

Ambrose News

Issue 73 December 2015

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A Christmas Story

What do you do when a 50+ year Holiday tradition is practically ripped from your heart in a matter of minutes? That's the dilemma our family faced when our treasured handmade Christmas card collection was stolen during a burglary in our home this past summer. But it's Christmastime and miracles are supposed to happen, right? I'll share our "small miracle" in a moment.

In 1958, my father started a tradition of creating homemade Christmas cards. I think part of the tradition may have been borne out of necessity as my parents used surplus school supplies to craft their early cards. I picked up the tradition 33 years ago when my parents moved on to more conventional store made cards. I thought it would be fun to carry on the tradition but was determined to find a simpler method than the hand stencils my Dad cut out for doing a silk screen painted card. Luckily, technology had advanced and there was now a photo emulsion process whereby you bake the intended images onto the silk screen and wash off the remnants leaving a clean positive for painting the cards through the screen.

Our first card was a simple red heart with a gold string hanging from a single branch of a Christmas tree. It symbolized my wife's and my first Christmas as a married couple and had the simple caption, "Christmas is Love."

Over the years, our cards have come to symbolize many of the major and minor milestones in our family's life. From the birth of our two boys, to the celebration of my wife's successful victory over cancer; from vacations to anniversaries and more. When my father passed away in 2007, I choose to honor him on our card using a Norman Rockwell sketch of a father reading a book to his child sitting on his lap. In retirement, my father became known as "The Storyteller of Rancho Bernardo". A retired school principal, he volunteered his time telling stories to children at schools and churches. The card was a fitting tribute to the man who started our tradition. It is one of my favorites in our collection.

Five months ago that collection was taken from us. I was heartbroken to say the least. This brings me to our "small miracle."

My sister recently came across my Mom's collection of our Christmas cards. My Mom passed away in 2010 and these cards were buried in her stuff. It was no surprise that my mother had kept them for she had previously sent me her entire collection of my father's cards which we framed and proudly display in our home. My sister finding ours was our first blessing. But when she sent them to us with her name and mine as recipients via overnight mail for safekeeping, a damaged mailing label and a misguided driver caused that precious cargo to be delivered to a stranger in nearby Pittsburg, CA. The stranger happened to have the same name as my sister. We seemed doomed to never seeing those cards again. Turns out this stranger was both our Guardian Angel and Good Samaritan for she looked me up from the return address and personally delivered the cards back to us a week later. A whole new chapter has been added to our tradition this year. Happy Holidays to All!

Best Regards,

Brian

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December 2015

Across

- 1 Old-hat
- 6 "Give it ___!"
- 9 Ottoman governor
- 12 Ski run
- 13 Panache
- 14 Bud holder
- 15 Moving as fast as one can
- 17 Kind of exam
- 18 Thin
- 19 Etna output
- 20 Put together
- 21 Title of respect
- 22 Skilled
- 23 Dwell
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- 27 Japanese admiral
- 30 Gave up
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- 55 Rara ___ (Rare bird)
- 56 Moving to contribute
- 58 Mel's Ransom costar
- 59 Semitic deity
- 60 Circular
- 61 Unit of energy
- 62 Holiday drink
- 63 Leg joints

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- 7 Apple variety
- 8 Can. province
- 9 Move to an unwelcomed spot
- 10 Biblical birthright seller
- 11 Cry out
- 13 And others, for short
- 14 Empty
- 16 Law degrees
- 20 Narrow inlet
- 22 Slave girl of opera
- 23 ___ carotene
- 24 Does some tailoring
- 26 Pouches
- 28 Swiped
- 29 Possesses
- 30 Mantle
- 31 Oklahoma city
- 32 Move until movement becomes impossible
- 33 Chap
- 34 Get moving
- 36 Bound
- 37 Mouth part
- 42 Craving
- 43 Envelope part
- 45 The good life
- 47 Harp (It.)
- 48 Bicker
- 49 Fr. river
- 50 Card game holdings
- 51 Stallion's mate
- 52 Affirm
- 53 Mississippi feeder
- 54 Soon, to a bard
- 56 News channel
- 57 Annoy

Down

- 1 Sacred hymn
- 2 Modify
- 3 Lounges
- 4 Gyrate
- 5 Unagi, at a sushi bar
- 6 Still moving about

More puzzles at www.bambrose.com

[Click here for this month's puzzle solution](#)

For more information about Ambrose Financial, visit www.bambrose.com, email Brian directly at brian@bambrose.com or call him at (925) 906-4615.

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Gingerbread Men Cookies

Prep Time: 20 min

Cook Time: 10 min

Ready In: 4hrs 30 min

Ingredients

- 3 cups flour
- 2 teaspoons Ground McCormick Ginger
- 1 teaspoon Ground McCormick Cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- ¼ teaspoon Ground McCormick Nutmeg
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¾ cup butter, softened
- ¾ cup firmly packed brown sugar
- ½ cup molasses
- 1 egg
- 1 teaspoon McCormick Pure Vanilla Extract



Directions

1. Mix flour, ginger, cinnamon, baking soda, nutmeg and salt in a large bowl. Beat butter and brown sugar in a large bowl with an electric mixer on medium speed until light and fluffy. Add molasses, egg and vanilla; beat well. Gradually beat in flour mixture on low speed until well mixed. Press dough into a thick flat disk. Wrap in plastic wrap. Refrigerate 4 hours overnight.
2. Preheat oven to 350°F. Roll out dough to ¼ inch thickness on lightly floured work surface. Cut into gingerbread men shapes with 5-inch cookie cutter. Place 1 inch apart on ungreased baking sheets.
3. Bake 8 to 10 minutes or until edges of cookies are set and just begin to brown. Cool on baking sheets 1 to 2 minutes. Remove to wire racks; cool completely. Decorate cooled cookies as desired. Store cookies in airtight container up to 5 days.

