



To All... PEACE



—Charles Thompson, Art Editor

First Prize Prose — A Christmas Fairy Tale

Erika Cathcart, '59

Once upon a time, as all fairy tales begin, there was a beautiful forest with large, tall evergreen trees. Their long branches danced in the frosty wind as they held their heads proudly above the straggly oak and elm trees, for they were the most beautiful denizens of the forest.

There was one evergreen tree that wasn't as beautiful, or as tall, as the others. It was small and rather bent and its branches didn't grow as evenly as its forest brothers. They never bothered to whisper with it because it was so homely. As the days hastened on toward Christmas, a tense feeling hung over the whole forest. Every-

one's greatest wish was to be decorated as the traditional Christmas tree.

About a week before this great day, people began to arrive in the forest. They brought axes and sleds with them, and rosy-checked children laughed and called to each other as they watched their breath form frost in the dry morning air.

Each tree held its breath as it watched for someone to pick it out as the one and only tree for his home.

One by one they were carried out of the forest until at last there were only two trees left. One was a very old and wise tree, much too large for a living room. The other

was the small tree whom no one cared to take because it just wasn't beautiful. As darkness fell the little tree began to cry, softly, so that no one would hear. It was so lonely and depressed, because it too wanted to go into a bright and cheerful home and be some child's own special tree.

That night, while the tree slept, it began to snow. The snow fell so lightly that the littlest tree didn't even feel it on his branches. As he slept he dreamed of all the wishes that he knew would never come true, and as he dreamed he wept large silver tears that ran down his branches and formed icicles at the tips.

All the next day it snowed, but by evening the clouds had cleared. The stars—first one, then another—turned on their lights to brighten the way for some lonely traveler.

(Cont'd on page 2, col. 4)

First Prize Essay — Safe and Sane Christmas

George Phillips, '59

At 6:30 on Christmas Eve, a couple of years ago, the Christmas tree in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Somers Fisher of Hyndman, Pa., suddenly burst into flames.

Three hours later the little town was a wreck. The entire business district—bank, post office, twelve stores—was burned out, and 23 homes and apartments lay in smoking ruins. Mr. Fisher and three others were in a hospital in critical condition. Mrs. Fisher was dead.

Few people realize that the Christmas tree can be one of the most flammable objects known. It is filled with pitch and resin. Once

(Cont'd on page 4, Col. 3)

First Prize Poetry — Does This Child Know?

Carolyn Skipski, '59

He lay in a manger
On which there was nothing to rest
His head,

A little smiling child
In a stiff unruly bed.
His father at the window,
His mother at his head,
They looked upon their smiling
child,

Knowing not what lies ahead.
DOES THIS CHILD KNOW the
life He'll lead

Of suffering, pain, torture and
grief?

DOES THIS CHILD KNOW how
things will end,
That at thirty He'll die for man-
kind's sins?

DOES THIS CHILD KNOW how
He'll be shamed
When He should have much glory
and fame,

How He'll be tortured, scorned and
blamed,
While his so-called friends will
hide in shame?

DOES THIS CHILD KNOW at His
last dinner
He'll be dragged away, convicted
a sinner?

Then at a pillar with hands tied up
tight
They will mock Him and wipe
Him till, oh! what a sight—

The blood will gush out of His
body and head—
Though you look in His eyes not a
tear does He shed.

Then out of the crowd will come a
soldier in red
With a crown of thorns for His
noble head,

With this cross on His back He'll
be dragged through the street
To the top of the mountain, fol-
lowed by women that weep,
Nailed to the cross by His feet and
His arms

Between two thieves as if He'd done
harm.

DOES THIS CHILD KNOW the
ending he will see?

Why, oh why, did it ever have to
be?

Yes, The Little Smiling Child, he
knows what lies ahead,

But when we rejoice on Christmas,
do we ever think how it did
end?

Special Award Poetry Christmas Prayer For Americans

Carol Wrobbel, '58

Within his troubled heart
He wonders, why the battles
He endures without cause.
Does color, race, and creed
Make him fight for every need?
Or should he be equal,
Not apart from you and me?
Let him enjoy creation,
Don't push him down so deep.
Oh, Lord, who made his nature,
Take care of his great need.



FIRST PRIZE SKETCH —Earl Sheppard, '59

The Wonderful Three

Sally Megonigal, '59

Christmas means so much to me,
Because I possess The Wonderful Three;

My eyes to see the snow so white,
The beautiful flame of a candle light;

My lips to speak of stories old,
The Christ Child's birth on one night cold;

My ears to hear the carols sweet,
As they are sung throughout the street.

These gifts I know are treasures rare,
For God gave them with His loving care.

Yet at Christmas when other children run and shout,
That Santa has come and been about,

I think of the gift God gave to me,
The most glorious gift of The Wonderful Three.

