



Volume 23, No. 07 *"And Ye Shall Know The Truth..."* December 19, 2012

*"The first task is caring for our children ... "*



*"... surely we can do better than this." President Obama, December 16, 2012*



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## This Strikes Us ...

*A Sojourner's Truth Editorial*

"The first task is carrying for our children, if we don't get that right, we don't get anything right." – President Obama, December 16, 2012

Having just completed an election cycle in which voters were assured that the number one issue facing this nation is the economy, could we have possibly been mistaken?

Newtown, Connecticut is the type of setting in which millions of Americans dream of raising their families – small, picturesque, close-knit and, above all, safe. The type of town in which kindergartners and first-graders walk a few blocks to school under the watchful eyes of neighbors. The type of town to which thousands of Philadelphians and Chicagoans, trying to raise their families on the mean streets of the inner city, would give anything to escape.

Small towns in Connecticut, in fact, are filled with escapees from the Big Apple, those who have yearned to breathe the sweetness of a crime-free atmosphere. That won't end, even in the aftermath of a mass killing that left 20 young children dead in Newtown. Twenty children and seven adults, killed by deranged individual using an assault rifle and two handguns.

On the other hand, if excitement, activity, diversity, even bright lights are more to your liking, perhaps a visit or move to a place such as Chicago makes more sense. Great place to raise kids as well. Great neighborhoods in and around Chicagoland. Four million people, a million things to do at any given time.

Pick one of those great neighborhoods and your children's lives will be filled with the culture richness that Chicago has to offer. Pick the right neighborhood and you won't have to hear the gunfire that keeps those awake in large parts of the West and South Sides of the City with Big Shoulders.

Mayor Rahm Emmanuel held a prayer vigil in November, 2011 for children who had been killed in the city during the previous three years. Just for children who attended Chicago Public Schools. Not young adults, not those who attended charter or private schools – just for school-aged kids who had attended the public schools. That three-year tally was 260. That's just under two kids per week. Killed. Virtually all by gunfire.

In no other industrialized nation do such events occur with such frequency. And our response?

A state senator from Oregon has just put forth the perfect plan to stop the killing of children, at least in places such as Newtown. Arm the teachers, he states. That way when someone comes in who looks as if he wants to cause harm, a designated shooter can blow the alleged perp away.

Several years ago, a man went to the campus of Virginia Tech in Blacksburg, VA and killed 33 people – the largest such massacre in recent years. Then, too, the response in the aftermath was that if people had been armed on campus, they could have taken him out before too many got killed.

So picture this scenario if you will. Let's say a 100 students and faculty had been armed and waiting for such an opportunity. Then the word went out over the public address system, or via text messages and social media, that a lunatic was running around killing people. Go find an armed individual and take him out, says the text message! What a body count that would be!

Okay, here's our alternative to the lunacy that we fight the scourge of assault weapons and handguns with more assault weapons and handguns. Why don't we seriously consider regulating firearms and banning the ones that are only designed to kill people?

The United States is home to approximately 270 million privately-owned firearms – nine guns for every 10 people – leading the world in this particularly gruesome category. In second place is Yemen with one gun for every two citizens. Yemen, a war-torn, Al Qaeda-infested, backwards hole-in-the wall rife with political unrest.

Now, we admit, it's not a novel idea. Great Britain, Australia, Japan, Germany, Norway ... and on and on.

There are two prevailing arguments against gun control with which every American is familiar. The first is that if we criminalize gun ownership, only "criminals will have guns."

Well, of course that's true if we only do it in half measures. If we criminalize the possession of guns in Chicago or in Newtown, we have no chance of effectively putting an end to senseless murders.

Any truly effective ban on assault rifles and regulation of other firearms must occur on a national level.

The second argument against gun control is historic and strikes at the very essence of our existence as a nation. We need guns, goes that theory, so that as citizens we can stop our government should it become unduly oppressive and try to take away all those other

*(Continued on Page 5)*

## Community Calendar

December 10-15

Toledo School for the Arts Gallerie 333 Holiday Sale: 419-246-8732 ext 224

December 15

Woodward HS Community Celebration: 2 pm; Join Salem Lutheran, United Vision Baptist, Trinity Faith Tabernacle and Friendly Center: 419-243-1289

December 16

St. Paul AME Zion Church "Holiday Worship in Music:" Toledo Interfaith Choir; 5 pm: 419-243-1065

December 18

The University Church 5<sup>th</sup> Open Mic Night: For secular and non-secular performers – poets, musicians, story tellers, comedians with 9 minutes of material to share; 7 pm

Self-Improvement Workshop Series: "Gang Violence and its American Roots;" Presenters Ben Hester, Jr; Waymon Farmer; Washington Muhammad; Lagrange Branch Library: 419-322-5107 or 419-283-1017 or 419-973-0248

Helping Hands of St. Louis Christmas Meal: 11 am to 1 pm: 419-691-0613

December 20-21

Power of Oneness Empowerment Revival: "Staying focused on Purpose; Solid Rock Church; Musical guest Elder Chris Byrd: 419-255-ROCK

December 21

Christmas Meal MLK Kitchen for the Poor: 4 to 6 pm: 419-241-2596

December 24

The University Church Christmas Eve Services: 4 pm Family Service and 11 pm Candlelight Service: 419-534-3080

Christmas Meal St. Paul's Community Center: Noon to 2 pm: 419-255-5520

Christmas Meal Toledo Gospel Rescue Mission: Noon to 2 pm: 419-242-6642

December 25

Merry Christmas!

Christmas Breakfast Toledo Gospel Rescue Mission: 7:30 to 9 am: 419-242-6642

Christmas Meal Toledo Gospel Rescue Mission: 4 pm: 419-242-6642

Christmas Meal Toledo Gospel Rescue Mission Outreach Center: 4 to 6 pm: 419-478-1005

Christmas Meals Cherry Street Mission Community Center: Breakfast – 8 to 8:30 am; Lunch – Noon to 1 pm; Dinner – 5 to 6 pm: 419-242-5141

December 26-January 1

Kwanzaa Celebration – Wayman Palmer YMCA: Seeking vendors, creative expressions (spoken word, singers, African drums, etc): toledodonald@aol.com or 419-509-0751

December 27

A Christmas Play "The King of Glory:" Warren Senior Services Building; 1 to 2:30 pm

December 29

"Saturday Morning Youth Skate" with Councilman Tyrone Riley: 9 am to noon; Ottawa Park Ice Rink: 419-245-1050

January 1

Happy New Year!

January 3-5

Temple of Christ Universal Life Church New Year' Revival 2013: 6:30 pm nightly: 567-218-8731

## The Sojourner's Truth

**Toledo's Truthful African-American Owned and Operated Newspaper**

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## All in a Day's Work

By Lafe Tolliver, Esq  
Guest Column



Let it be said at the beginning that I am always grateful when corporations or city departments come to me for legal advice regarding peculiar circumstances that they may face, be it employment issues or issues of public relations.

I am acutely aware of the financials that are involved in such delicate contacts but I am also aware of the fact that the public has a right to know how their hard-earned tax dollars are being spent and as such, I contend that I have a higher and a moral obligation to clue in the local citizenry on two recent events and why I was retained by the city and the local gaming casino.

As you may have read, the local casino has experienced a decline in overall revenues. It appears, maybe...that the local gaming population is pooped out playing with Lady Luck and does not have the stomach to return to that Mecca of Baal on the Maumee River and pay homage to it with more money and mo' money.

Even in spite of my earlier columns railing against the pernicious evils of gambling, the local honchos thought what better advice it would be by getting a critic to give them advice on what ails them. It is somewhat like asking the fox to wear night vision goggles when he visits the hen house...better to see the fatter hens!

So, below is an excerpt of the "request for advice" that I received this week from the Hollywood Casino fat cats:

Paragraph 2....What recommendations would you have to lure in more gamblers to our site?