Do you have a favorite recipe you'd like shared in our newsletter? Each month, we'll choose a reader's recipe and share it here! Send your recipe to Dedee at dedee@bambrose.com See more recipes at www.bambrose.com

These Gingerbread Men Cookies are as cute as can be. If desired, decorate with raisins, currants or cinnamon red hot candies for eyes and buttons.

Come check out our website at www.bambrose.com

"Run, run, as fast as you can, you can't catch me, I'm the Gingerbread Man!" The Gingerbread Man first appeared in the court of Queen Elizabeth I, who presented her important guests with gingerbread likenesses of themselves. The gingerbread men were lavishly decorated with gold leafing and other outlandish touches.



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This Month In History ...

December 2015

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 1955 – Rosa Parks is arrested for refusing to give up her seat to a white male on a bus.	2	3	4	5 1933 – The 18th Amendment (Prohibition), which had outlawed alcoholic beverages in the U.S. for 14 years, is repealed.
6	7	8	9	10 1906 – President Theodore Roosevelt wins the Nobel Peace Prize, becoming the first American to win a Nobel Prize of any kind.	11	12
13 1913 – The Mona Lisa, which was stolen from the Louvre Museum in France, is returned.	14	15	16	17 1903 – The Wright Brothers achieve the first powered, controlled airplane flight, after three years of experimentation.	18	19 1972 - The last manned lunar flight, Apollo 17, returns to Earth.
20	21 1913 – Arthur Wayne's Word Cross, the first crossword puzzle (with 32 clues) is printed and published in New York World.	22	23	24 1818 – Franz Gruber of Oberndorf, Germany, composes the music for Silent Night.	25 	26 1982 – The Man of the Year in TIME magazine is the computer.
27	28 1981 – Elizabeth Jordan Carr, the first American test-tube baby, is born in Norfolk, VA.	29	30	31	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; width: fit-content; margin: 0 auto;"> <p><i>Come visit us at</i> www.bambrose.com!</p> </div>	

Holiday Safety Checklist

A fire on any day seems bad, but a fire during the holidays seems to be the worst. Here are some tips to help keep your holidays the safe and joyous time they should be.

The Tree

- If you buy an artificial tree, make sure it's fire-retardant.
- If you buy a fresh tree, have the vendor make a fresh cut an inch from the bottom; this will help the tree drink (thus not becoming a dry fire hazard!).
- Don't buy a tree that is dry and dropping needles. To check for freshness, loosely grip the end of the branch and pull your hand over it. Only a few needles should fall off.
- Make sure your tree stand holds 1 gallon of water, check it daily, and refill as needed.
- If your tree seems wobbly, center it in the stand more securely and redo the bolts or screws. If your tree stand isn't strong enough, buy a larger, stronger one.
- Keep your tree at least three feet from furnaces, radiators, and fireplaces. Try to position it near an outlet so the cords aren't running long distances. Don't place the tree where it can block exits.
- Dispose of real trees when they start to drop needles- don't leave it in your house or garage!

The Lights

- Use only UL-approved lights (mini-lights are the safest, producing the least amount of heat).
- Link no more than 3 strands together.
- Use only indoor lights indoors and only outdoor lights outdoors.
- Check each strand for broken or cracked sockets, loose connections, or frayed wires. If the strand is damaged- throw it away!
- Do not overload wall outlets or extension cords- use a power strip.
- If you're not using the "add-on" socket on a string of lights, fill it with a "child-proof" tab.
- Make sure all outdoor electrical connections are above the ground out of the puddles & snow.
- If tree is metallic, do not use strings of electrical lights!
- Make sure outdoor trees hung with lights are not touching power lines.
- Turn off the lights when you go to sleep or if you leave your home.

Candles

- All candles should be placed in sturdy containers approved for candles
- Candles should be a safe distance from combustibles.
- Make sure you extinguish all candles before you go to bed.

Decorations

- Old decorations that may contain lead (such as old tinsel & icicles), should be discarded.
- Natural decorations (holly berries, mistletoe...) should be kept out of reach of children.
- Breakable ornaments should be placed at the top of the tress, away from pets and children.

Fireplace

- All decorations should be a safe distance away.
- Make sure the flue is open before starting a fire.
- Exercise caution when using "fire salts" which create colored flames.
- Do NOT burn wrapping paper or evergreen boughs. Flash fires could result from the intense burning & jumping

General

- Make sure all your smoke detectors have fresh batteries.
- You should have at least one carbon monoxide detector installed.
- Have an operable fire extinguisher readily available

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