Second Prize Prose—Christmas Magic

Peggy Collingwood, '58

It was Christmas Eve. The night was cold, and the air thick with falling snow. The enveloping whiteness was broken only by the dark, shabby figure of a small boy trudging wearily on his way. It was a long way from the outskirts of town to the market, especially for a small boy to travel, but Robin knew that he and his mother would have no Christmas dinner if he did not go.

Once he reached the market, Robin did not take much time there, for there was so little he could buy. Soon he stepped into the bitter night again, carrying a small package.

He passed a church on his return trip, and a small white form, huddled at the bottom of the broad stairs, caught his eye. As he drew closer, he saw that it was a boy, no older than himself, who sat there silently in the snow. The child wore only a white robe, and his poor feet were bare, but his pale face was the most beautiful Robin had ever seen.

At this moment the church doors opened, and streams of people poured down the steps and into the street, laughing and talking. Not one of them noticed the two children there.

The lad sat looking after them with a face so full of sadness that

FAIRY TALE

(Continued from page 1)

The little tree opened its eyes and looked about. It had never seen anything like this before. Everything was white. Its branches were white. Why, it was beautiful! And surely it was. Above its head was a crown of stars. The largest star's light made the icicles sparkle and dance. The wind made them tinkle as tiny bells in the night, and the snow which had fallen on it was an added touch of splendor.

And there, beneath its snow-laden branches, seeking shelter from the cold, were all the forest animals. They were the children of the forest who needed this little tree in order to live and who relished the warmth it radiated. For the simple animals had come to know that it isn't outer beauty which rules the world, but inner beauty and love which enhance it and make it a world in which a human being, as well as a tree or a forest animal, would want to live.



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I Knew Who It Was

Shirley Burns, '58

'Twas two nights before Christmas and oh, how I sighed, As I watched the people scurry on by. Too busy were they to notice me for I was little and they were so big.

But I didn't care, for I had only one thought

Which was to see the man possessed in my heart.

They pushed me and shoved me and, before I knew, I was standing before the man I pursued.

His suit was so red and his beard so white,

His eyes were so warm and his voice was just right.

And as I sat upon his knee, I whispered, "Daddy, you can't fool me."

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SMOKE SIGNAL

Vol. 8, No. 3 December 20, 1957

EDITORS-IN-CHIEF

Harris Fischer and Sidney Clark

LITERARY EDITORS

Emilia Martinez and Linda Boyer

(Literary Staff organized and judged the 1957 Christmas literary and art contest. Some of the best entries are published in this issue. The Conrad Parent-Teachers Association co-sponsored this year's contest and provided \$30.00 in prize money.)

Star of the East

Martin Price, '59

Star of the East, that long ago
Brought the wise men on their way
Where angels knelt and were singing low,
Showed where the Child of Bethlehem lay.
Above the Jerusalem hill afar
Light still shines from the Eastern Star.
Star of the East, the night was dreary,
When with your warm and tender grace,

You shone from Heaven to bring your cheer
To earth's most lonely, darkest place.
Now by your light we all may see
That ever there's hope and charity.
Star of the East! Show the way
With your wisdom undefiled
That we may in that manger lay
Our own gifts for the Child;
And bring our hearts and offer them
Unto the King of Bethlehem.