My answer: Dear Ronald \_\_\_\_\_, thanks for the generous retainer fee. The size of it makes me blush, if that were possible. I detect from the tone of your letter that Hollywood Casino is seeking to maintain the levels of profitability it first enjoyed when it first opened.

That is possible but only if you follow my below suggestions to the letter. I know some of them may seem drastic but, trust me, there is a sucker born every minute (I think P.T. Barnum first said that).

Try these ideas out for at least 30 days and you will be truly amazed and awed at the positive results.

Please understand that if you attempt to use these ideas at your other gaming establishments, we have a binding contract that I will be paid for my innovative ideas. So, with that in mind, please proceed:

(1) **Free parking.** No potential sap wants to go home and realize that he or she had to pay to be parted from his monies. With free parking, at least he or she will feel that they got one up on you.

(2) **Lights out!** This concept involves that at a random time each night, you suddenly turn off all of the casino lights and for about 10 seconds, the patrons can grab whatever monies or chips that are on the gaming tables and use it as their own stack. Needless to say, this causes a near ruckus with the gaming community delirious in knowing that they have an equal chance to get at least even with the house odds. This one is a proven winner!

(3) **Faces in the crowd:** This one is a real crowd pleaser. Reconfigure some of your slots to show the faces of past and current mayors on the spinning dials, you know, the ones who supported gaming in Toledo. If the gambler gets all three smiling mayoral faces in a row, he or she wins a triple payout.

(4) **Yo' mamma!** A money maker like no other! Here, any gambler who brings in his mother or his mother-in-law between the hours of six p.m. and 11 p.m. gets an additional 20 percent off of his food and drink bill. If he brings in both his mother and the mother-in-law, he gets 25 percent off of the tab. This one will have your coffers overflowing right away!

(5) **Barrel boy:** A sure bet if ever there was one! Here, when you play blackjack, put a newly manufactured card that has a picture of a man in a wooden barrel. If a playa' hits blackjack with that barrel card, the playa' gets not only what was wagered but the house pays him three times his or her wagered amount. Talk about people going nuts at the blackjack tables with this barrel card deal!

(6) **You all come back, ya' hear!** Last, but not the least. Any time a playa' comes to the casino twice a day for a whole week and wagers at least twenty bucks each time, the house will provide him with \$100 worth of chips. Talk about repeat business! You ain't seen anything like this!

Well, Ronald, there you are. Put these ideas in operation and it will be just a matter of what local bank can even hold the moon size money deposits you will be making.

So long and good luck!

As to the other issue that commanded my attention and also with a very attractive fee was the recent story that the City of Toledo may still balk at settling a long-running discrimination case that involves the City of Toledo, former Mayor C. Finkbeiner and Gary Daugherty.

This involved an issue of Daugherty being allegedly wrongfully terminated from his employ with the City of Toledo some years ago while the city was under the rule and reign of C. Finkbeiner. The other involved parties settled their claims against the city but the Daugherty case remains yet to be resolved...either by settlement or by the city rolling the dice and having a jury trial.

Again, for reasons of privacy, I am allowed only to release that applicable portion that pertains to the request for my advice and involvement:

**Paragraph Nine....** In essence, what should we do with this remaining Daugherty case?:

**My response:** Dear city law director: I know that you are a hard man to deal with and you take it as a personal victory to minimize any payout to any perceived aggrieved citizen of this fair city. Undoubtedly, the hardliners on City Council will follow your lead and do your bidding....regrettably.

It is my sound advice that you cut your losses, swallow your pride and tell City Council to cut bait and pay the claim. You have paid enough out in taxpayer monies including the ever-growing attorney fee bill by outside counsel.

It is my advice that any allegations of wrongful termination done by C. Finkbeiner are valid and the City should pay up. If this matter proceeds to a jury trial and you have C. Finkbeiner on any witness stand and he is properly vetted by a searing cross examination, he will fold like a house of cards...or in the alternative, so display such unbecoming and unbearable shrill verbal conduct that any right minded juror will use their gut instincts and award a fat monetary judgment against the city.

As a city law director, you know C. Finkbeiner. You know his history. His propensities. No doubt Perlean Griffin will be a witness against the city and she will be unflappable and will be the dagger in the financial heart of the city's case. Don't go there with Perlean. She is a straight shooter and will be a no-nonsense witness.

Since you are paying me big bucks for my legal opinion, I suggest that you get the most of it by listening to it and following my directives.

Note: Could Finkbeiner face punitive damages in his personal capacity if the complaint is properly sufficient in that regard? If so, he should think twice about being a "tough guy" and wanting City Council to follow his lead. Don't do it. It will lead the City right off a financial cliff!

Daugherty has the facts and has right on his side. Don't be on the wrong side of history on this issue.

Cut your losses and go on to the next fight.

Regards

Lafe Tolliver, Attorney

P.S. Please make sure my retainer check has two "L's" in my last name!

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# Holidays Highlight An Indelible Mark of Inferiority

By *Floyd Rose*  
Guest Column

When the announcement of a black Santa Claus appeared on the marquee of Serenity Church here in Valdosta, GA, and children were invited to take pictures with him, we received a few negative responses from callers; the same responses we received when we put a picture of Jesus in black in the sanctuary of Valdosta's Church at Pine Hill in 1998.

African Americans are the only ethnic group that does not see Jesus through the eyes of our own culture, or line the streets following a parade led by a man dressed in a red suit who looks like us. Is it that only a white man can save us, and a white man can bring our children gifts?

In the 60s, we experienced a transformation of values, and we redefined ourselves. We spoke, not of enlightenment, but of en-blackenment, and James Brown sang, "Say it loud. I'm black and I'm proud."

We wore our dashikis and sported our afros, had our unique handshake, body bump, and warmly greeted each other with, "Brother" and "Sister." The Black Knights Men's shop, Black Giant Appliance store and the Sepia theater were in the heart of Toledo's black community.



We dressed Gary Edwards, who was a big, and extremely dark, black man, in a Santa Claus suit. He sat on a throne in Black Giant. Gary had it all; the red suit, the red hood, the long white beard, and the black boots. My son, Billie Sol, was four years old, and I was eager to have him see the black Santa.

At my urging, Billie walked up to Gary, whose arms were outstretched to welcome him. Billie reluctantly climbed up into Santa's arms. Gary smiled and said, "Now, tell Santa what you want for Christmas." Billie curiously looked up at him and said, "Why do you want to know?" After a few minutes, he jumped down. As we were walking out of the store, my son

said, "Daddy, that's not Santa. That must be Santa's helper."

I was stunned at Billie's reaction until it dawned on me that the Santa that he saw on television was white, the one he saw in newspapers and magazines was white. The one he saw at the mall, and in the department stores, was white. Why would he not be shocked at seeing a black Santa Claus?

Black mothers gave their little girls white dolls for Christmas, even though they could never have a white baby. Later when a black doll was placed beside a white doll before them, the black girls picked up the white doll to play with because they thought the white doll was beautiful, and the black doll was ugly; At the time, they couldn't play with white girls.

I returned to Valdosta to live in 1995, and during the last 17 years, all of the Christmas parades I witnessed featured a white Santa Claus, and most of the parents and children who lined the streets to watch were black. Even though it was black parents who would buy their children gifts, they were telling them that a white Santa Claus would have to bring them.

The legacy of slavery has left an indelible mark of inferiority on our minds which too many of us find hard to shake.

**Floyd Rose**  
Senior Servant  
Serenity Church  
Valdosta, Georgia

## Young Urban Professionals (Toledo Chapter) Presents GLASS CITY URBAN BUSINESS EXPO

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# HIV/AIDS Talks Highlight Annual NAACP Religious Summit

Faith leaders commit to addressing HIV/AIDS in the black community

*Special to The Truth*

The NAACP hosted its 14th annual National Religious Leaders Summit in Atlanta last week to help move the faith community back to its long-held leadership role in matters of social justice. Faith leaders committed to working with the NAACP to address the HIV/AIDS crisis and other important issues.

