

# Hermes

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Dana College

## SIGHTS AND SOUNDS



by Jeremy Stoll  
Hermes Staff

The "Sights and Sounds of Christmas" festival is one of the biggest most talked about events at Dana. Hundreds of people, relatives, friends, and fans, come to campus for food, entertainment, and a taste of Scandinavian culture. This year the festival was bigger than ever. An estimated 1,800 people visited the campus last weekend, 1,030 of which went to the smorgasbord.

The smorgasbord was an event in itself. By 3:00 p.m. Sunday the cafeteria had gone through 120 lbs. of herring, 250 lbs. of smoked salmon, and 10,000 meatballs. A small group of "scouts" was sent out to locate some more herring, and found it at No Frills here in Blair. The local grocery store just happened to have 800 lbs. Of herring sitting in their back room. The smorgasbord attracted people not only looking for food, but friendly service, and 3 ice sculptures on display in the dining area.

The main concert, which headlined both the Chorale and the Concert Band, brought in 700 people on Saturday, and 1,100 on Sunday. The concert stage was positioned along the west wall, giving audience members a clearer view of the concert by using the width of the gym. Attendance to the concert was actually up 200 people from last year.

Rosemarie Sand, from the Public Relations office, reported hearing that "the weekend gets better each and every year." She also mentioned that the faculty and administration make an effort to do just that. The festival serves to promote Dana and it's many programs, as well as give back to the community within which it resides, not to mention spread holiday cheer the first weekend of every December.



Chorale Photo...taken by Kjaer Kirkegaard

## CHRISTMAS STORYTELLER



Mary Sutherland  
Hermes Staff



In the center of Dana's own forum sits a square wooden platform, a home to one of the most endearing aspects of the Sights and Sounds of Christmas. Adorned with an old wooden chair, table, and shelf, the platform sets the stage for an old fashioned Christmas. A patchwork quilt is thrown over the chair, piles of children's books are strewn atop the shelf, and an antique lantern lay upon the table. Amidst it all sits Professor Emeritus John W. Nielsen. With quivering book in hand, wrapped in a black scarf and a floppy black cap adjusted awkwardly on his head, he sits narrating timeless yarns from Denmark and beyond.

As I watch Dr. Nielsen transfixed in his stories, I am transported to another time and another place, back to my childhood. A time when Christmas still meant magic and storytelling was a nightly occasion. With an infectious tone reminiscent of Paul Harvey and the radio days of old, Dr. Nielsen brought stories, prose, and poetry to life for anyone lucky enough to wander into the Forum.

Dr. Nielsen is no stranger to Dana

College. He graduated from Dana with a BA and went on to earn his BD from Trinity Seminary and D.Phil from Oxford University. Dr. Nielsen served as pastor of St. Peter's Immanuel Lutheran Church in Northfield and Hazelwood, Minnesota. A professor of religion and Director of the Humanities program at Dana, Nielsen retired in 1990. Since his retirement, Nielsen has served as Director of Special Projects of the Danish Immigrant Archive. He has edited several books published by Dana's own Lur Publications, including "Tante Johanne," "A Frame but no Pictures," and "Many Danes, Some Norwegian."

When asked how he started telling stories, Dr. Nielsen smiled and said, "I really don't know." But although the origins of his talent are unknown, his favorite aspects of storytelling are numerous. "My audiences have changed....I have learned to enjoy narrating to students and adults alike." True enough, the majority of those who sat listening to the stories were adults, but the smiles on their faces mirrored even the largest toothless toddler's grin.

"I love discovering the dramatic possibilities in Christmas carols and nursery rhymes." Nielsen, in fact, ended the session by reading a poem he had written long ago for his own children. Reminiscent of a union between Mother Goose and the Brothers Grimm, the poem seemed a fitting ending to a most enjoyable afternoon.



If anyone is wondering how they can help the less fortunate this holiday season, they don't have to look very far. There is a Washington County Food Pantry and a food drive right now.

