a centrifuge made from a gramophone motor, Czech Professor Otto Wichterle spun history's first soft contact lens in Prague. He was removed as head of the Czech Chemistry Institute after organizing anti-communists protests in 1968, and never became wealthy from his invention. He died in 1998 at age 84.

1976: Larry Gatlin & The Gatlin Brothers became members of the Grand Ole Opry.

1989: For the first time in history, Christmas masses were broadcast live in Eastern Europe.

1995: Attorney Andre-Francois Raffray died at age 77 in Arles, France. At age 47, Raffray had agreed to pay 90-year-old Jeanne Calment's rent of \$500 a month until she died on the condition that he would inherit her home. The 120-year-old Calment celebrated Christmas with dinner at an Arles hotel. She died in 1997.

2002: Katie Hnida became the first woman to play in a Division I college football game when she attempted an extra point following a New Mexico touchdown in the Las Vegas Bowl. Hnida's kick was blocked but she had already made history in the 27-13 loss to UCLA.

TODAY IN CHRISTIAN HISTORY

496: King Clovis, who united Gaul and founded France, is baptized in the Cathedral of Rheims, followed by 3,000 of his soldiers. "Worship what you once burned, and burn what you worshipped," the priest instructed him. However, Clovis and his troops showed little change after their "conversion" and apparently believed Christ was merely a war god who would grant them victory if they prayed for it.

525: Easter tables by Dioysius Exiguus wrongly give December 25th as the date of Christ's birth.

800: Pope Leo III is crowns Charlemagne, the first ruler of the Holy Roman Empire.

1814: First Protestant sermon on New Zealand soil preached by Rev. Samuel Marsden, colonial chaplain of New South Wales. Spearhead of the CMS mission to the Maoris, who were baptized in droves in the 1830's.

1865: Evangeline Booth is born, the last of the Booth children.

1931: Missionary radio station HCJB, run by World Radio Missionary Fellowship, Inc., begins broadcasting the Gospel from Quito, Ecuador, to eastern Asia.

HOLLYWOOD, SPORTS AND CELEBRITY FIGURE BIRTHDAYS

- actress (“Brooklyn South”, “Millennium”, “Intelligence”) Klea Scott 49
- actress (*Cole Miner’s Daughter, JFK, Tuck Everlasting, Four Christmases, An American Haunting, “Bloodline”*) Sissy Spacek 68
- actor (Travis on “WKRP in Cincinnati”) Gary Sandy 72 ([audio clip](#))

BEE-BOP BIRTHDAYS

(Music Artist Birthdays From SongFacts.com)

1907 : Cab Calloway
1912 : Tony Martin
1915 : Pete Rugolo
1929 : Billy Horton ([The Silhouettes](#))
1929 : [Chris Kenner](#)
1934 : McKinley Mitchell
1937 : O’Kelly Isley ([The Isley Nrothers](#))
1943 : Trevor Lucas (Fairport Convention)
1944 : Henry Vestine ([Canned Heat](#))
1944 : John Edwards ([The Spinners](#))
1945 : Noel Redding (The [Jimi Hendrix](#) Experience)
1945 : Steve Mancha (100 Proof Aged in Soul)
1946 : Jimmy Buffett
1948 : Barbara Mandrell
1954 : Robin Campbell ([UB40](#))
1954 : [Annie Lennox](#)
1957 : Shane McGowan ([The Pogues](#))
1971 : Noel Hogan ([The Cranberries](#))
1972 : [Dido](#)

SECRETS OF THE UNIVERSE *(Answering questions that have plagued mankind for minutes!)*

How did the word “Yuletide” originate?

The word "Yuletide" originated from the word "Yule", which was recorded in Latin writings as early as A.D. 726. At that time, the form of the word was "guili". Both terms refer to a 12-day pagan feast celebrated around the time of year that has come to be known as the Christmas season.

NEWS KICKERS

(None on weekends. Want a customizable version with your specific station tag, FREE? [Email me for more information!](#))

NEW NEWS KICKERS...

(Not posted on weekends and U.S. holidays.)

(This feature will be taking a break December 25th thru January 1st and will return Tuesday, January 2nd.)