"The NAACP is committed to strengthening our historical connection with the

faith community at this crucial moment in our nation's history," stated NAACP Chairman Roslyn M. Brock. "We are excited to continue our partnership in the coming year."

During the three-day meeting, held December 10 to 12, faith and lay leaders created a post-election political agenda for communities of faith, focused on protecting voting rights and ad-

vancing strategies for job creation in the African American community. NAACP Board of Directors Chairman Roslyn M. Brock helmed a dialogue session with mainline protestant denominations to discuss the NAACP's Five Strategic /Game Changer areas.

A significant outcome of the dialogue was a national commitment from faith leaders to address HIV/AIDS in

the black community, in response to the NAACP's report The Black Church and HIV: The Social Justice Imperative. The leaders agreed to work with the NAACP to expand HIV testing opportunities and offer faith-based training and prevention education in churches, seminaries, historically black colleges and universities and organizational national conventions.

The Summit featured a national training session on HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention that was attended by approximately 100 pastors, faith leaders and members of local NAACP units and state conferences. Representatives attended from cities with some of the highest rates of HIV prevalence.

"The commitment to engage in this important work from the highest offices of these denominations solidified the Black Church's overall concern and commitment to reverse the HIV/AIDS epidemic," said Brock.

Faith leaders also paid tribute to a leader of their own. A Master Preacher



Roslyn M. Brock

**"We are excited to continue our partnership in the coming year."**

Award was bestowed upon Rev. Joseph Lowery for lifetime achievement in civil and human rights advocacy.

"Rev. Lowery represents a lifetime of preaching and living the gospel of justice and fairness," stated Rev. Nelson Rivers III, Vice President of Stakeholder relations with the NAACP. "It was a powerful moment for all the generations present to see a civil rights icon like Dr.

Lowery, as well as Dr. C.T. Vivian, another legend who presented him the award."

The black churches represented at the meeting included AME Zion, Christian Methodist Episcopal (CME), Black Methodist for Church Renewal (BMCR), National Baptist Convention-USA, National Baptist Convention of America, Progressive National Baptist and Primitive National Baptist.

## This Strikes Us

*(Continued from Page 2)*

rights we cherish in the Constitution.

Now that desire to preserve "rugged individualism" goes to the very heart of the American Revolution and the colonists desire to throw off the yoke of British domination. At that time, individuals took up arms in revolt and when the Constitution was drafted, there was more than a little sentiment to keep in mind the lessons learned during that successful effort to rid the states of British rule and to stay prepared to ward off any subsequent rule that might occur. Especially should it be home-grown.

There was no standing army after the Revolution as well, so a citizenry, armed and prepared at a moment's notice, made a great deal of sense.

When we speak these days of being prepared to take arms up against an oppressive government in order to preserve that sense of rugged individualism, it's almost as if we were living in a time machine being chauffeured by Daniel Boone in a coonskin hat.

The government is already here, folks. It has al-

ready assumed the role in our lives of controlling so many of our activities. We didn't want a government building roads in 1800, much less the federal government to do so. We certainly didn't want taxes, standing armies, laws that spelled out when and where we could consume a glass of wine or ordinances telling us where and when we could hunt and fish.

The only thing that keeps our government relative benevolent and protects its citizens from oppression is the writ of habeas corpus - a security blanket that has been suspended at periods for some of our citizens. That occurred even as other citizens, armed to the teeth, stood by and watch it happen without giving voice to their discomfiture.

Reality tells us that should our government cease its benevolence and decide to oppress the majority, and, in turn, citizens, fully armed as they might be, decide that enough is enough, there aren't enough handguns, deer rifles and assault weapons to stop the potential onslaught of a totalitarian state. But that's not our objection to the fact that so many of us relate un-

restricted gun ownership to some vague notions of preserving freedom.

Let's grant the argument that gun ownership plays some important role in preserving freedom of some sort. Here's the dilemma. As we look at the gravesites of those 27 people in Newtown or reflect upon the 260 kids in Chicago killed between November 2008 and November 2011, we must, if we value our desire to have unrestricted ownership of firearms, look at those lost lives as merely the price we are willing to pay for the freedom to bear arms.

Some people are just going to have to give it up so the rest of us can sleep a little more peacefully at night, with our Sig Sauers tucked under the pillow and our Bushmaster .223 assault rifles, fitted with magazines carrying 100 rounds of ammunition, leaning against the wall and well within arms' reach.

"Is the carnage visited upon our children the price of our freedom?" President Obama, December 16, 2012.

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## Jack Ford Back in the Elective Office Hunt

Sojourner's Truth Staff

Former Mayor Jack Ford has thrown his hat into the political ring once again. Ford is a candidate for the open at-large Toledo city Council seat that Councilman Phil Copeland is leaving in January. Copeland was elected to the Lucas County Recorder's office in November. Ford, who was a member of City Council in the 1990's

### Lucas County Children Services Needs Foster Homes for Babies

#### Registration open for Tuesday/Thursday and Saturday training classes.

Special to The Truth

Lucas County Children Services (LCCS) is in dire need of foster homes for infants and young children, and is asking families to help meet that need by becoming licensed as foster parents. "For the first time in recent memory, the agency is having difficulty finding licensed homes for infants," says Dean Sparks, LCCS executive director. "Families in our community should know that they can make a tremendous impact by fostering a baby in its formative first years," he adds.

All foster families need to attend free information and training classes at LCCS. A Tuesday/Thursday evening session (6-9 p.m.) runs January 8 - February 14, 2013, and a Saturday session is scheduled February 9 - March 16 from 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. To register for the classes, call 419-213-3336 or visit [www.lucaskids.net](http://www.lucaskids.net).

The agency always needs adults and families who can provide loving and stable homes for babies, young children, teens and groups of three or more brothers and sisters. Qualifying to be a foster or adoptive parent is easier than you think.

You...

- § Must be at least 18 years of age to adopt; 21 to become a foster parent
- § Can be married or single
- § Can own or rent a home with at least two bedrooms
- § Can work outside the home
- § Must have a source of income
- § Need a safety inspection for your home
- § Agree to a background check
- § Receive free training
- § Receive financial support, based on your child(ren)'s needs



Council President Joe McNamara (center) with Laneta and Bill Goings



Myron and Dr. Helen Cooks

before he was elected to the Ohio general assembly, became mayor in 2002, lost his re-election bid to Carty Finkbeiner in 2005 and eventually gained a seat on the Toledo Board of Education.

Last Sunday, Ford held a fundraising event at the home

of James and Helen Cooks. He is one of five candidates who have been interviewed for the Council seat by the Lucas County Democratic Party. Their choice is expected to be revealed this week. Then the selection will be made by the City Council

members who convene in January. With only three Republicans on council, it is anticipated that the Democratic Party's recommendation will be approved by the council members.

Young Urban Professionals (Toledo Chapter)

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# The Truth ECONOMY

## Tackling Tough Times

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### Following up on Employment Opportunities

By Tiffany Reynolds



Here are some important tips you should follow before and during your job interview:

Besides sending your application to the HR address, locate an e-mail address for the hiring manager and also send your application to him or her.

Create a job leads log to keep an accurate record of your job searching and follow-up.

Ask the interviewer what the "next steps" are in the hiring process and when it's acceptable for you to follow up.

When the interview is done, ask for the business cards of each person who conducted your interview. These cards will provide you with the information you will need for following up after the interview (i.e. the correct spell-

ing of the interviewer's name, the interviewer's title, street address, and e-mail).