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HERMES  
STAFF

# FEATURES

## LARP SUGGESTIONS CONSIDERED



Mary Sutherland  
Hermes Staff

It's Thursday morning. Your alarms sounds at 8:00am, and you dizzily roll over and press the snooze button. You are still half-asleep; dreaming about the book you stayed up half the night reading. It's the usual Thursday morning LARP saga. Every Dana student knows the routine because every Dana student is required to take one semester of LARP each year. Most of us read the books and we all take the quizzes. However, if you ask the average student what they think about LARP, the general consensus is negative. Considering the fact that LARP affects everyone's GPA and that it is supposed to be part of our "liberal arts experience", I feel the students' voices should be heard if they feel their needs to be change. So, a few weeks ago first semester LARP students were given a survey about their LARP experience. My hope was that they would fill out this survey honestly. That way, the LARP committee would have a better sense of what the students were feeling. The results of this survey have been tabulated and the students' responses have been recorded. I will be honest. I thought that many of the students wouldn't take the survey seriously, and that I might end up with hundreds of sarcastic suggestions.

I am happy to report that I was wrong! There were only a handful of unusable

surveys and the three hundred others were helpful and considerate! I'd like to personally say thanks to everyone who put time and effort into completing the survey! Your voices have been heard and your comments were all helpful. The issue brought up repeatedly, was the amount of time and work required of students for a class that is only worth one non-transferable credit. The majority of students said they spent at least 3-4 hours a week reading LARP. They also reported that even this amount of time wasn't enough to finish the assignment. "We could have shorter or less books...a week isn't enough time." "If the reading assignments weren't so long, more people would read the assignments." "Students already have so much reading in their other courses." "Less reading would help, especially on books that take more effort to comprehend." The suggestions seem redundant, but the pleas are valid.

Most full-time students have at least 4 or 5 three-credit courses a semester. These courses, according to their credit, are supposed to take the most time and effort. LARP is only a one-credit course, and yet students often have a lower grade in it than they do in their major-oriented courses. "It brings down my entire GPA," said one sophomore. This can be accredited to the fact that most students are not English majors, and that they are unused to the amount of reading comprehension required for LARP.

After reading the surveys, I believe that students do not necessarily object to the concept of LARP, but to the expectations it puts on them. When

asked what they would change about LARP, almost fifty percent of students said they would like smaller or easier reading assignments. In order for this to be accomplished, the number of books read each semester would probably have to be lowered. This is not an unreasonable request. LARP does take an enormous amount of time, especially for students who are slow readers. If one book were eliminated a semester, we would still be exposed to good literature and new ideas, just less of them at one sitting.

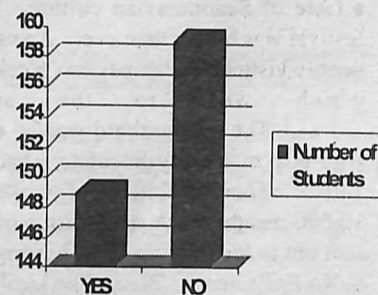
Many students suggested reading more novels in LARP. The author, Stephen King, was brought up repeatedly. On this account, I must explain the committee's stance on book selection.

Although Stephen King does sound like more fun, he is not what LARP is about. The committee has set criteria for picking books to be read in LARP. Jeanmarie Nielsen, who heads the LARP committee, provided me with this statement: "LARP books are selected on the basis of "discussability." We also must include a variety of authors by ethnicity, gender, topic and time period. It's important for students and faculty to be challenged to read something that they might not choose to read for themselves. Of course, not all books are going to be appreciated or relevant to all readers, but the attempt is to provide a wide selection of books for students and faculty to experience."

Students must remember that LARP is a class. It is not meant for leisurely

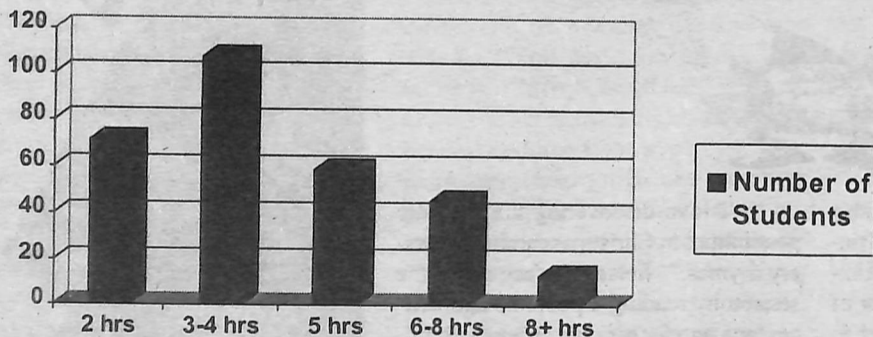
reading. Although the committee tries to choose one "lighter" book for every semester, the books that are chosen are meant to inspire thoughts and ideas, both old and new. Overall, students were candid with their responses. I expect that the LARP committee will honor this honesty and take all the suggestions into account. I believe the students are right to ask for a lighter workload, but that does not mean an easy workload. A middle ground must be found between the committee's ideas and the students'.

