

# 12 Days Of Christmas

Since we are in the third day of the twelve, I would like to share with you my favorite song and video of the season. I think it was around last year, but it really got exposure this year.

Since the good doctor made mention of the two songs here is Josh Groban singing Petit Papa Noel from his glorious Holiday CD, Noel.

and... Vive la Vent

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# Fun And Games On Boxing Day

This year, the extended family gathering fell on the day after the big day when everyone could fit it into their schedule with their other festivities. Get us all together and it is bound to be a fun-filled event. The hilarity began when my brother dropped his plate of food on the floor on the way to the table. He insists that he had both hands on the plate. I told him he should have had both eyes on the plate as well. Alicia thought that he was sitting on the floor in the hall eating instead of joining us at the table.

Lots of goodies are always set up on Aunt Sandy's table throughout the day, cheeseballs, cookies, candy (featuring everyone's favorite buckeyes) plus the home cooked spread featuring pies and a delicious meal and you do not leave the place hungry.

Chad had to song lead at mass at six so a bunch of us went and came back out. He did fine except that I think he should have practiced those later verses of "The First Noel" a bit more. I admit that some of those do get tricky especially if you are not used to them. The melody is familiar enough but when you are unaccustomed to the lyrics of all five verses then you tend to get overwhelmed.

After mass, many returned to the house and engaged in what I hope becomes a tradition: the euchre battle. Going head to head with my oldest brother is daunting anyway (PARTICULARLY, KNOWING WHAT A SHARK HE IS!). I am amazed and pleased to say that Christi?! and I beat Jeff and his rotating partners Dan and Carla 2- 1.

I also received a camera under the tree (let's see how long it

takes before I lose THIS ONE ☐ )

☒ Sydney in front of the horrible Eddie Murphy version of *The Nutty Professor*.

☒ Carla, Dan, Sydney, and a surprise appearance by someone's handsome leg.

☒ Shelby (half covered by a mysterious appendage, Joshua, Jeff, and Elizabeth.

☒ Sorry Shelby... must have had the blur reduction off.

☒ Noah opening the Magna Doodle to which he lost the magnet inside the pen before the night ended.

☒ Autumn, Jason, Carla, Lauren, Dan, Alyssa, and Alex with his second set of Army accessories of the season.

So... lots of fun, love, and FOOD over the Christmas holiday.

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## Christmas Celebrations

I LOVE CHRISTMAS. I still look at the holiday with the wonder of a child. For the entire month of December, I still do believe in the magic of Jolly Ol' St. Nick but still marvel at the wonder of the true meaning of the holiday. I even have my sister wrap my presents and I do still snoop (ok, I admit it). After getting off work at 2 on Christmas Eve, the immediate family and their kids opened presents and had the first of three feasts throughout the weekend. What a haul! The highlight of my haul were two Scene-It games. I had asked for the rather awesome looking *Star Trek* edition the moment I

heard about it and submitted a question to the makers of the game when it was being developed. I also received a pleasant surprise. I had picked up the Simpson's edition for my nephew just after Thanksgiving. I unwrapped the one of my own for Christmas. I have played it with some friends and ADORE IT!

Midnight Mass (well, 11PM mass) was beautiful as usual. The past few years singing "Silent Night" at Communion have been really difficult. I am immediately taken back to the four Christmas concerts in high school singing the carol by candlelight. I can still see Emily behind the piano. I then went home and caught my sneak-in viewing of *A Christmas Story*.

Christmas Day was feast number two and a day typically set aside for watching movies people had received. We were treated to *Santa Buddies* courtesy of Alex. I was exhausted and slept through half of it.

More fun and merriment to come with the Swary family Christmas.

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## All about family

On Christmas my four daughters were together for the first time since my 3rd daughter got married. This is the first time my 3 married daughters and their husbands have been together. This is the first time I got to spend some time after Christmas with my youngest grandchildren. The first Christmas I got to spend with my 2nd son-in-law. The 6th Christmas without my beloved wife.

My three oldest daughters have been married for 3 years, 2 years and the last daughter 6 months. My first son-in-law was the only son-in-law to meet my wife. I think that he was very

lucky to have this opportunity. He got to meet the a main ingredient of his wife's personality. The girls all get some of their personalities from this wonderful woman. Some they get from me. My son-in-laws have a very good chance to get to know me. I'm not really shy at who I am.

We will have two more opportunities for all of us to be together. It is family that gives me they greatest pleasure. Playing with my grandkids makes me feel younger. Talking with my daughters allows me to stay a dad. Being with my son-in-laws allows me to 'hang out' with the guys. That was something I didn't get too many chances to do with 4 daughters.

I can't wait for the next 3 days to start. I get to spend more time with my family. They are wonderful to be with.

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## **A post? Really?**

Sorry for the lack of posts. Time, stress, not feeling like posting- you know, the usual. Still nothing about my life at the moment, but here's a cute video. Merry Christmas!