Ask the interviewer if you can connect with him/her or their company on LinkedIn. You can potentially build a long-term professional relationship through this connection, whether you end up getting the job or not.

Here are some important tips for following up on employment opportunities after a job interview:

Don't sit back and wait. Immediate and proper follow up is critical.

Send out a hand-written thank-you note immediately to each person that was involved in your interview. Do this the same day as your interview if at all possible.

Follow up in a timely fashion-five to 10 days for con-

ventional job searching, sooner for online applications. It is preferable to do this follow up by phone but e-mail is also appropriate.

Send a "snail mail" letter to the interviewer summarizing your strongest points as they relate to the job you applied for. This shows great professionalism and reminds the interviewer that you really have an interest in the job.

When following up by telephone: Show your enthusiasm but don't come across sounding desperate.

Keep it brief, to the point and professional.

Prepare a script ahead of time that addresses your fit with the job, knowledge of the company, etc.

Keep your resume handy so you can refer to it, as needed.

Ask if the employer needs any further information that may have been excluded from your initial application (i.e. awards, recognition, additional training or schooling, etc.).

End the conversation by thanking the person for their time.

When following up by e-mail. Always address your e-mail to the hiring manager.

Proofread and spell-check your e-mail before sending it. Keep the e-mail short and to the point. Simply highlight your interest in the position and your key qualifications.

Remember that timely and appropriate follow-up is key.

According to a recent survey accomplished by CareerBuilder, 15 percent of hiring managers wouldn't hire someone who didn't send a

note and 32 percent would think less of them. Continue following-up regularly (alternating between phone calls and e-mail), but don't overdo it. You want to make yourself stand out from the crowd and reinforce that you are a strong candidate for the position without annoying the interviewer.

Follow up! Follow up! Follow up!

Tiffany L. Reynolds,  
Author | Job Coach | Project  
Coordinator  
Economic Opportunity  
Planning Association of  
Greater Toledo  
[www.treynolds@copa.org](http://www.treynolds@copa.org)

\*Author of the book: Need a Job? Then, Do SUMthing! Breakthrough 'Sum of All Parts' Marketing Methods & Techniques\*

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# Fifth Third Bank Presents Funds to FDCA For Workforce Development

By Folasade Oladokun  
Sojourner's Truth Reporter

In an informal, but well-attended ceremony on Tuesday December 18, 2012, Fifth third Bank's Linda Ewing, vice president, Community Affairs, and Carla Nowak vice president and Affiliate Marketing director, presented a check for \$10,000 to the very grateful Fredrick Douglas Community Center board of directors.

Sonya Harper-Williams, executive director and Karl Parker, president, Board of Trustees, accepted the check and explained the purpose of the funding. The money will



Sonya Harper-Williams

help launch the Fredrick Douglas Community Association WorkKeys Assessment Center, a workforce development program.

Fifth Third bank has a rich legacy of community support noted Ewing. "Fifth third Bank is proud to be able to invest a 10,000 dollar check to a nationally recognized program," said Linda Ewing.

The program is said to stimulate job opportunities in the community and bring about a reemergence of the neighborhood. "We are really excited about the financial impact this donation will have on the community," said Harper-Williams.

Many employers across the country are requiring the

WorkKeys assessments or recommending the National Career Readiness Certificate as a pre-interview tool for new employees. These certificates are nationally recognized and portable.

Taking WorkKeys tests is an important first step to prepare for education, training or a career and provides a competitive advantage to those seeking employment. The introduction of this nationally recognized workforce development system and the associated Career Readiness Certificate program will ensure that the next generation of job-seekers will be prepared to compete in the changing employment arena.

The Frederick Douglas Community Association was founded in 1919 when the

late Albertus Brown, lawyer and civic leader, was inspired by the need for social and recreational opportunities for the African-American youth



Karl Parker

of Toledo.

From a small group of 25 enthusiastic and loyal people emerged a movement that raised \$1,200 for equipment and operating expenses. The following year, the Toledo War Chest (now United Way

of Greater Toledo) allotted \$2,400 to support the movement.

In 1921, the organization moved to a church at 15 North Eleventh. In 1925, \$20,000 was used to purchase a property on the corner of Pinewood and 13th Street. In April, 1926 the name was changed to the Frederick Douglass Community Association (FDCA). The Center had become a way of life in Toledo with the cooperation from both races.

In 1979, the FDCA moved to its current location in the James B. Simmons, Jr. Neighborhood Facilities Building at 1001 Indiana Avenue, Toledo, Ohio 43607 where it continued to offer social and recreational activities for the youth of Toledo.

## Helping People Move From Benefits To Work

There's good news for the millions of Americans who receive disability benefits from Social Security and want to work. There's a free, voluntary program that just may be their ticket to employment.

The program, called Ticket to Work, makes it possible for those who receive Supplemental Security Income—also known as SSI—or Social Security Disability to begin a job while maintaining access to some of their benefits.

In the case of Terry Anderson, it was more than a ticket to work. It allowed her to take control of her life. Terry went on Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) after being diagnosed with cancer and losing her job due to downsizing. As a result, she took an extended period of time away from work.

A year later, with her cancer in remission, Terry learned about the Iowa Development Workforce Center, an American Job Center that's one of over 1,000 disability employment-focused organizations that provide free employment-related support services to Social Security beneficiaries through the Ticket to Work program. She decided to see what her local American Job Center had to offer.

Fortunately, the staff was able to provide her with expert advice about disability benefits and employment. For example, she learned about special Social Security rules called "Work Incentives," which are intended to help people who receive disability

(Continued on Page 10)

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# Claiming Tax Refunds, Protecting Tax Cuts

By U.S. Sen. Sherrod Brown



were worth more than \$1,500 on average.

Ohioans have always worked hard and played by the rules. But every year, millions of Americans don't receive their tax returns because of postal errors. Taxpayers deserve to easily receive the money that the government owes them, and shouldn't lose money just because their checks got lost in the mail.

Fortunately, claiming a tax refund is an easy process if you are eligible. According to the IRS, if a refund check is returned to the IRS as undelivered, taxpayers can generally update their addresses with the "Where's My Refund?" tool on IRS.gov. The Tool also enables taxpayers to check the status of their refunds. A taxpayer must submit his or her Social Security number, filing status, and amount of refund shown on their 2011 return. The tool will provide the status of their refund and, in some cases, instructions on how to resolve delivery prob-

lems.

**Ohio taxpayers checking on a refund over the phone will receive instructions on how to update their addresses. Taxpayers can access a telephone version of "Where's My Refund?" by calling 1-800-829-1954. They can also go to the Where's My Refund? online tool to check the status of their refund by clicking on <https://sa1.www4.irs.gov/irfof/lang/en/irfofgetstatus.jsp>.**

Ohioans can also take two simple steps to avoid the risk that their refund could get lost in the mail. They can start by signing up to have their tax returns directly deposited to their bank accounts, eliminating the potential for postal errors. Next, they can file their taxes electronically. In addition to reducing the potential for miscommunication, e-filing reduces errors on tax returns and speeds up the refund process.

But while ensuring

Ohio families receive the refunds they are owed is important, it's also crucial that we fight to guarantee middle class families across the country don't see their taxes rise altogether.

Right now, taxes will automatically rise for all Americans on January 1 unless Congress acts.

Both the President and I campaigned on maintaining tax rates for 99 percent of Ohio families, and on November 6, you strongly supported this position. But, more than a month later, some conservative politicians in Washington still haven't gotten the message. They are still protecting the wealthiest one percent, at the expense of the middle class.