When it is, I believe both the committee and the students will appreciate the compromise.

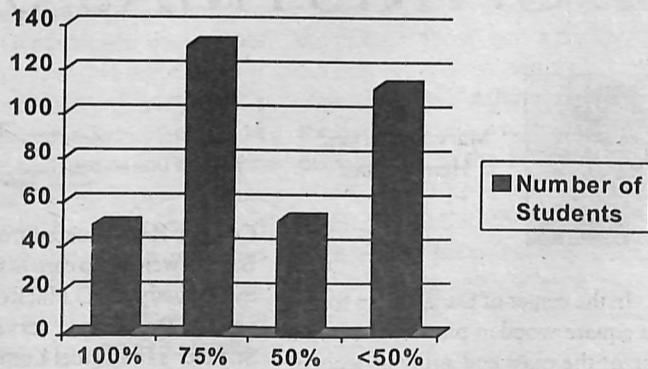


Number of students who said they did or did not use Spark Notes, Cliff Notes, etc.

\*Editor's note: This chart does distort the numbers. Notice it starts at 144 students.

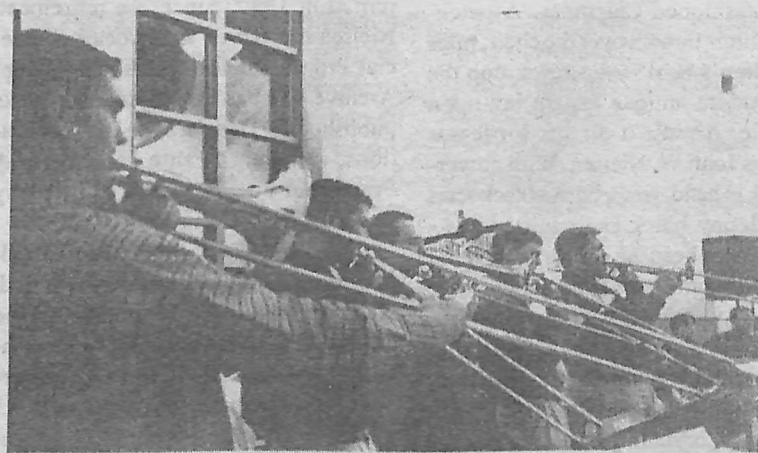


Time Spent Reading



How Often Students Finish the Assignment

Pictures? Stories? Ideas?  
The Hermes needs you!  
Contact: Toni Hoffmeier, Editor-In-Chief



Band Concert  
Photo taken by Brandon Pretz

# OPINION

## COMPUTER SERVICES



Tyler Cooper  
Hermes Staff

Most Dana students have to communicate with professors one way or another through e-mail. A lot of students communicate with friends and family through e-mails, also. Almost every Dana student has had a problem at one time or another with the Dana e-mail system. Some students have had homework assignments lost in cyber world, instead of going to their professors computers and others have sent e-mails that never made it home. One way to fix this problem is to receive and send e-mails from a computer in your dorm room.

For the students who already have computers, and the ones who have hopes of finding one under the Christmas tree, it is about time to sign up for dorm room dial in access. Anyone that would like to receive and send school e-mails from your room should go to the computer lab in DCC and get registered. You can pick up a registration form in the office. Students will need a computer with a modem and Windows 95 or Windows 98. *Students in Holling and Mickelson* have the option for a network access. They will need a network card and Windows 95, 98, 2000, or Macintosh. There is a one time registration fee of \$15, which will increase to \$28 after Feb. 28. Students that have sign up for internet access on their dorm room options must still fill out the registration form in the computer lab.

If you are interested in having internet access from your dorm room go to the computer lab and register or call these numbers; 7359 or 7289.

## RAGING RENTALS: CHRISTMAS VACATION



Toni Hoffmeier  
Editor-in-Chief

If you're looking for a hilarious, pee-in-your-pants kind of Christmas movie, then I have a treat for you. I suggest renting an old, but great movie titled "National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation."

The main character, Clark Griswold, played by Chevy Chase, is planning to have the perfect Christmas in his suburban Chicago home. Little does he know that 25,000 twinkle lights, unwanted family pests (oops, I mean guests) and Christmas Eve dinner can turn the holidays upside down. Clark's wife, children, and parents go on his wild ride in search of the perfect holiday. They all try to persuade Clark to give up at each obstacle, but he refuses.