NEWS KICKER EVERGREENS...

(Not posted on weekends and U.S. holidays.)

(This feature will be taking a break December 25th thru January 1st and will return Tuesday, January 2nd.)

AS THE JUNGLE TURNS

(Not updated on weekends and U.S. holidays.)

(This feature will be taking a break December 25th thru January 1st and will return Tuesday, January 2nd.)

[CLICK HERE](#) TO DOWNLOAD TUESDAY'S EPISODE – JANUARY 2nd, 2018

OPEN: And now, FancyMonkey.com, (Show Name), and (Station Call Letters) bring you As the Jungle Turns! Last time, the jungle animals were so busy trying to get so many things done that they didn't have time for anything else... meetings, planning, even talking to each other! They were getting annoyed with each other – and then, all at once, the animals shouted...

CLOSE: Do the turtles have a secret to staying calm, cool, and collected? Will they share the secret with the other animals? Tune in again next time, as FancyMonkey.com, (Show Name), and (Station Call Letters) bring you As the Jungle Turns!

****You may simulcast "As the Jungle Turns" on the Internet stream of your live broadcast only. Any other Internet use of "As the Jungle Turns" in whole or part including podcasting of your live broadcast is a violation of copyright law. Thank you for your cooperation on this vitally important issue. If you have any questions, please [e-mail](#) us and ask about "Jungle Jam & Friends the Radio Show" usage.*

MOMENT OF DUH

Today's Moment of Duh is caused by a spelling error on the jerseys of a university's basketball team!

If we had a Moment of Duh award, one would have to go to Western Illinois University back in 2002 because not one basketball team member had noticed, for several games, and after appearing in uniform in their media guide, and then not until someone pointed it out to them, that "Illinois," emblazoned across their white home team tops, was misspelled "Illinios."

TOP TEN

TOP TEN GIFT IDEAS (GRATEFULLY) REJECTED BY THE WISE MEN

10. An autographed photo of Herod!
9. An AAA travel guide to Egypt!
8. A copy of "Following Stars For Fun And Prophet"!
7. The home version of "Survivor"!
6. An "I Be The KING Of Kings" Tee shirt!
5. Herod's latest CD: "I Did It MY Way!"
4. Gold, Frankincense, and Myrrh Chia Pets!
3. The "Ronco Jr. Miracle-making Workshop"!
2. A "Set the Prisoners Free" card!
1. Fruitcake!! (No one liked it--even back then!)

THE FILES OF LAW & DISORDER

When deciding to steal something from a car, be sure it is not a police cruiser - and be sure the officer isn't standing nearby watching you.

FILE #1: Ron Powell spotted a pack of cigarettes, a lighter and a candy bar inside an unlocked car. Unable to resist, he reached in and grabbed the goodies. And to cover his tracks, he then stepped back and wiped down the car with a towel to erase his fingerprints. Unfortunately for him he was so focused on the things he wanted to steal that he failed to notice a couple of other important things about the car. Like the police radio inside and the police light rack on the roof. Yep, he robbed a police car. In broad daylight. With the officer standing nearby. Yes, he's in jail.

FILE #2: A Florence, Oregon, woman was arrested for arson and burglary after, police say, she set fire to a neighbor's trailer home for allegedly stealing her keys, then later found her keys hanging from her pants pocket.

FILE #3: A thief in Bogota, Colombia, ended up in the hospital after he tried to rob a karate academy. ***MARLAR: Something tells me he didn't think that one through.

STRANGE LAW: In New York it is against the law to throw a ball at someone's head for fun.

THIS IS YOUR BRAIN ON DRUGS

“This Is Your Brain On Drugs” is about people doing dumb things under the influence, but addiction is no laughing matter. If you or someone you know needs help, there’s a toll free number you can call 1-800-438-0380. That’s the Addiction Hope and Help Line at 1-800-438-0380.

Advertising your product to the world for them to buy is a good thing – unless you’re selling illegal drugs.

Two students at Boston's Northeastern University were arrested after one allegedly leaned out their dorm window and shouted, "If you're looking for weed, my roommate has some for sale!" ***MARRLAR: Well, at least that student will learn ONE lesson this year.