In July, the Senate passed the *Middle Class Tax Cut Act*, which would prevent 99 percent of Ohio families – and all Americans making less than \$250,000 per year – from paying higher taxes. Under the bill, the median income Ohio households would save an average of \$2,200 on their taxes next year. Leaders in the House of Representatives have failed to schedule a vote on the bill – in part, because it asks the wealthiest two percent of American households to pay the same tax rates they paid during the Clinton years, when our economy added 22 million jobs. It's time for the House of Representatives to stop holding hostage middle class tax

cuts and pass the bill.

It's our duty to ensure that taxes will not go up for the millions of Ohioans who wake up early, send their children off to school, keep our assembly lines productive, tend to our vast agricultural areas, and stand up behind a counterserving customers for eight hours or more each day.

Let's move forward with our economic recovery and ensure that Ohioans have the resources they need to support their families. By accessing unclaimed tax credits, and providing tax cuts that bolster middle class families, we can continue to make our country stronger.

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### Helping People

*(Continued from Page 9)*

benefits transition to the workforce and become financially self-sufficient.

She also found out that recipients of SSDI can keep their Medicare coverage and their cash benefits while gaining work experience during the Trial Work Period. Terry also learned that thanks to another Work Incentive called "Expedited Reinstatement," she might be able to restart her Social Security benefits without a new application, if she has to stop work because of her disability within five years.

Eventually, Terry found work as a loan-servicing specialist and now works a second job at Walmart, where she trains cashiers and enjoys interacting with customers.

Grateful that Social Security helped her "...get through the storm," Terry acknowledged she was happy to leave benefits behind.

To learn more about the program, call the Ticket to Work Help Line at (866) 968-7842 (V); (866) 833-2967 (TTY/TDD) or visit [www.socialsecurity.gov/work](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/work).

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Author: Kim Jones, J.D.



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**The Holiday Book Gift Guide, Pt 3**

By Terri Schlichenmeyer  
The Truth Contributor

Last January, you loaded up.

You loaded up on all the left-over, on-sale, clearance-priced Christmas wrapping paper you could lay your hands on. You bought Hanukkah bags, Santa wrap, gift things with poinsettias and reindeer and holly and you put it all away because you knew darn well that you'd use it in due time.

Well, now's the time.

You got the paper out. You just need to find things to use it with.

But sometimes, it's hard to find just the right thing for everybody on your list, isn't it? There's always somebody who's impossible to buy for... and that's when you should head to the bookstore to look for these great reads....

MEMOIRS and BIOGRAPHIES

There are jobs, and then there are jobs, and if someone on your list loves to read about unique jobs, then look for *In the Land of Long Fingernails: A Gravedigger's Memoir* by **Charles Wilkins**. Canadian Wilkins gives readers the dirt (ahem) on what life's like for someone who deals with death. You have to agree (and so will your giftee) – that's fascinating stuff.

If there's a hunter on your list and you're tired of giving the same old stuff for the holiday, look for *Meat Eater* by **Steven Rinella**. This is a book about a life-long hunter and his adventures, but the author also writes about nature, history, and how we need to remember where our food comes from.

Your green giftee will appreciate knowing where the movement started, particularly when you give *Beyond Earth Day: Fulfilling the Promise* by **Gaylord Nelson, with Susan Campbell and Paul Wozniak**. Though Nelson, the father of Earth Day, died in 2005, this book lays out his ideas for a better planet and includes a foreword by Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. and a preface by Nelson's daughter, Tia.

Giftees who are exploring a new-found faith will love reading *Does This Church Make Me Look Fat?* by **Rhoda Janzen**. It's the continuing story of a former Mennonite who finds a home with Pentecostals... but is it really where her heart lives?

Armchair adventurers will love reading *The Last Viking: The Life of Roald Amundsen* by **Stephen R. Bown**. It's the story of polar explorer Amundsen who, within two short decades, explored four geographical passages that had been a sort of last frontier. Wrap it up with a warm polar-fleece blanket.

If there's a political animal on your gift list, then *Golden* by **Jeff Coen and John Chase** is a certain winner. It's a book about Rod Blagojevich and the scandal that got him arrested some four years ago. It's hard-hitting journalism at its best, and political watchers will love it.

For the giftee who likes a little humor in his memoir-reading, *Kasher in the Rye* by **Moshe Kasher** might be a good gift. This is the story of a nice Jewish boy who turned not-so-nice after his mother moved him from New York to California. It's a fish-out-of-water kind of book that's funny, scary, and sobering.

The new homeowner on your list will love *Sugarhouse* by **Matthew Batt**. It's the story of a well-meaning family that purchases what was supposed to be their dream home. Nope, it's a nightmare, for a lot of reasons. Wrap it up with a gift certificate to a Home Improvement store because, as you know, no house is ever completely done...

The pugilistic person on your gift list will love unwrapping *The Good Son: The Life of Ray "Boom Boom" Mancini* by **Mark Kriegel**. It's a bio on the lightweight champ, his fights, his life, his wins, and his troubles in the ring.

Do you have someone on your list who loves reading medical memoirs? Okay, good, then you'll want to wrap up *Monkey Mind: A Memoir of Anxiety* by **Daniel Smith**. With bravery and honesty, Smith tells what it's like to live with dread and – believe it or not – a good sense of humor about it all.

What might it be like to live with a tragedy that you wear every day? If your giftee would love the story of such a journey, then wrap up *Out of the Ashes* by **Charlie Morecraft**. Oil worker Morecraft was injured in a horrific accident, but his long recovery only strengthened his resolve to turn tragedy into triumph. This book is his story, as well as a how-to for your giftee's safety as well as that of his (or her!) family.

If your giftee needs a good dose of humor after a long and difficult year of fighting cancer, then *In the Pink* by **Susan McBride** might be the perfect antidote. It's the story of how McBride found a younger man, had a baby, and survived breast cancer, all before turning over the calendar on a "significant" year. Seriously, just the cover is going to make your giftee smile.

Somewhere on your gift list is the name of a rock and roller. That's the person who should get *Sinner's Creed* by **Scott Stapp**, former member of the band Creed. This is Stapp's story of his life as a musician, his addictions, his self-destructive ways, and the turn-around he attributes to God and to his wife. It's powerful, candid, and, well, it rocks!

TOO COOL TO MISS

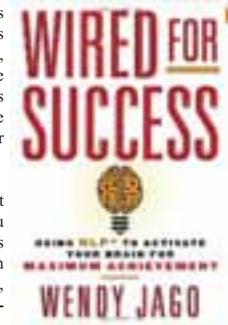
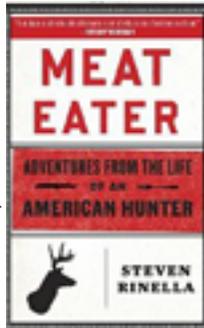
There's not a science geek in the world who wouldn't want to unwrap *Skulls: An Exploration of Alan Dudley's Curious Collection* by **Simon Winchester**. Yes, indeed, this is a book filled with photos of a private collection of noggins from every kind of breathing critter. Have you ever wondered how a grizzly bear differs from a leaf-nosed bat, for instance? Surely you have someone on your list has... and this book will be a big winner for that person, for sure.

Another unusual book that I can't get enough of is *Talking Pictures* by **Ransom Riggs**. Riggs says, in his introduction, that he's a collector of ephemera, specifically, old pictures of total strangers... but they have to have something written on the back. This book is just part of his collection. It's funny, it's heartbreaking, it's going to make your giftee gasp, and it's going to make you both eager for the next volume.

BUSINESS

The businessperson on your gift list wants to get the most out of his or her ad bucks, so you can't go wrong when you wrap up *Lead with a Story* by **Paul Smith**. This book offers excellent ideas for making a good business narrative that can be used in ads and to generate buzz. Speaking of leadership, look for *Leading So People Will Follow* by **Erika Anderson**

(Continued on Page 12)



Effective January 1, 2013 Dr. Samuel H. Hancock will return to private practice and rejoin Dr. Linda Whittington-Clark (Whittington-Clark and Associates LLC) as a part-time therapist. Dr. Hancock, who is a Licensed Professional Counselor (L.P.C.), educator, author, and International Consultant/Trainer in the area of Leadership Development and Cultural Competency, (Hancock, Hancock and Associates LLC) has a Doctorate in Leadership Education and Policy Studies from Bowling Green State University and is a former Assistant Professor in the Department of Medicine at the University of Toledo (UT). He is also the former Assistant to the President for Institutional Diversity at UT.

