

MY VOICE

Ye olde Yuletide

CARA DALLENBACH
Staff Writer

Oh boy, here comes winter time again. Time for sleigh rides, and family, and cookies, and fun! Cue the laughter of little children as they skip around the Christmas tree. Get out the old snowflake patterned sweaters. "Who wants to hold hands with grandma as the family sits amongst an open fire and sings timeless Christmas carols?" I do, I do!

Ah yes, aren't the holidays just simply jolly? Well, except for the fact that this heightened sense of winter-time only exists in the eyes of small children and in every Gap commercial. For our age and up, Christmas isn't as magical, and for sarcastic people like me, it is simply laughable, especially while looking back on childhood memories.

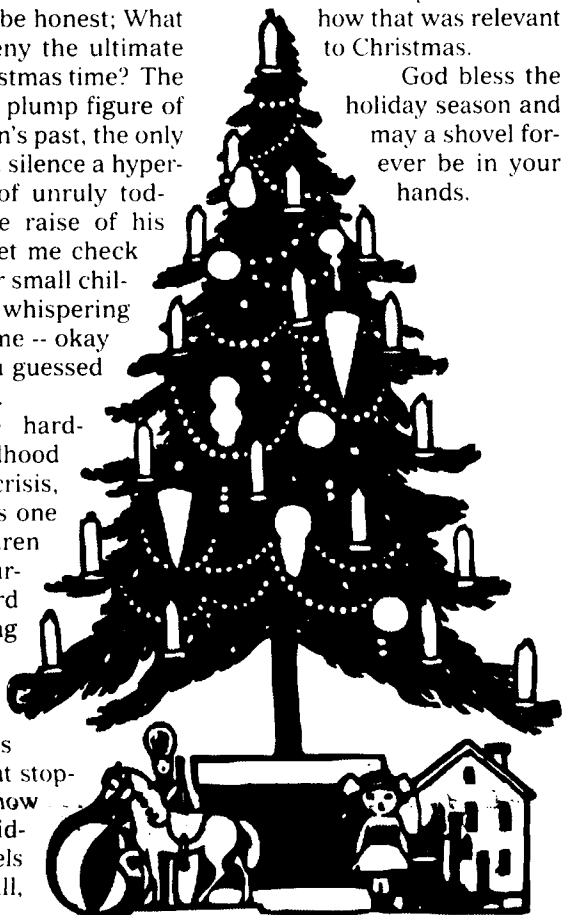
When you are a child, everything seems so whimsical and enhanced to the umpteenth degree, and December is no exception. Let's be honest; What child could deny the ultimate reward of Christmas time? The one pleasantly plump figure of every American's past, the only man that could silence a hyperactive crowd of unruly toddlers with one raise of his candy cane. Let me check the premise for small children before whispering this sacred name -- okay it's clear -- you guessed it, Santa Claus.

Despite the hardships of childhood Christmas crisis, there is always one way for children to let loose during the hard times by playing in endless mounds of snow for extensive periods of time without stopping. -- Snow meant sled riding, snow angels and most of all,

it meant freedom. It was just you, the snow, your snow suit, and the occasional wedgie -- anything was possible. Yet, while the children clap and cheer as blizzards accumulate outside, their parents sulk alone in the garage, staring lifelessly at the shovel, wondering where the past 10 years of their lives has gone and why they never moved to California. Their pathetic life-assessment is quickly interrupted as a line of whizzing snowballs passes their face and perpetual requests for carrots. Meanwhile they both know that the quaint snowman in their front yard will be melted and or altered into a vulgar sex position by dinner time.

Christmas time brings with it some humorous perspectives but it's not all a big joke. It's a time for love and joy, so get out there and do some community service or perhaps roast a chest nut on an open fire. Let me know how that goes because I have always wondered how that was relevant to Christmas.

God bless the holiday season and may a shovel forever be in your hands.



MY VOICE

Being an athiest during the holidays

Anyone who watches Bill O'Reilly around this time of year has heard of this "War on Christmas." This preposterous notion of a "war" implies that somehow, a group of people (in this case, atheists) has somehow joined together in an army to attack a holiday.