PHONER PHUN

What gift did you receive for Christmas that was a complete surprise to you?

BIBLE BRAIN BUSTER!

QUESTION: Which Old Testament prophet had predicted that Jesus would be born in Bethlehem?

ANSWER: Micah (Micah 5:2 = "But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of you shall come forth to Me the One to be Ruler in Israel, whose goings forth are from of old from everlasting."

QUESTION IMPOSSIBLE

QUESTION: Where did the word "Christmas" originate?

ANSWER: The Nativity of Christ was introduced as a special feast in Rome about the middle of the 4th century. The word "Christmas" can be traced back to 1038 to the "Mass of Christ," in old English pronounced "Cristes Maesse."

TRUE OR FALSE

Pay attention! If our next player doesn't answer all ten T/F questions correctly we start all over from question #1! First person to answer question #10 correctly is our winner!

1. The movie "Holiday Inn" introduced us to the song "Silver Bells." (False - that was from The Lemon Drop Kid starring Bob Hope. The song was written by the composers of "The Theme from Mr. Ed," Jay Livingston & Ray Evans)
2. More than 30-million Americans had presents under their Christmas tree this morning for their dog. (True)
3. It snowed once in the Sahara Desert. (True – on February 18, 1979. Not surprisingly, the snow quickly melted. This is the only recorded incident of it happening in the Sahara Desert.)
4. 30% of U.S. families put up an artificial Christmas tree each year. (False – it's more like 22%.)
5. In England, Father Christmas has two addresses, Edinburgh and the North Pole. (True. Letters addressed to 'TOYLAND' or 'SNOWLAND' go to Edinburgh, but letters addressed to 'THE NORTH POLE' have to be sent there because there really is such a place!)
6. Rudolph's father is Comet. (False - it's Donner)
7. An old wives' tale says that bread baked on Christmas Eve will never go moldy. (True, it's an old wives' tale. However, it's not true that the bread won't go moldy. It will.)
8. It's not until the twelfth night of Christmas that the Three Kings are supposed to be added to the Christmas nativity scene. (True. In Germany, Twelfth Night - the evening of January 5th - is known as 'Three Kings Day'. More info [HERE](#).)
9. Mincemeat pie shouldn't be eaten until after sundown on January 5th. (True. Eating mince pies at Christmas dates back to the 16th century. It is still believed that to eat a mince pie on each of the Twelve Days of Christmas will bring 12 happy months in the year to follow.)
10. Over the river and through the woods, to grandmother's arms we go. (False - "to grandmother's HOUSE we go.")

TABLOID MATCH GAME

You have to match the blank in the tabloid headline with the word or phrase that has been removed!

NOAH'S ARK FOUND IN _____ (IRAN)

IRAN - Iranian officials confirmed today that they have found Noah's Ark!

A team of top Iranian archaeologists discovered the prominent ancient boat at just over 13,000 feet on Mount Suleiman in Iran's Elburz mountain range over the weekend.

"It is absolutely, certainly Noah's ark," said Tariz Ibaq, president of the Koran Archaeology Search and Exploration Institute, based in Tehran. The group went on an expedition five months ago and were pleased to make the dramatic discovery.

Photos taken by KASE members show a prow-shaped outcrop, made of petrified wood, emerging from a ridge in the mountains.

"We have had thin sections of the rock and identified ancient wood cell structures," Ibaq said.

Iranian leader, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad said this proves that Noah's ark came to its final resting place in Iran and proves that Iranians are God's "chosen people."

THE WAY TOO EARLY IN THE MORNING TO UNDERSTAND THE PUNCHLINE EVEN AFTER TWO CUPS OF COFFEE JOKE OF THE DAY

JOKE #1

A 4-year-old boy who was asked to return thanks before Christmas dinner. The family members bowed their heads in expectation. He began his prayer, thanking God for all his friends, naming them one by one. Then he thanked God for Mommy, Daddy, Brother, Sister, Grandma, Grandpa, and all his aunts and uncles. Then he began to thank God for the food. He gave thanks for the turkey, the dressing, the fruit salad, the cranberry sauce, the pies, the cakes, even the Cool Whip. Then he paused, and everyone waited--and waited. After a long silence, the young fellow looked up at his mother and asked, "If I thank God for the broccoli, won't he know that I'm lying?"