He worked in Private practice with Dr. Whittington-Clark, a Licensed Counseling Psychologist, who has been in private practice for over 30 years, for three years in the mid 1990's. Dr. Hancock's practice will include but not be limited to marriage and pre-marital counseling, along with group and individual counseling for children and adults. Most insurance companies are accepted.

Also, Dr. Hancock, a Widower who was married for 30 years recently launched a series of discussions about how men and women can have more meaningful, satisfying, trusting and loving relationships. These discussions are based on Hill Harper's best-selling book entitled "The Conversation" and Dr. V.A. Vernon's book the "10 Rules of Dating".

To arrange for an appointment please call 419-578-2525. Feel free to e-mail Dr. Hancock at [SAMUEL.HANCOCK@BEX.NET](mailto:SAMUEL.HANCOCK@BEX.NET), and to visit his web page at [www.hancockhancock.com](http://www.hancockhancock.com).

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## Give the Gift of a Designated Driver This Holiday Season!

Special to The Truth

Every day, millions of Americans travel on our Nation's roadways. Thousands of these drivers and passengers tragically lose their lives each year because of drunk, drugged, or distracted driving. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reports that in 2011 there were 9,878 drunk driving fatalities.

Sadly, buzzed and drunk

driving will impact one in three drivers in our community this holiday season alone.

Unison Behavioral Health Group has launched its "Designate a Sober Driver" campaign for the holiday season. The campaign is funded by the Mental Health & Recovery Services Board of Lucas County and focuses on the highest risk driving population: young men ages 16-25. Components of the campaign

include: outdoor advertising, social media, and public education. The message is simple: Buzzed driving is drunk driving... designate a sober driver this holiday season. The campaign is scheduled to run through January 2.

"Most people don't intend to drive drunk," says Dr. Larry Hamme, Unison's Chief Clinical Officer. "But, at the end of the night, too

many try to convince themselves and their friends that they aren't drunk, just buzzed, and are perfectly capable of driving." Being buzzed means being too impaired to drive. Period. Understanding this and planning appropriately can save lives.

Unison Behavioral Health Group recommends these simple tips for a safe holiday season:

Unison Behavioral Health

Group  
Release—Add One

1. Plan a safe way home before the festivities begin
2. Before drinking or partying, designate a sober driver
3. If you're buzzed, use a taxi, call a sober friend or family member, or use public transportation
4. If you happen to

see a drunk or impaired driver on the road, don't hesitate to call 911 to report the vehicle

Unison reminds the community: if you know someone who is about to drive or ride while impaired, take their keys and help them make other arrangements to get where they are going safely. Help this make a holiday season filled with hope. For more information, visit [www.unisonbhg.org](http://www.unisonbhg.org).

## The Holiday Book Gift Guide, Pt 3

(Continued from Page 11)

son. It's a book about inspiring loyalty in your organization, and it features examples from many major corporations.

So you say that someone on your list can't live without his smartphone. If that's the case, then wrap up *The Big Disconnect* by Giles Slade. It's about how technology and social media are changing the way we relate (or don't). Wrap it up with a firm appointment for lunch – no cell phones allowed.

Your giftee might not talk about it, but building his (or her!) business is the main thing on his (her?) mind. So why not show you know by wrapping up *Triple Crown Leadership* by Bob Vanourek and Gregg Vanourek. Written by two successful businessmen, this book is filled with advice from leaders from sixty-one organizations around the world. Wrap it up with a package of sticky notes, because your favorite businessperson will need them while reading this book.

Business people know that there's never too much education to be had, so wrapping up *How Excellent Companies Avoid Dumb Things* by Neil Smith is a good bet for your business-giftee. It's filled with informative chapters for reflection, quick-to-read sidebars for time-pressed readers, and some surprising advice. Another book to wrap is *A Slice of the Pie: how to Build a Big Little Business* by Nick Sarillo. It's a book on creating the right culture to grow your business and make it successful, by a guy who makes pizza for a living.

For the businessperson who loves business biographies, you can't go wrong with *The Einstein of Money* by Joe Carlen. This is the story of financial wizard Benjamin Graham, the man who changed the way we invest money. It's drawn from notes, interviews, and Graham's own memoirs, and your finance fiend will love it.

By now, your business giftee knows that much of success comes from between her ears. So here are two books you know she'll love: first, *SuperReading for Success* by Ron Cole, a book about improving her reading speed and memory, and how it can further her career. And then there's *Wired for Success* by Wendy Jago, which is a book on how brainpower can be boosted for brain-training optimization.

Of course, the businessperson on your gift list wants to get ahead. So give him (or her!) a leg-up by wrapping up *Second That Emotion* by Jeremy D. Holden. This book shows how trends and fads are shaped, how movements that seem sudden are far from that, and how your business giftee can take advantage of them all.

It's a shark's world out there, but the new businessperson on your list can survive – especially when you've wrapped up *OtherWise: The Wisdom You Need to Succeed in a Diverse*

and *Divisive World* by Dick Martin. Wrap it up with *The Winning Factor* by Peter Jensen for someone who will surely be a leader someday.

KIDS BOOKS (PICTURE BOOKS)

Moms of toddlers will surely appreciate it if you wrap up *Big Boys Go Potty or Big Girls Go Potty*, both written and illustrated by Marianne Richmond. These easy-to-understand books will be helpful, gender appropriate, and kid friendly. Bonus: giving them to a toddler doubles as a gift to Mom and Dad, too.

While there's little boredom during the holiday season, it quickly settles in right afterward. So maybe *Delia's Dull Day* by Andy Myer is a good book to wrap up and save until after the holiday. It's the story of a little girl whose life is boring, boring, boring, but if she'd just look harder, she'd see how it's really not so much.

If your little giftee loves dangerous animals (think: sharks and dinos), then *A Strange Place to Call Home* by Marilyn Singer and Ed Young. This book is filled with rhymes about the animals that live in deadly, dangerous places. What kid isn't going to love a book like that? Wrap it up with *Track That Scat!* by Lisa Morlock, illustrated by Carrie Ann Bradshaw. It's a book about animal poop, another subject that kids this age can't get enough of.

A slight fright awaits the child who unwraps *Oh, No!* by Candace Fleming and Eric Rohmann. It's the story of a frog who falls into a deep hole, his friends who try to help him out, and a tiger who's very, very hungry... Another book to look for – one with a bit of excitement but a happy ending – is *Toads on Toast* by Linda Bailey and Colin Jack. In this case, though, it's toads that are in trouble, and a hungry fox.

Does your little giftee have monsters beneath the bed? Then you need to wrap up *Emily Brown and The Thing* by Cressida Cowell and Neal Layton. It's a really cute book that will show kids that the "thing" under the bed needs love, too.

Every kid loves adventure, and *Captain No Beard: An Imaginary Tale of a Pirate's Life* by Carole P. Roman will give your little giftee arrrrgh great dose of that. It's the tale of the good Captain and his fearless crew, along with a

little boy and his stuffed animals on the high seas. Look for it, Matey!

Your young tennis fan will love *The Adventures of Henry the Sports Bug: Book 1* by Melissa Wyler. It's the story of a bog bug that magically turns into a sports hero who teaches young children about the game of their choice. This adventure is about tennis, but stay tuned – Henry also plays other sports, too.