Some of funniest parts of the movie

are Cousin Eddie's RV antics and when Clark goes sleigh riding while trying out one of his company's products. At one point, Clark fantasizes about his perfect gift for the family, which turns into a "Hawaiian Paradise."

The Griswold's neighbors even find time to annoy the viewers with their anti-Clark cracks and bah humbug attitude.

Aside from the humorous antics, this movie triumphs in the family category. Clark and his wife Ellen, played by Beverly D'Angelo, seem to have the perfect marriage. They love, care, and respect one another and their children Audrey and Rusty, played by Juliette Lewis and Johnny Galecki. They seem to have brought back the same chemistry they had on "National Lampoon's European Vacation."

The movie is rounded out with a hilarious cast of Doris Roberts as Ellen's mother, Julie Louis-Dreyfuss as the pesky neighbor and Randy Quaid as Cousin Eddie.

The movie debuted in 1989 and is directed by Jeremiah S. Chechik.



## SPECIAL THANKS

Thanks to all the Dana students who participated and contributed to the success of the following events for Sights & Sounds 2000: Voices, Dana College Chorale and Concert Band, Santa Lucia, the play "Santa Claus in Love," Student Art Exhibit, Julestuen and the Sunday morning worship service. Also, the Dana Baseball and Football Teams who assisted with parking and also changing out the stage between worship each performace in Borup.

The talent and effort from all of you did not go unnoticed by our guests.

Also, special thanks to several members of Student Senate who came to decorate the campus on Sunday, December 19, and Saturday, December 2.

It was a joy to work with all of you.

--Anne Christophersen,  
Coordinator of Sights and Sounds

## THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION



Krysti Conley  
Hermes Staff

*\*Editors Note: It is important to remind the reader that Krysti tried to find out what the majority of people thought about the presidential election troubles. She didn't go out looking for Bush supporters, these are just answers given to her by the Dana public.*

Tuesday November 7, most of us headed into the polling booths to elect a new president. Whether we voted for Al Gore or George W. Bush, we all thought that the election would be over that night. And it almost was, but no, we still have no president-elect.

And along with the appeals, we have the endless media coverage. So what do you think about all the media coverage? According to Lisa Grasso, junior, "It has been pretty good about showing both sides." But, according to Tanya Dugan, sophomore, "It's boring and overrated." So when asked if they were interested in what's going on, Dugan replied, "No, not at all." But Grasso said, "I'm very interested, but I'm also a very strong republican."

Even with record turnouts in voting

this year, the race for the presidency has been as close as they come. Late, the night of Nov. 7th, it was reported that Bush had won the vote in Florida and therefore, won the presidency. Gore even made a concession call to Bush. But, if you stayed up into the wee hours of the morning, you would know that that was receded and it was deemed 'To Close to Call.' And so, the recounts started. And that led to the appeals. "I think Gore is trying to delay the inevitable," said Grasso when asked if she thought that the appeals were necessary. When asked the same question, Dugan said, "No, take your loss like a man."

So are all these appeals and recounts causing the candidates to lose their popularity among the people? "Yes," stated Dugan simply. Added Grasso, "I think Gore may be cause he's just being a sore loser."

Due to the closeness of the election and all the recounts and appeals, the new president-elect may face scrutiny and other problems when he does finally take office. When asked if they thought this would happen, Dugan said, "Maybe, but he will [face scrutiny] still be the president." Grasso added, "I believe that if Gore receives the office he will because Bush has won-fair and square."

So whether or not you voted for Bush or Gore and whether or not you're interested in the media coverage, we still don't have a president-elect. But maybe this election proved, and is still proving, just how much one vote really does count.



## LOOK FOR THE NEXT HERMES ISSUE FEBRUARY 2ND.

## THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO HELPED WITH THE HERMES THIS SEMESTER.



## Help Wanted

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## DANA COLLEGE HERMES

Hermes is written and published by students of the Dana College Communication-Print Media Department on Fridays during the fall and spring academic year. Content of the paper is developed independently of the student government, faculty and administration and does not reflect the policies of these groups. Opinions expressed in Hermes are not necessarily those of the editors, college or the college community.

Hermes welcomes letters to the editor expressing all original points of view. Hermes reserves the right to edit all letters according to space availability. All letters must include the author's name and address. Under certain circumstances Hermes may respect requests to have names omitted at time of publishing.