—Mary Lou Simpson, '60

Second Prize Essay Keep Christ In Christmas

Linda Churn '60

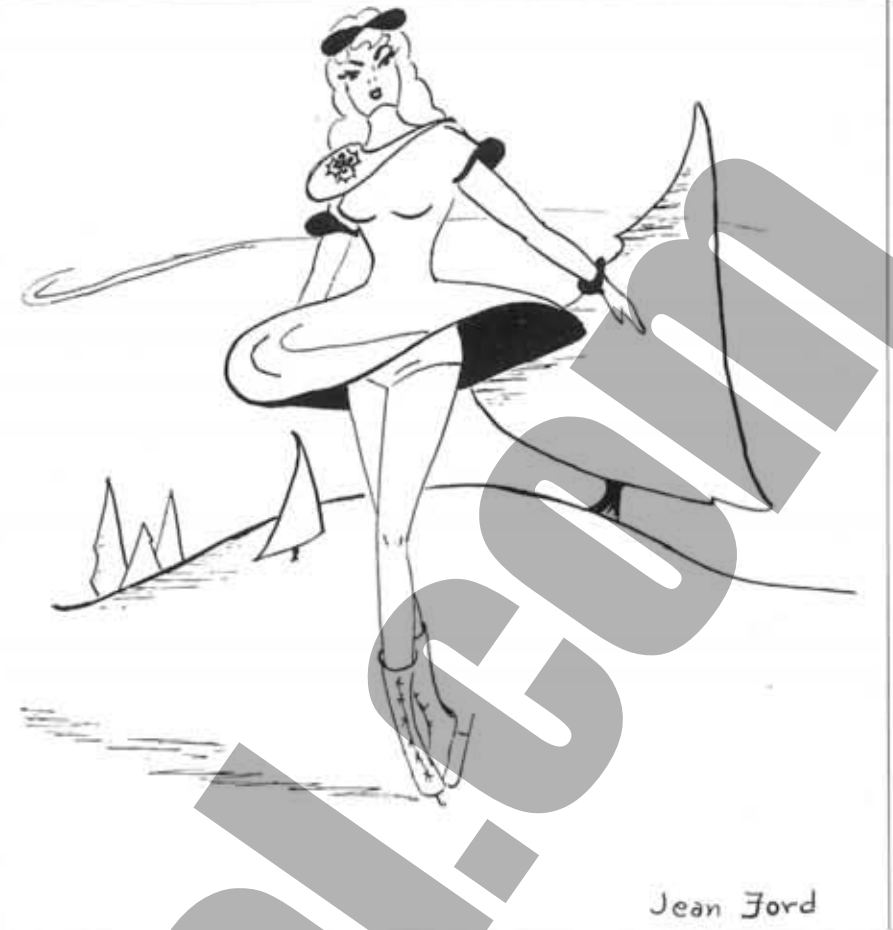
Christmas has always been considered a time of joy. But today too many of us forget the true meaning of Christmas and get involved in the giving and receiving of presents. We think of friends and loved ones who are so hard to shop for. Maybe there is something in the store, but is that what they really need? What about some token of love—what about love itself. . . .
and friendship
and understanding
and consideration
and a helping hand
and a smile
and a prayer?

You can't buy these in any store but these are the very things people need. We all need them. Let's not permit the crowds and the rush to crowd Christmas out of our hearts.

Christmas means much to those who know the ONE whose birthday it is. The old message, "For unto to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour who is Christ the Lord," is still the heart of Christmas.

Those who truly know him will find the joy of Christmas abiding with them daily and forever.

THE RESPONSIBILITY TO PUT CHRIST INTO CHRISTMAS LIES WITH THOSE WHO ARE REALLY CHRISTIANS IN ACTIONS AND DEEDS AS WELL AS NAME.



Jean Ford

Second Prize Poetry— The True Christmas

Sue Wilson, '59

Under the bright and beaming star
That shown in Bethlehem afar,
The Gift of the very first Christmastide
Was given the world—far and wide.

In deep adoration, many men came
Bowing humbly at the sound of
His Name;
Gifts they offered and praises they sang,
While bells in the distance joyfully rang.

That Christmas of many a by-gone day
Is far different from one of today;
Noise and commotion are all you hear
As Christmas approaches again this year.

Hustle, bustle, worry and woe

As quickly, so quickly the money does go;
Hurry and scurry for last minute things,
While the song of the carolers constantly rings.

But something important's been lost in the rush,
The part of each Christmas said in a hush;
Yes, the prayer of thanksgiving for the Christ so dear
Should be first in our hearts throughout the year.

Oh how we've strayed from the true Christmastide
By the crave for festivity with which we abide;
If only this worry and fuss could cease,
Christmas would be a time of great peace.

The Nativity

Lorna Hoehn, '59

The Virgin Mary was great with child,
Complained of nothing all the while,
Of the journey she took so long and hard,
Under God's vigilant and watchful guard.

Tired and hungry they reached an inn;
The keeper shouted from within,
"There is no room for you two here,
Nor have other inns which are quite near."

Joseph knocked on the door again,
The keeper said that they could spend
The rest of the night in his stable warm,
Away from the cold and other harm.

Mary was bedded down for night,
By Joseph, knowing of her plight;
The will of God to be fulfilled,
The night came on, cold and still.

While on the mountains near Bethlehem,
Their flocks of sheep the shepherds tend,
The heavens above opened wide to sing,

An angel told them of God's blessing.
The Star in the East their guide to be,
The Christ, the shepherds came to see,
Bringing their gifts of lambs and fur,
While Wise Men brought Him gold and myrrh.

In the warmth of the stable round,
There just resting on the ground,
In His bed, a manger of hay,
Our Lord, the Saviour Jesus, lay.

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A Thought For Christmas

Jim Davis, '58

Finer than the precious gem
Was the star that told Thy birth.
Son of God, to rescue them,
Was with mankind, here on earth.

Choirs angelic sang acclaim!
Shepherds came to honor Thee,
Son of Mary, Lord by name,
To worship Thee on bended knee.

Sages traveled from afar,
Gave their gifts and knelt to pray.
Led there only by Thy star,
Thus they started Christmas Day.

Strictly we this day retain,
To its meaning we are blind.
Thoughts of giving do remain,
Sacred thoughts are left behind.