KIDS BOOKS (MIDDLE GRADERS)

If there's a sleeper in your child's future, *The Girls' Ghost Hunting Guide* by Stacey Graham is a must-have. This book is filled with terror, stories from real ghost hunters, and more, and it's sure to scare up a good sleeper. You might want to look for *Recipe for Trouble* by Sheryl Berk and Carrie Berk. That's the latest in the Cupcake Club books, which include recipes and a good idea for your middle-schooler and her friends. Baked goods, anyone?

Though *Faith: Five Religions and What They Share* by Dr. Richard Steckel and Michele Steckel looks like a picture book, it's not. In this book, your young giftee will learn about Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, and Judaism and what they have in common. This is the perfect book for kids who wonder why there's strife around the world. It'll make you wonder, too...

The young dog lover on your list will be so happy to unwrap *The Last Dogs: The Vanishing* by Christopher Holt. It's a book about a journey for family, and the danger three dogs must endure to find their people. Hint: it's the first in a series, which will give you plenty of ideas for the next gift-giving event. Also look for *One Dog and His Boy* by Eva Ibbotson, the story of a young boy who rescues a dog. Or is that the other way around?

So your horse-loving giftee has raced through every Black Beauty book and then some, and you're at the end of your gift-giving rope? You're in luck: look for *The Island Horse* by Susan Hughes and wrap it up quick. It's the story about a girl who lives on the coast of Nova Scotia. When her father moves the family to a new home near Sable Island, the girl finds a surprise that she might not get to keep...

There are a lot of animal books out this year that will appeal to kids who love critters, and that includes *Lower the Trap: The Lobster Chronicles 1* by Jessica Scott Kerrin. It's the story of a huge lobster, a boy's pride – and then his horror, when he realizes that what's good for him is not necessarily good for the lobster.

(Continued on Page 14)

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## Merry Christmas vs. Happy holidays

By Michael Hayes  
Minister of Culture



If you are one of those Fox-News-watching, right-wing neo cons... then you probably believe that there is a so-called "War on Christmas."

If you are a sane individual with a grasp of common sense, you know better than that.

Telling someone "Happy Holidays" instead of "Merry Christmas" these days is likely to get you involved in a shouting match.

You thought you were offering some good-natured yuletide cheer in the spirit of the season, but what you really did was just piss them off.

The fact that some people are angered by a simple choice of phrase is proof of the real war:

The War On Tolerance.

How are you claiming to be anything remotely close to a "godly" person when you turn an innocent season greeting into some alleged attack on your values?

Do you think Jesus is gonna tell Santa to throw a little something extra in your stocking just because you harassed someone over what greeting they gave you?

Wouldn't it be more in tune with Jesus' teachings if you practiced peace and tolerance and avoided such trivial disputes?

The point is, this season belongs to more than just one group of people.

I'll say it again so you understand, this season belongs to more than just one

particular group of people.

The phrase "Happy Holidays" includes all holidays celebrated wherever!

That shows tolerance. That shows acceptance. That shows spiritual alignment with the teachings of The Most High. That shows inclusion. That shows respect. That shows consideration. That shows fairness.

I mean, aren't those the tenets of most major religions?

Picking a fight with someone just because they used the greeting without the word "Christ" in it just seems contrary to what this season is supposed to be about.

I haven't heard of any fights breaking out over wishing someone a "Merry Christmas."

But there have been a growing number of incidents and overall backlash to the other greeting being used. People are claiming that when someone wishes them "Happy Holidays" that it's part of some larger religious persecution plot.

But let's be clear, no one religion has a monopoly over this month.

Saying "Happy Holidays" can include Kwanzaa, Hanukkah, Bodhi and Ashura celebrations...which all take place during this time of year.

And if you read that and didn't know about those other holidays, cool.

But if you read that and thought to yourself that you don't care about those other holidays because the one you celebrate is the only one that matters, then YOU are part of the problem.

I take that back, you are the whole problem... in its entirety.

Have you ever thought about what it's like for a young Muslim kid in a public elementary school during this time of year?

A young Muslim child whose family may be just as God-fearing, and spiritually-abiding as anyone else... that kid has it terribly rough dur-

ing this season.

Let's say he was never taught to believe in some overweight white man in a red jump suit dropping into his home in the middle of the night, but if he doesn't take part in the class exercise to paste cotton balls on his beard or color his sleigh...he gets in trouble.

Forced to look at nativity scenes and sing songs that reflect nothing of his spiritual heritage, he is ridiculed by peers and possibly even singled out by the teacher.

But when Eid rolls around, no one forces the other students to take part in that holiday.

Now imagine that you are the parent of that young Muslim child.

Your vote helped approve that public school levy.

Your tax dollars help fund that public school district.

Public, means for the public...that means for everyone.

Yet although you have paid into this public school system and entrusted them with the responsibility of educating your child they won't observe the holidays native to your culture. Then, on top of that, they damn near force your kid to take part in the customs of a religion that contradicts the beliefs you have instilled while raising them.

Just imagine that for a second...that you are paying into this public system, entrusting this public system but the system plays favorites with what religious beliefs get attention and which ones get overlooked.

Also, imagine how time consuming and unproductive it would be to observe every single religious or cultural holiday that may exist in the smallest minorities of the district.

The only fair way forward is to be tolerant.

You don't have to know all the faiths or religions, but you should at least observe their right to exist. You don't have to stop saying Merry

Christmas, but you should at least see the usefulness in why a more general phrase of "Happy Holidays" is starting to catch on.

As you make your rounds this season and find yourself in casual conversation among strangers or on the other end of a department store cashier's greeting... keep a

tolerant attitude. You are sharing this time of year with hundreds of other religions shared by billions of other people. No one is attacking you and what you believe in just because they want to acknowledge other paths.

And with that... I wish you all a Merry Christmas!  
*Christmahaukowitzakosolishura.*

Peace.

Email:  
mercuryspeak@gmail.com  
(no "s" at the end, just mercury speak - a nickname a friend gave to how I tend to express myself at times).

### Mistakes Men Make That Women Notice

Whether it's a first date or first encounter, here are some tips on how to avoid a "bumpy" start to a relationship.

According to professional stylist and master barber Ben Phillips, guys need to face the facts about what it takes to make a good first impression. Proper grooming is essential to getting her attention and keeping it. It not only promotes how you look on the outside, but says a lot about who you are on the inside.

**Here's his take on three of the most common grooming mistakes men make-and what they say about the men who make them.**

**Razor Bumps**  
Cause: Using the wrong tool for the job or shaving too quickly after jumping out of bed. What she thinks: You're probably too aggressive or a little too impatient. Solution: Avoid dull blades and always shave or trim your face after showering—or after applying a warm, wet washcloth for several minutes.

Make sure the shaving or trimming device is designed for your hair type and can provide a close cut. A shaver made for African-American men, such as the new Bump Control Trimmer from Wahl, can alleviate skin issues caused by using the wrong tool.

**Unkempt Hair**  
Cause: One common cause is waiting too long between haircuts. What she thinks: If you can't maintain your hair, how are you going to maintain a job?

Solution: Get your head in the game by investing in a set of clippers that can keep your hair maintained at all times. Fortunately, there are newer tools, such as the Fade Pro Clipper, that allow you to do more styles than ever before while keeping a tight look at all times.

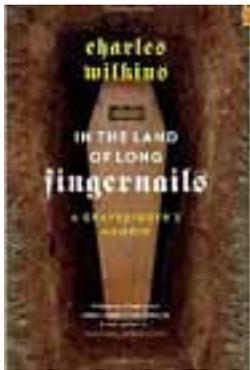
**Missed Details**  
Cause: Lack of tools to get the job done or not realizing the growing issue in front of you.

What she thinks: If you're missing the details staring you right in the face, what would you miss in our relationship? My birthday, our anniversary?