Readers are encouraged to submit story ideas and comments by calling (402) 426-7328, or via Hermes, Dana College, Box 1252, Blair NE 68008. Submissions must be received by 4:00 p.m. Wednesday to be printed in the weekly issue.

# SPORTS

## INTERVIEW WITH THE WRESTLING COACH



Jeff Mangus  
Assistant  
Editor

They're new and tough. They are Dana's 2000 wrestling team. With only three seniors in the 24 men on the team, Coach Steve Costanzo has a hungry team. This hasn't stopped them from being ranked 10<sup>th</sup> in the nation in the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA). The Vikings have already wrestled in one dual meet, Dec. 7<sup>th</sup> against Briar Cliff, who has been ranked 14<sup>th</sup> in the NAIA. The Dana men have also competed at four open tournaments, including the tournament hosted by the University of Nebraska at Omaha. Several of these tournaments put them up against Division I and II schools. "It's tough

but the experience is good for them," said Costanzo, who says his team consists of many competitive individuals.

Costanzo expects a good year, assuming the Vikings stay healthy. "Every coach says that," he said, "but it really is true."

The next meet for the Vikings is Saturday Dec. 9<sup>th</sup> at the University of Nebraska at Kearney, which is a Division II school. The team will take a break for Christmas, then resume with the UNO Open on Jan. 6<sup>th</sup>. Costanzo said that he'd like to see everybody turn out for the Jan. 12<sup>th</sup> home dual meet against Huron University wrestlers from South Dakota. The following day, Jan. 13<sup>th</sup>, Costanzo and his team host the Dana Invitational. "Crowd support would be wonderful," he said.

The wrestling tradition at Dana has existed for 40 years. Costanzo said he is committed to keeping it strong.



Dana women shoot great freethrows...Photo by Tricia Nicholson

## INTERVIEW WITH THE BASKETBALL COACH



Melissa Lewis  
Hermes Staff

The Dana men's basketball team is under new leadership this year. Head coach Chris Fear joined the Viking men's basketball team this fall, as well as becoming one of Dana's health professors. He attended the University of Sioux Falls, South Dakota where he majored in health and physical education. Before coming to Dana, Fear was the assistant men's basketball coach at Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Mich.

He also taught several physical education activity classes while he was at Calvin. Between juggling his basketball team and grading papers, Coach Fear is married and has two daughters age 7 and 6 months. He was drawn to Dana because it was closer to home and because he had the opportunity to become a head coach. Several changes have been made since the last season, these include new practice uniforms and a new attitude of the entire program. Fear hopes that this season the men's basketball team will meet their highest potential.

"They are a really talented group," said Fear.

So far, the team is off to a positive start with a record of 6-2.

## MEN'S BASKETBALL DOING WELL



Jon Carlo  
Hermes Staff

The Dana Viking Men's basketball team traveled to AOmaha Saturday to take on the Division II UNO Mavericks. The Vikings (6-3) came up short of a victory losing 86-73. Even though the Vikings did not get the win head coach Chris Fear found many positives to build on, "We played extremely hard all the time, we didn't quit." The Vikes came out with an early 5-0 lead, and after the Mavs called an early timeout, they began to take a commanding lead over Dana. The Vikings narrowed the lead in the

second half at one point to nine. In the second half Dana out scored UNO 45-42.

Michael Johnson continued with his dominant play scoring 25 points and pulling down 14 rebounds. Johnson is averaging just over 22 points and just under 10 boards per game. Jeff Tesmer scored 13 points as well as dishing out 4 assists, and recording 3 steals. Tesmer is averaging 12 points on the year.

After playing two games on the road, Vikings host Nebraska Wesleyan, a team that is consistently at the top of the conference. Fear commented on the upcoming game, "This will be a big test for us. If we want to think about winning the conference, we have to win."

## THE OTHER SIDE OF CAMPUS



Jeremy Stoll  
Hermes Staff

Ah, the holidays. That joyous time of year when families get together to feast and be merry. Mom dresses dad and the kids up in their most uncomfortable dress clothes. Everyone piles into the 10-year old minivan, and sing carols through chattering teeth because the heater is broken. Onward to Grandma's house in a 100 horsepower Chrysler, shivering all the way. Dad slides to a stop near the front door, toppling over grandma's lawn elves. The kids and mom walk up to the front door while dad quickly tries to replace the little plastic elves in their rightful places. New-Age-Zen-health-nut-Buddhist-hypochondriac Aunt Judie answers the door with a plate of seaweed pastries and a big smile. Ah.....relatives.