JOKE #2

One weekend Sally, a nurse, was looking after her six-year-old nephew when he fell off a playground slide and hit his head. Worried that he might have a concussion, she checked him all night. Every hour, she'd gently shake him and ask, "What's your name?"

Soon, he began moaning in protest each time she entered the room. When Sally went in at 5:00 A.M., she found something white on his forehead.

Leaning close, she saw a crayon-scrawled message taped to his forehead. It read: "My name is Daniel."

JOKE #3

"Look at ME!" boasted the fit old man to a group of young people. "Every morning I do fifty push-ups, fifty sit-ups and walk two miles. I'm fit as a fiddle! And you want to know why? I don't smoke, I don't drink, I don't stay up late, and I don't chase after women!"

He smiled at them, teeth white, eyes glittering, "And tomorrow, I'm going to celebrate my 95th birthday!"

"Oh, really?" drawled one of the young onlookers, "How?"

USELESS FACTS

A medical intern at a hospital in Austria mistakenly injected an elderly patient with olive oil instead of antibiotics after mixing up the vials at her bedside. The olive oil had been placed there by a physiotherapist for a massage.

Fortunately, doctors said she would not suffer any serious complications from having olive oil in her veins. ***What about the complications from being massaged with tetracycline?

A Japanese teen was banned from attending a school dance after being busted for excessive cursing at school. But he knew the dance was a big one and he really wanted to go. So he did. He managed to get in by disguising himself as a girl, complete with a black dress, sandals, nail polish, glasses and a wig. His sister and her girlfriends helped with the disguise. His success was short-lived, however... he was spotted the second he walked in. ***At which point he began cursing excessively.

FEATURED FUNNIES

CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

A little boy, excited about his part in the Christmas play at school, came home and shouted, "I got a part in the Christmas play! I got a part in the Christmas play!"
"What part did you get?" asked his mother excitedly.
"I'm one of the three wise guys!"

IT MUST BE TRUE BECAUSE I HEARD IT ON THE RADIO!

Planning to ship something to that special person in the military overseas? You might want to consider shopping online somewhere other than Wal-Mart.

You might get a very unpleasant surprise when ordering gifts online for that soldier serving overseas from Wal-Mart, who currently have the biggest markup on shipping charges for the military. On a \$120 purchase, Walmart.com charged \$10.35 to ship to an APO address, compared with just \$2.10 to a stateside address. However, for most items, Amazon.com charged the same to ship to an APO address as a stateside address and Target.com offered free shipping on a \$120 purchase to an APO address. Wal-Mart officials would not comment except to say, "We continue to work with carriers to negotiate favorable shipping rates." But Earl Small, the postmaster at Wiesbaden Army Airfield, said that the shipping and handling charges have nothing to do with the military postal system or the U.S. Postal Service and points out that, "A company can charge whatever they want." According to Small, when companies ship to APO addresses, the order is shipped to New York, after which the Department of Defense picks up the tab to get the package to an APO address overseas. And in his strongest statement Small said flat out, "There are no higher transportation costs. Companies are abusing the system and making a killing." ***MARLAR: Thanks for your patriotism, Wal-Mart.

INSPIRATIONAL INSPIRATION

WHAT WE REALLY WANT FOR CHRISTMAS

What do you really want for the holidays? *USA Today* printed these letters from children written to Santa Claus and directed to the US Post Office:

Dear Santa: The only wish I want is to have a nice Christmas for my little brothers. We don't have the money to put nothing under the tree because of welfare. Please help. There are five kids and it's hard for Mom. - Lisa

Dear Santa: I want to help the kids that don't get anything for Christmas. It is real important to me. I don't want just to help in the United States but all over the world. - Austin

Dear Santa: We will give you lots of goodies. One present is to find my dog Boom Boom. - Joni

Dear Santa: This Christmas I would like four things. Understanding for the children. Respect for the parents. Love for the elders and peace for everyone. - Rebecca

What these children really want runs deeper than the latest toy fad or a new outfit. I believe they want what we all want, when we get down to it. It may make you think of a story that comes out of World War I. It was December 25, 1917. Only a short distance of mud separated two enemy trenches - German and American. They had been shooting at each other for days, but today their thoughts turned to hearth and home. Suddenly, a German soldier laid down his rifle, pulled a block of chocolate from his pocket, and tossed it into the American trench. In response an American tossed over a can of milk. Soon gifts were being passed back and forth, and the men were both laughing and weeping.