Solution: Invest in a facial hair trimmer that features a detail attachment for tight spots such as nose, ears and eyebrows. Switch to the trimmer or clipper blade to clean up the back of the neck.

**The Holiday Book Gift Guide, Pt 3**

(Continued from Page 12)



If reading a Christmas tale as a family is a tradition of yours, then look for *Nutcracker* by E.T.A. Hoffman, pictures by the late Maurice Sendak. This classic book basically follows the ballet of the same name, and it's rich with pictures your family will love. I also think they'll enjoy *Smudge and the Book of Mistakes: A Christmas Story* by Gloria Whelan, illustrated by Stephen Costanza. It's

the story of a young monk who's given the task of illustrating the Christmas Story. Unfortunately, his nickname is "Smudge" and he lives up to that name...

Though it's not a book, *Deck of Snakes from the Boy Scouts of America* will get your young herpetologist reading, for sure. Part game, part reference, this is a deck of cards on which are printed dozens of snakes and lots of info about each. It's ssssss a ssssspecial gift for sssssomeone who loves ssssss snakes. Wrap it up with *Get Out!* by Judy Molland, which is a book about ways to explore and enjoy nature and get green, and it's perfect for kids and their parents.

If your giftee loves a bit of drama, then *Margaret and the*

*Moth Tree* by Brit Trogen and Kari Trogen is a book to give. It's the story of a plain orphan who lives in an orphanage that's being terrorized by a beautiful Matron. Beauty, in this case, does not triumph...

Comic book fans will devour *The Rainbow Orchid*, Volume One in The Adventures of Julius Chancer series by Garen Ewing. This graphic novel, meant for readers ages 8 and up, is the story of Julius Chancer, young assistant to historical researcher Sir Alfred Catesby-Grey. This book mixes adventure, legend, history, and fun and comic book lovers won't be able to get enough of it.

For the budding comedian, *Ricky Vargas: Born to Be Funny* by Alan Katz, illustrated by Stacy Curtis is a great book to give. This is a quick-to-read three-story book with not a lot of words but a lot of laughs.

So your young giftee loves to travel, eh? Then here are two books with a theme of postcards: *Mira's Diary: Lost in Paris* by Marissa Moss is about a young girl's search for her missing mother after Mom sends a postcard from another century. Also, *Postcards from Pismo* by Michael Scotto is the story of a boy who strikes up an American soldier in Afghanistan. Wrap them both up with - what else? - some postcards!

Kids who love nothing more than to spend time at the beach will love receiving *The Big Green Book of the Big Blue Sea* by Helaine Becker, illustrated by Willow Dawson. Though the cover of this book might remind you of a Dr. Seuss book, what's inside the covers is serious stuff. Young scientists and any kid who loves the ocean will want to have this book. Hint: if you're planning a winter-break vacation to the beach, you can't go wrong with this. Another book your

young animal-watching scientist will enjoy is *Flocks, Herds, Litters & Schools* by Jim McMullan. It's a book about how animals live and survive, and what words we use for them when they do.

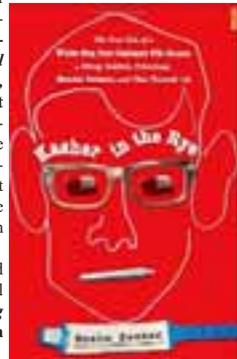
If you've got a historian on your gift list, then *A Civil War Scrapbook: I Was There, Too!* will absolutely thrill him (or her!). Filled with true stories, activities, information, and lots and lots of pictures, this skinny book will have a whopping amount of interest for budding Civil War buffs. Hint: if Dad or Grandpa is a Civil War buff, too, get two copies.

KIDS BOOKS (YA AND TEENS)

No doubt, your high-schooler closely followed the elections this year. After all, he'll be voting himself pretty soon...

so give him a little bit of behind-the-scenes information with *District Comics: An Unconventional History of Washington, DC*, edited by Matt Dembicki. This heavy paperback is filled with the work of many various artists and cartoonists and it takes a look at some of the secret, hidden goings-on in our nation's Capital.

If your teen has decided that it's time for a total change, then *Stealing Parker* by Miranda (Continued on Page 16)



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Page 15

December 19, 2012

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We are seeking an individual to fill the critical role of Program Manager, United Way *AmeriCorps*. This position is responsible for all aspects of the program which includes: providing leadership to 41 AmeriCorps members, 39 of whom serve as Graduation Coaches.

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- Recruit, train and develop AmeriCorps Members
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- Conduct program evaluations of members
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- 3-5 years experience program management is required
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This position is grant-funded, therefore continuation of employment beyond the end of the funding cycle is dependent upon renewed funding.

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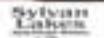
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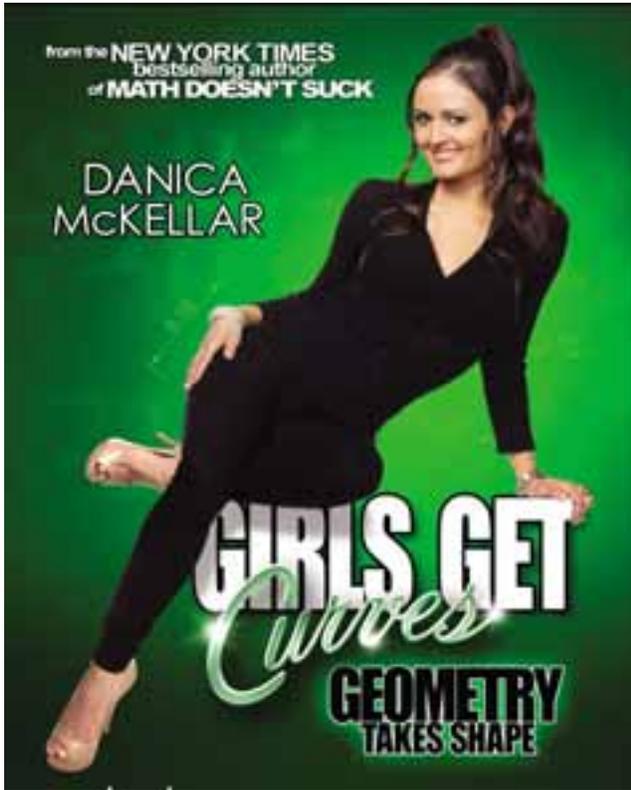


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**The Holiday Book Gift Guide, Pt 3**

(Continued from Page 14)



**Kenneally** is a great gift. In this book, Parker Shelton has the perfect life – but she wants a new one, so she shakes things up. Was it a mistake?

Bullying has been in the news lately, and if your teen has taken a stand, then wrap up **Send by Patty Blount**. It's the story of one boy who stands up to a bully, but though he doesn't regret it, it could be a mistake. That's because he has a secret that could be revealed by his bravery.

Surely your gift list includes a math wizard... or maybe someone who wishes she was? Then you know you've got a winner under wraps when you give **Girls Get Curves by Danica McKellar**. In this latest installment by actor and Harvard graduate McKellar, girls will learn all the angles of geometry, as well as a few other things they'll need to know to succeed. Hint: wrap it up with a really good calculator.

And finally, if your

giftee loves novels of mythology and magic, then you need to wrap up **The Vicious Deep by Zoraida Cordova**. It's the story of a young man who falls into the ocean and goes missing for several days. When he's finally found, he's changed – and he can't pos-

sibly begin to tell anyone why...

**SUMMARY**

So there you are. A bunch of ideas for everybody whose name on your gift list makes you groan. What will you buy? Now you know.

Keep in mind that availability isn't guaranteed, titles may have changed, and some books might have to be ordered. But if these ideas aren't good enough, then ask your friendly bookseller for hints, tips, and favorites. They love to talk books – it's why they get paid the big bucks, you know.

So go. Get outta here. Go shopping.

And Season's Readings!



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