If clothed gaily, proudly fed,
In wicked self-esteem we spin.
Remind us of Thy manger bed
And Thy lowly stable inn.

Help us keep Thy holy day,
In remembrance of Thy birth,
Free from hate and greed, I pray,
Mindful of its sacred worth.



—Ella de Courcelle, '58

Is There a Santa Claus? Death of a Snowflake

Betty Lue Fisher, '60

Has a child ever come to you
With frowns and tearful eyes?
Has he ever lifted his sobbing head
And asked, "Why all those lies?"

He wants to know why Santa Claus
Is not the man you said.
He'll ask you why you told him:
"He comes when you go to bed."

When he lifts those sad, blue eyes,
You'll hear him softly say,
"The big kids said, 'There is no
Santa!'"

It's not the way you say."

You lift him to your knee
And rock him to and fro,
Trying to think of a way to say
The things he doesn't know.

You sit and wait remembering
How your Daddy would carefully
say
Things that would sooth and not
hurt you
In any unnecessary way.

You finally find the words
To say into his ears
Something to make him understand
And to wipe away those tears.

"Santa is a laughing spirit
With smiles and cheerful eyes.
He brings gifts and lots of goodies
To all good girls and guys."

"Gramma, Grampa, Sis and Brother
Are all Santas to you.
Anyone who gives a gift
Is a Santa, it is true."

"You can be a Santa Claus,
Just love and want to give,
And when you're a little older
You'll find that's the way to live."

His questions have been answered
As well as you could do.

And now his mind is satisfied
And with love is filled anew.

His sleepy eyes begin to close,
And you watch his nodding head.
His trusting arms enfold you
As you take him off to bed.

A flake of snow comes floating,
Comes floating near the ground;
I watch it ever closely,
Until it forms a mound.

It looks so soft and pretty,
So weak and faint mid strife;
And when I put my hands upon it,
I take away its life.

SAFE CHRISTMAS

(Continued from page 1)

a fire is ignited it is almost impossible to extinguish it until it burns out almost by itself.

It takes little to turn the tree into a blazing torch. A tiny spark, or a careless smoker standing too close to a tree, or even an electric bulb resting against a branch can do the trick.

To avoid an overly warm Christmas at your house here are a few helpful hints:

1. Keep the tree outside until a few days before Christmas. When you bring it in, keep it moist by cutting the trunk on a slant and putting it in a bucket of wet sand.
2. Never use lighted candles near the tree.
3. Check the electric wiring for worn spots and loose connections. Don't overload the circuits and make sure that none of the bulbs are touching the branches.
4. Turn off the tree lights when you leave the house or go to bed.
5. Remove all gift wrappings from around the tree. Use only fireproof decorations—never cotton or paper.
6. And finally, get rid of the tree by New Year's Day.

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INSIDE THE TEPEE

by Ashley & Clark

'Twas the night before Christmas
and all through the school,
—Of course it's silent,
no one's there, you fool!
The stockings were hung by the
squawk box with care,
In hopes that Bill Stevens soon
would be there

All you last-minute Christmas
shoppers going downtown this
week are urged to be extremely
careful driving east or west on
Market St. because Market St. runs
north and south.

Anyone finding a foot in his
Christmas stocking should go back
to bed and try it all over again.

A Smoke Signal Special:

DEAR SANTA

Please bring Miss Miller a pair
of galoshes, a dictionary, and a
pair of bowling shoes

. . . Mr. Jeffrey could use some
Drano for his swamp pond

. . . Miss Snyder needs a sponsor
so that she can fight with Ray
Grehawick on TV

. . . the boys' gym classes would
appreciate some new mud for the
locker room . . . the old stuff is
getting awfully dirty

Please send, with the Sock and
Buskin Club's apologies, a foot
plaster to the lady whose foot
Wayne Ashley crushed with his
auditorium seat. It seems that
when he sat down with the rest of
our group in the Newark High
auditorium to watch their production
of "Time Out for Ginger", the
lady behind him had her foot in
his still-folded seat and it caught

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her on a sensitive tendon. OUCH!
. . . please bring the whole stu-
dent body ten feet of snow. They
could use a longer vacation . . .
. . . and, last of all, be SURE
to bring that little boy his Mayo!!

Poems, with apologies to the
literary world:

Jingle Bells—a tone poem

Jingle bells, jingle bells,
jingle, jingle, jingle,
The happy sound of Christmas,
and merry old Kris Kringle.
Jingle bells, jingle bells,
jangle, jangle, jangle,
Christmas is a happy time,
but shopping is a wrangle.
Ed. Note: Don't read this—
it's snow good.

SNOW

Snow is falling,

Snow is laying,

Little old men

are coming

and shoveling.

Snow is melting,

Snow is melting,

Little boys will catch cold

in the slush.

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