Peace was what they really wanted at that sacred time of the year. They wanted the war to be over and to be home. They wanted to quit the fighting and violence and live in harmony. What they really wanted was what we all want. Never stop believing that it can be so.

DRIVE TIME DEVOTIONAL

JOY TO THE WORLD, THE LORD HAS COME!

We pray that this season and through the coming year you will experience all the blessings the Lord Jesus Christ came to give us. *"For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might be rich."* --2 Corinthians 9:8

While He lived in heaven the Lord Jesus Christ was rich. He had everything that belonged to Him as God the Son. He reigned in majesty supreme in heaven. He was the owner of all things. He was full of joy and perfectly satisfied. When He became a man he laid aside all His wealth. He spent His first night in a smelly place with the cattle. He grew up in a carpenter's home. When He became an adult He said, "The foxes have holes and the birds have their nests

but the Son of man has no place to lay His head." When He paid the temple tax He sent Peter to catch a fish which had a coin in his mouth worth enough to pay it. When died He had no earthly possessions but the clothes He wore. The ultimate poverty was His death between two criminals.

He became poor and despised that He might forgive our sins and share with us His own wealth of spirit and His position of favor and power at the Father's right hand. So we are rich. God has given us everything we need to share His abundant life here and to prepare for life in heaven for all eternity.

"Thanks be to God for His unspeakable gift" (2 Corinthians 9:15).

Keep your heart in tune with God this Christmas... and enjoy all His gifts.

LEFTOVERS

CAN THIS BE CHRISTMAS?

What's all this hectic rush and worry?
Where go these crowds who run and scurry?
Why all the lights - the Christmas trees?
The jolly "fat man," tell me please!
Why, don't you know? This is the day
For parties and for fun and play;
Why this is Christmas!

So this is Christmas, did you say?
But where is Christ this Christmas Day?
Has He been lost among the throng?
His voice drowned out by empty song?
No, He's not here - you'll find Him where
Some humble soul now kneels in prayer,
Who knows the Christ of Christmas.

But see the many aimless thousands who gather on this Christmas Day,
Whose hearts have never yet been opened, or said to Him, "Come in to stay."
In countless homes the candles burning,
In countless hearts expectant yearning
For gifts and presents, food and fun,
And laughter till the day is done.
But not a tear of grief or sorrow
For Him so poor He had to borrow
A crib, a colt, a boat, a bed
Where He could lay His weary head.
I'm tired of all this empty celebration,
Of feasting, drinking, recreation;
I'll go instead to Calvary.

And there I'll kneel with those who know
The meaning of that manger low,
And find the Christ - this Christmas.

I leap by faith across the years
To that great day when He appears
The second time, to rule and reign,
To end all sorrow, death, and pain.
In endless bliss we then shall dwell
With Him who saved our souls from hell.
And worship Christ - not Christmas!

LIFE... LIVE IT

PRACTICAL WAYS TO HELP YOU GET INTO THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT

- Give your bank teller a candy cane! (Or any other little goodie.)
- Give at least ONE heartfelt compliment to someone everyday. (Save one for yourself, too.)

- Be the first to say "Merry Christmas." (Or at least a friendly and hearty "Hello!")
- Smile at someone who looks a little "Grinchy." Don't be upset if they don't smile back, but chances are that they will!
- Help some senior and elderly citizens in your neighborhood put up their decorations. (And remember to go back later to take them down!)
- Hug a child. (Start with yours!)

JUST FOR FUN

FIRE... THERE'S A FIRE...