Little Joey, and Suzie disappear instantly into the house. You, the older, wiser, college-aged child, make bets on what little expensive glass knick-knack they'll break this year. Grandpa sleeps noisily on the recliner, oblivious to Aunt Judie's spoiled children trying to slip his pocket-watch from his pocket without rousing him. An easy enough task when you consider the last time he actually woke up was somewhere around the turn of the century. Dad immediately goes to the kitchen, joining Uncle Max near the turkey. Uncle Max is trying to carve the turkey without breaking eye-contact with the Bronco's game in progress. Dad decides to "help" Uncle Max with the turkey by standing next to him and turning the volume up on the TV when

the kids start giggling to loudly to hear. Why are the kids giggling? Little Joey has managed to eat several Christmas ornaments and part of the tree. Mom takes Little Joey aside to reprimand him while Aunt Judie rattles off statistics about how many children choke to death on common Christmas foods.

The doorbell rings but Grandma has started smiling blankly at the cuckoo clock, and no one else seems to be moving. You decide to take a little initiative. "Merry Christmas!" It's Aunt Chloe and her third husband, and four of her five children from any of her three marriages. You tough out the cheek pinching and the incessant questions about your future. "How's school?" "What's your major?" "Are those earrings?" "Whose kid are you again?" In an effort to escape you go and sit next to grandpa. A badly scratched "Frank Sinatra's Christmas" record plays on the phonograph. As you sit there you begin to think the old guy's got it figured out. He sleeps over the holidays so he isn't forced to bond with all of the relatives, and he sleeps throughout the rest of the year so he doesn't have to think about bonding with relatives over the summer. You roll over for a nap.

Finally, dinner is ready and everyone gathers around the table. This year, however, you have been upgraded to the adult table. You sit down between grandma, who won't stop offering you her "special casserole", and Aunt Chloe's third husband. You can't remember his name so instead you turn to grandma and grudgingly accept her casserole. As soon as the food has been passed around and everyone is salivating, grandpa wakes up to say grace. Somehow he moved from the recliner to the table, though no one took

notice. With grace said Uncle Max thinks it's time to mention all of the medical trauma his bowels have gone through in the last year. All of a sudden the potatoes and gravy don't sound so appetizing. If that's not enough Uncle Max's confession has reminded dad of a joke he heard about two nurses and a badger. The turkey has lost its appeal by now. However, with the male portion of conversation exhausted the women start to talk about this or that female celebrity that is "getting a little heavy around the middle". You try to watch the football game through the kitchen door and eat without being bothered.

Suddenly there is uproarious laughter from the kiddies table in the adjacent room. Little Joey has managed to stuff an entire devilled egg up one nostril. You suddenly realize you miss sitting at the kiddie table. Mom retreats to extract the egg, grandpa passes out, Uncle what's-his-name starts talking about the stock market while everyone else tries to nod and smile intelligently. (Except dad, who's too busy watching the game to even pretend he cares.) The Aunt's exchange child-bragging-rights and dinner is proclaimed over.

Presents. Shiny, colorfully wrapped gifts with big bows and little notes attached that serve to spread Christmas cheer. "To grandpa...hope it fits." "For Judie's kids...we're too cheap to buy a present for each one." "Mom." It's a known fact that the size of Christmas presents are inversely proportional to the

age of the receiver. Therefore Little Joey immediately rips into a box the size of a refrigerator, and grandpa (now asleep in the recliner again) gets a package about the size of a AAA battery. You look jealously at the children as they collect their own weight in represents, and look disdainfully at the bedpan sized Von Maur box in your lap. It's probably another tie. Dad forces a smile as he pulls yet another pair of wool socks from his wrapping and exclaims with glee. "More socks." At least grandma is consistent.

There's always an issue at holiday get-togethers; "When is a polite point to leave?" Well, if your family is like mine, here are some signs.

1. The kids are passed out with hard candy stuck in their hair.
2. Dad and Uncle Max have had way too much eggnog and are frantically searching for the Santa Claus suit. No one knows why.
3. Aunt Judie has abandoned her health-kick-of-the-month and is stuffing Christmas cookies into her mouth while venting to your mother.
4. Your mother is asleep at the kitchen table.
5. You're very, very, very, very, very bored.

Afterwards everyone goes home to take back their gifts, get their refunds, and buy something they actually want. But remember, the holidays don't last long, and later in life you might miss these family gatherings. But I doubt it.