Think about that. According to Bill O'Reilly, there is a group of people in America who don't have any kind of pope or bishops and don't meet at any kind of church or synagogue -- or even a day of the week when they're all supposed to come together and congregate -- you get the comparison yet? Bill O'Reilly is purporting that this group of people, whom he reg-

ularly bashes on his show, is somehow taking on the biggest group of people in the world and winning.

Now, in the interest of fairness, I should mention that I am both an atheist and consider myself fairly liberal. I take issue with Mr. O'Reilly not because of either of these reasons, but because I am devoutly anti-idiot.

Just speaking from personal experience, most of the atheists I've met don't have some evil

vendetta against people who practice a religion; it just merely isn't something we believe in. It doesn't offend me to have someone say "Merry Christmas" to me at the end of a conversation, just like it shouldn't offend a Christian to have a Jew wish him or her "Happy Chanukah."

Mr. O'Reilly is simply blowing the actions of a tiny minority way out of proportion. Unlike religion, atheism does not have a central voice that speaks for all



MIKE O. WEHRER
news editor

WHAT WE NOW KNOW ABOUT TIGER WOODS' ACCIDENT:



MY VOICE

My childhood basketball idol

I stared in disbelief at the red breaking news box and the words scrolling across ESPN's ticker as I sat in my favorite seat on the couch over Thanksgiving break. There was just no way that my childhood basketball idol and favorite NBA player, Allen Iverson, decided to retire at the age of 34.

After watching SportsCenter and gaining more information about the Iverson story, I knew that he would without a doubt come out of his so-called "retirement" and put the number three jersey back on for some NBA team.

On Wednesday, my prediction turned out to be true. Iverson signed a one-year contract with a team he is very familiar with: the Philadelphia 76ers.

The Sixers picked Iverson in the 1996 NBA draft and he spent ten consecutive seasons in the City of Brotherly Love.

When I heard the news about his return, I was ecstatic. My childhood basketball idol was back.

Why was he my childhood basketball idol? Because of his performance on the court, plain and simple. His signature quick cross-over move leaves defenders wondering how they tripped over their own feet as they watch Iverson step back for a pull-up jumper.

I idolized him especially during my early years of playing basketball. I began playing in fifth grade and continued through my senior year of high school (except for sixth grade).

My Iverson craze occurred from fifth grade through middle school. I idolized him because despite his small size of only six feet, he had such a huge impact on the game. Just like Iverson, I was one of the

shortest players on my team, and just like Iverson, I also played the guard position.

A pair of Iverson basketball shoes, known as I3, was a necessity for me in seventh grade. The all white shoes with the black I3 label meant so much to me at the time. The shoes weren't my only Iverson gear.

During a family trip to visit my grandparents who live outside of Philadelphia, I got a black Sixers jersey at the King of Prussia Mall. And, of course, there was a red number three on the back with Iverson's name.

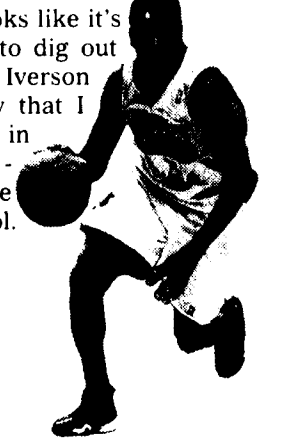
In seventh grade, I actually watched Iverson play live at the Wachovia Center, the Sixers home arena. My friend and I, who was just as big as an Iverson fan as me, sat there in awe of what he could do on the court.

Of course, there have been some parts of his career that I don't agree with. For example, the practice rant. In a press conference, he said, "How the hell can I make my teammates better by practice?"

I played basketball for a total of seven years and learned a lot through my experience, especially during my high school years. One of the most valuable things that I took away from the game is exactly opposite of Iverson's practice quote.

I learned that you do, in fact, make your teammates better through practicing. I learned the importance of teamwork and if a team works together in practices and games, then positive results will eventually show. I learned how every player has a specific role for the team.

Looks like it's time to dig out my Iverson jersey that I got in middle school.



CHRISTINE NEWBY
managing editor



NICK BLAKE
sports editor

MY VOICE

A holiday tradition

Christmas time is finally here, and it is my favorite holiday of the year.