Proving once again that just everything in the world is bad for you, it's now being said that candles are part of our global pollution problem. Candles. Now doesn't that just burn you up?

Candles are now being blamed for our global pollution problems! According to research done by the US Environmental Protection Agency (who believes that everything in the world will eventually kill you), burning candles can lead to high levels of pollutants (called particulates) released into the atmosphere. According to one EPA spokesperson, "If I were someone who had a health problem like asthma, and I were looking for things to prevent aggravating my respiratory problems, candles and incense are two things I would seriously consider" getting rid of." ***MARLAR: Well, yeah – but saying candles are partially responsible for global pollution? Sometimes I think the EPA is bad for our health.

FUN LIST

CHRISTMAS COOKIE RULES

1. If you eat a Christmas cookie fresh out of the oven, it has no calories because everyone knows that the first cookie is the test and thus calorie free.
2. If you drink a diet soda after eating your second cookie, it also has no calories because the diet soda cancels out the cookie calories.
3. If a friend comes over while you're making your Christmas cookies and needs to sample, you must sample with your friend. Because your friend's first cookie is calorie free, (rule #1) yours is also. It would be rude to let your friend sample alone and, being the friend that you are, that makes your cookie calorie free.
4. Any cookie calories consumed while walking around will fall to your feet and eventually fall off as you move. This is due to gravity and the density of the caloric mass.
5. Any calories consumed during the frosting of the Christmas cookies will be used up because it takes many calories to lick excess frosting from a knife without cutting your tongue.
6. Cookies colored red or green have very few calories. Red ones have three and green ones have five - one calorie for each letter. Make more red ones!
7. Cookies eaten while watching "Miracle on 34th Street" have no calories because they are part of the entertainment package and not part of one's personal fuel.
8. As always, cookie pieces contain no calories because the process of breaking causes calorie leakage.
9. Any cookies consumed from someone else's plate have no calories since the calories rightfully belong to the other person and will cling to their plate. We all know how calories like to CLING!
10. Any cookies consumed while feeling stressed have no calories because cookies used for medicinal purposes NEVER have calories. It's a rule!

So, go out and enjoy those Christmas Cookies - we only get them this time of year!

MORE SHOW PREP STUFF...

They are the most hated Christmas songs of all time! What would be on YOUR list?

How many times can you hear "Grandma Got Run Over by a Reindeer" or Madonna trying -- but not even coming close-- to best Eartha Kitt with "Santa Baby" before you just scream? The *Washington Post* has called these two

songs, along with Barbra Streisand's "Jingle Bells" and the Jackson 5's "Santa Claus Is Coming to Town" the "sonic equivalent of a chorus of screeching cats." They are among the most hated Christmas songs of all time -- but they aren't the most hated. The honor of the most hated Christmas song of all time goes to "Jingle Bells," as "performed" by the Singing Dogs, a 1955 Danish record that was reedited and released in 1970.

OTHER STUFF I WANT TO CRAM INTO TODAY'S PREP

(Not posted on weekends and U.S. holidays.)

SOUL-GLO

(Feel-good stories! Only posted as new stories come available. Not posted on weekends and U.S. holidays.)

TOTALLY OUTRAGEOUS!

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AND I LEAVE YOU WITH THIS THOUGHT

It's amazing how everybody gets into the Christmas spirit. I actually received a card from the finance company that said, "Merry Christmas: Second Notice!"

THE TICKET Movie Reviews with MARIE ASNER

Marie Asner has been reviewing films for over 35 years. Her outlets include radio, print and Internet. For more in-depth movie reviews of the following films, visit www.Tollbooth.org. Ratings from 1 (Low) to 5 (High).

DECEMBER 22-25, 2017...

Bright---How about living in a fantasy world where humans and fantasy creatures have co-existed for eons. This is an alternate Earth, and policeman Will Smith and his Orc partner, Joel Edgerton, are on duty. However, there is evil afoot and they have to find a magic wand before anyone else. Also in the cast are Noomi Rapace and Lucy Fry. "Bright" is rated PG 13. No rating.

