

A Matter of Perspective

BY JEFF MARTINDALE
Special to The Collierville Herald

Christmas morning sunlight peeks through slanted blinds and two fitfully rested parents lie still in the pre-dawn dimness. They slept little during the night, having stayed up late making final preparations for the morning. They often belted at the ceiling, momentarily suspending their arrangements to implore their two boys to go to sleep, soon to resume the task at hand, albeit in more hushed tones. They would eventually finish and collapse into a fleeting rest, silently hoping a new day would come slowly.

Christmas morning sunlight peeks through slanted blinds and two fitfully rested boys spring from their beds in the pre-dawn dimness. They slept little during the night, having stayed up late whispering excited expectations of gifts they hoped Santa would bring. They often bellowed at the floor, momentarily suspending their discussion to ask their parents whether it was time to get up, soon to resume the banter at hand, albeit in more hushed tones. They would eventually tire and drift into a rich dream world, silently hoping a new day would come quickly.

FLASH! An overhead light comes alive, and at the top of the stairs appear two pajama-clad boys, beaming smiles beneath matted mops of hair. The parents watch them bound down the stairs two at a time. Camcorders and cameras in hand, they beg them to be careful, stalling for time to record the moment. Craning their necks for a glimpse at their Christmas bounty, the boys thanklessly dart past them in a rush of air. The parents amble into the living room in their wake, wincing behind viewfinders at the noise made by little voices, the abundance of gifts an obstacle to guarded steps.

FLASH! An overhead light comes alive, and at the bottom of the stairs appear two pajama-clad parents, stifling yawns beneath matted mops of hair. The boys dash down the stairs and rush past

them – barely acknowledging their presence – in their eagerness to discover what Santa brought. Charging into the living room, they can barely contain their excitement, their senses overloaded from Santa's generosity as they frenetically broadcast their gifts to no one in particular, the abundance of gifts a breathtaking sight to behold.

The tearing of wrapping paper resonates throughout the house, and the parents silently bemoan the mess cluttering the floor. They keep one eye on the clock, pleasantly but firmly reminding the children that they must soon leave for Grandma's, an hour away. They fend off their whiny protests with stiff upper lips, graciously allowing the selection of one toy to carry with them, this to preclude keeping up with an abundance of toys while traveling and to reduce the chance of losing them.

The tearing of wrapping paper resonates throughout the house, and the boys frantically toss aside the gift wrap in their haste to discover their presents. They could spend hours – no, days – with their gifts, but their parents' ceaseless nagging about the time and departing for Grandma's house prompts complaints about leaving their new toys behind. They will be gone for days and want to carry them along, but, to their frustration, are allowed only one each. They plead and promise they'll keep up with their toys, but no one will listen.

The sun climbs over the horizon, illuminating the room in a warm glow, and the parents pause from recording to savor the moment, grateful for their financial abundance this year. They gaze into each other's eyes, their expressions soft and tender, subtle smiles an unspoken message giving thanks for everything.

The sun climbs over the horizon, illuminating the room in a warm glow, and the boys pause from their gift opening to relish the moment, grateful for their abundance of presents this year. They look each other in the eye, their expressions filled with pleasure and awe, then arise and rush to their parents, throwing arms around their waists, unrestrained hugs an unspoken message giving thanks for everything.

A portrait hangs unnoticed above the mantle overlooking the scene. It portrays Christ Jesus on His knees, His head bowed reverently, praying earnestly.

To give thanks for everything.

Jeff Martindale is a Collierville resident, FedEx employee and proud father of two boys. His 'Confessions of a Confused Dad' blog can be found at confessionsofaconfuseddad.wordpress.com.

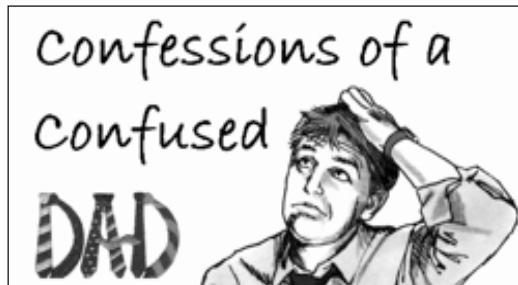


Photo by K. Garrett

The Avenue Carriage Crossing is offering photos with Santa and Mrs. Claus through Dec. 24. Times are Monday-Saturday, 10 a.m.-8 p.m., and Sunday, noon-6 p.m., but be careful not to come during Santa's nap times, 1-2 p.m. and 5:15-6 p.m. Monday-Saturday and 2-3 p.m. Sunday. Pet photos with Santa are available Mondays through Dec. 22, 6-8 p.m., next to College Station. A professional photo package is available.



Photo by Margie Augustine

It's a wonderful holiday season for five more winners in the Carriage Crossing MarketPlace gift card shopping spree drawing. The third drawing was held Dec. 15 and only two more Monday drawings remain for the \$20,000 total in shopping sprees. All smiles and ready to hit the 11 Carriage Crossing MarketPlace stores are (from left) Wanda Williams and 2-year old Taylor Grandberry, who picked up the \$500 worth of gift cards Williams' daughter and Taylor's mom, Paige Green of East Memphis, won; \$1,000 winner Bonnie Humphrey of Collierville; Ross assistant store manager Thomas Prescott, who assisted with the drawing; and \$2,500 grand-prize winner Tammy Eldred of Olive Branch, Miss. Other winners receiving \$500 shopping sprees were Carol Perry of Booneville, Miss., and Verlie Patrick of Collierville. Carriage Crossing MarketPlace retail center is located at Houston Levee at Shelby Drive and Hwy. 385/Nonconnah Parkway. Entry forms are available at all the center's shops: Sports Authority, Ross, Old Navy, Petco, Shoe Carnival, Dress Barn, Rue 21, Gamestop, Maurices, Factory Card and Justice. Drawings will be held again Dec. 22 and 29.

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The Town of Collierville held the annual lighting of the Town Square Christmas tree Tuesday night. Mayor Stan Joyner, aldermen and town department heads served visitors hot chocolate while local elementary schools and the Collierville High School Ladies Ensemble provided entertainment.

**Clockwise from top:
Kelli Geminn of Square
Beans Coffee brings a
cup of warm hot chocolate
to Audio Enthusiasts'
Brandon Snell.**



Town of Collierville employees (from left) Cole Spicer of the General Services Department, Clay Ticer of Public Services and Jay Porter of Parks, Recreation & Cultural Arts help prepare hot chocolate.



Parks, Recreation & Cultural Arts special events coordinator Sheila Moody chats with Greg Clark, the department's director, as she prepares a table for town officials to serve hot chocolate.

Photos by Michael Ward