From frolicking in the snow to decorating the tree with the family, there are countless Christmas activities which I find very joyous.

My absolute favorite Christmas activity, though, is curling up on the couch with a cup of hot chocolate and a snowman shaped cookie while I watch Christmas movies.

Yes, Christmas movies are the highlight of my holiday season, and I recently discovered my favorite Christmas film.

A Christmas Story is a movie about a young boy named Ralphie Parker who wants (more than anything in the world) an official Red Ryder, carbine action, 200 shot model range air rifle.

Now, it's not just that Ralphie wants this air rifle really bad, it's the one and only thing that he wants for Christmas.

Unfortunately Ralphie is told by nearly everyone he encounters that he'll shoot his eye out if he has a BB gun.

First it comes from his mother when he tells her what he wants, but that was to be expected.

Ralphie then decides that the best way to get his point across was to write about his Christmas wish in a paper for school. Following a dramatic fantasy of receiving an A+ for masterpiece, Ralphie gets his paper back with a C+

grade and a note from his teacher which reads, "you'll shoot your eye out!"

Ralphie begins to lose hope, but just as he is about to give up, he realizes that Santa Claus is going to be at the mall. Who better to tell than the jolly, big guy himself?

Low and behold, Ralphie fails again. That's right. Santa Claus listens to Ralphie's only wish and tells him that he'll shoot his eye out.

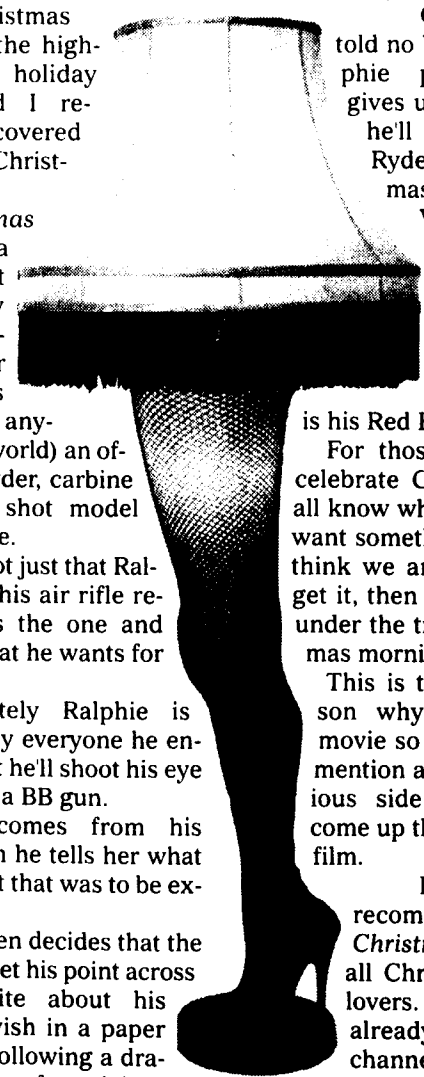
Once he is told no by Santa, Ralphie pretty much gives up hope that he'll get his Red Ryder for Christmas.

Well Christmas day comes and guess what is waiting to be unwrapped? It is his Red Ryder BB gun.

For those of us who celebrate Christmas, we all know what it is like to want something so badly, think we aren't going to get it, then find wrapped under the tree on Christmas morning.

This is the exact reason why I love this movie so much. Not to mention all of the hilarious side stories that come up throughout the film.

I definitely recommend A Christmas Story for all Christmas movie lovers. If you haven't already seen it, channel surf to TBS on Christmas Day and I'm positive that you won't be disappointed.



Have Your Say:

How do you plan to spend your time over Holiday Break?



Brianna Fisher
Sophomore
Physics & Chemistry

"Working and studying for Organic Chemistry, which owns my life."



Jeff Zaffino
Sophomore
Aerospace Engineering

"Working and spending time with my fiancée."



Andy Wehler
Freshman
Interdisciplinary
Business & Engineering

"Spending time with my wonderful family and friends."



Lauren Brack & Nicole Schau
Freshmen
Accounting & MIS

"We're gonna hang out with friends and family, and maybe some work."