Downsizing---Bet you thought this term mean problems in the work force. Think again. In this film, it concerns shrinking people (shades of "The Incredible Shrinking Man.") There is a purpose in this movie, though, and that is if you want to control populations and have the environment last, make the people smaller. Hmm, does that mean family pets, too? One swipe of that paw and....! To begin the experiment, a group of people are purposely shrunk to four inches and live together, but then problems come forth. Stars are Matt Damon, Christoph Waltz, Udo Kier and Kristen Wiig. "Downsizing" is rated PG 13. Rating of 2 for fans.

Happy End---This is a depressing film about a family with poisoning and suicides in their past. The story centers on a teenage girl named Eve (Fantine Hardoin) with a troubled past and uncertain future. She eventually lives with her aunt (Isabelle Huppert) and still has problems. Others in the cast are Toby Jones and Jean-Louis Trintignant. French language film. "Happy End" is rated R. No rating.

Father Figures (also called "Bastards")---This film stars Owen Wilson and Ed Helms as fraternal twins. Their Mom is Glenn Close and they, as adult, find she doesn't know who their biological father(s) are. What to do? The search is on. Also in the cast are Christopher Walken and J. K. Simmons. "Father Figures" is rated PG 13. No rating.

Hostiles---Christian Bale stars in this western as an army officer in 1892, who agrees to escort a Native American tribal chief and his family back to their family ground. Of course, there are problems along the way with outsiders and weather. The cast includes Wes Studi, Adam Beach and Rosamund Pike. "Hostiles" is rated R. No rating.

Pitch Perfect 3---This is supposed to be the last film in the series, but then everyone says that. The group goes separate ways after winning their championship. Trouble is, they are bored, so along comes a chance to join the USO and entertain troops abroad. But, of course, they get into trouble. The stars include Hailee Steinfeld, Anna Kendrick, Rebel Wilson, Ruby Rose and Elizabeth Banks. "Pitch Perfect 3" is rated PG 13. No rating.

The Greatest Showman---Hugh Jackman is quite the performer, from “Wolverine” to Broadway. Here he takes on the role of P. T. Barnum and how he put together his wonderful circus. There are animals, clowns and trapeze artists, which brings us to singer, Zendaya, who plays Anne Wheeler. She is a trapeze artist who falls for P. T. Barnum’s partner, played by Zac Efron. Zandaya did most of her own stunts in this film. Also in the cast are Rebecca Ferguson and Michelle Williams. Music by John Debney and Justin Paul. How to put a show together? The Big Top has it all. “The Greatest Showman” is rated PG. Rating of 2 for fans. For children over age ten.

The Phantom Thread---Daniel Day Lewis submerses himself in his acting roles. From “My Right Foot” to “The Last of the Mohicans” and now a fashion designer in “The Phantom Thread.” Lewis has said that this is his final film and then he will retire from acting. However, sometimes a tempting role does come along... A phantom thread is a part of fabric/design in which, if you have the right thread, can unravel the garment. Much like a government, in which one small detail can bring the house down. In this film, set in the 1950’s in London, Daniel Day-Lewis is a couture fashion designer to nobility, along with his sister (Lesley Manville) and they have a structured life. Enter the outspoken, Alma (Vicky Krieps) who gives new fashion inspiration to Daniel, but his sister begins to see the facade crack and doesn’t know how her brother will handle, perhaps, love? Jonny Greenwood composed the score and the film was written and directed by Paul Thomas Anderson. “The Phantom Thread” is rated PG-13. Rating of 3 for fans of fashion and the stars.

DECEMBER 29, 2017...

Film Stars Don’t Die In Liverpool---An odd title for a movie, but then this film isn’t about your usual actress. It is about Gloria Grahame, an actress in the 1950’s who won a Best Supporting Actress Award for “The Bad and the Beautiful.” Other memorable roles were in “Oklahoma,” “Sudden Fear” and “It’s A Wonderful Life.” Annette Bening takes on the role of Gloria Grahame, whose regular life was more colorful than her screen life. She had several husbands and married her step-son, here played by Jamie Bell. Also in the cast are Vanessa Redgrave and Julie Walters. “Film Stars Don’t Die In Liverpool” is rated R. Rating of 2 for fans.

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