Oh, I'll start reading some blogs soon too...

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# Christmas Traditions

Celebrating Christmas could include food, family, friends, and gifts. Additional Family traditions could have a mandatory attendance to a Christmas Eve Service.

Our family traditions have been ongoing since the day after Thanksgiving. That was when it was 'allowed' to start thinking about Christmas. We could start to break out the Christmas music, movies and decorations. The stockings were hung up, with care, by Dec 6th. Small gifts, some candy and maybe a bit of fresh fruit would fill the stocking. Usually a Christmas ornament would arrive in the stocking, and it could then be hung on the tree.

For the past few years, most traditions have gone by the wayside. As a family we would still hang up the stockings on 6th, small gifts would be placed there. The Decorations of the past just don't make their appearance. Certain things still show up. We watch many versions of Dickens' 'A Christmas Carol'. There are the many other Christmas movies. And as my children grow up and start their own lives, they get to start their own traditions.

Families expand and contract. Traditions come and go. To share life, love, troubles and sadness are ways to bypass all traditions. In that sharing we find peace and hope.

To you and yours in this season. May you find what you need and have what is required. Merry Christmas.

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# Merry Christmas!

I haven't really felt up to blogging lately (one of those major life change things – NOT one of the good ones and NOT something I'm going to discuss on a blog right now), but I couldn't let the holidays go by without sending good wishes to everyone (anyone?) who still reads my on-hiatus blog. Bear with me, I'll probably be back soon. Here's to hoping 2010 is better than 2009!

Have a very merry Christmas and a Wonderful New Year!

*Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men. Luke 2:14*

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## I had to share this.

I'm stealing this, but I thought it was funny.

I had a flat tire on interstate 80, so I eased my car over to the shoulder of the road, carefully got out of the car and opened the trunk. I took out 2 cardboard men, unfolded them and stood them at the rear of my car facing oncoming traffic. They look so life like you wouldn't believe it!

They are in trench coats exposing their nude bodies to the approaching drivers.

To my surprise, cars start slowing down looking at my lifelike men which made it safer for me to work at the side of the road.

And of course, traffic starts backing up. Everybody is tooting their horns, yelling and waving like crazy. It wasn't long before a state trooper pulls up behind me.

He gets out of his car and starts walking towards me. I could tell he was not a happy camper!

'What's going on here?'

'My car has a flat tire', I said calmly.

'Well, what the hell are those obscene cardboard men doing here by the road?'

I couldn't believe that he didn't know..

So I told him, 'Helloooooo, those are my Emergency Flashers.'

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## Where are you?

Just wondering where you are. Do you realize I'm writing about you? Are you one of my normal readers who hasn't replied? Are you another blogger who hasn't written anything in ages? What is going on? Do you know you are missed?

I'm just sitting here wondering about all the places I tend to visit. I'm also not a good one to make myself known on other sites. I slip in, read a bit, and then slip right out. Sometimes this is known as lurking. So yes, I lurk. There are times that something on other sites will peak my interest and I will respond. I should do it more often.

If I've visited your site in the past, and you visit mine, maybe we can just say hi. This is a place for others to say hi to me. I will try to return the favor.

Have a good holiday season, whatever holiday you celebrate at this time of year.

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## A New Miracle

Since none of the channels I get are bothering to show the glorious original 1947 version this year, I decided to spend my nine dollars on the *Miracle of 34th Street* DVD. There is a treasure trove of added features including a very rare 1955 broadcast on the ["20th Century Fox Hour of Stars"](#) of yet another adaptation. I found it very well done for the limited 45 minute run time. There were of course deletions from the original but there was one scene that was in this adaptation that I saw for the first time on the stage: Mr. Sawyer giving his speech on the evils of myth at Susan's Progressive School.

There were also a few behind the scene stories that were very informative:

- The filming of the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade was the real McCoy filmed on Thanksgiving Day, 1946. This was the second parade given following its hiatus during WWII.
- Edmund Gwenn (who played Kris Kringle and won the Best Supporting Actor Oscar in the original) was Santa at the end of the parade.
- Many of the interior scenes for Macy's Department Store were actually filmed at the flagship store during the holiday season. WOW! Imagine the chaos that must have caused! An identical duplicate was recreated on a Hollywood sound stage in the event that some scenes needed to be redone.
- Both R.H. Macy and the Gimbel Brothers loved the film

much to the delight of the filmmakers.

- The film was released in June, 1947. Fox did not want audiences thinking they were going to a film about the Christmas season in the summer so in its publicity campaign, scenes were carefully selected that would not draw attention to the fact. The risk paid off and "Miracle" became a hit that ran in theatres for an unheard of 6 month stand.

A holiday treasure that teaches everyone that "faith is believing in something when common sense tells us not to." Isn't that what Christmas is all about?