**Christmas By The Numbers**

**While artificial Christmas trees have been steadily gaining fans, the real thing remains popular. About 32.8 million Americans bought live Christmas trees last year, compared to 9.3 million who purchased artificial trees. *(Smartmoney.com, as it appeared in The Week magazine, December 22, 2006)***

**65% - Percentage of U.S. organizations that do not plan to offer holiday bonuses in 2003, according to a recent study by Hewitt Associates, a global human resources outsourcing and consulting firm. While holiday bonuses are dying, office parties are seen as important, with about 68 percent of companies planning such an event. *(Rocky Mountain News, December 23, 2003)***

**22% - Workers who said they’d get the boss a gift for the holidays, with an average expenditure of $47, down $4 from last year. More women (28 percent) than men (16 percent) said they plan to give gifts to the boss, which was in line with the 2002 survey. *(St. Louis based Maritz Research Inc.)***

**A new poll conducted by the Small Business Television Network indicates a majority of respondents will have a break from work on Christmas Day. More than 7,000 people responded to the online poll conducted by the St. Louis-based digital network. Most of the respondent, 59 percent, said their employer has designated Christmas Day as a company holiday. However, 41 percent reported they will have to work on Christmas Day. *(Rocky Mountain News, December 23, 2003)***

**The single busiest shopping hour of the holiday season is from 3 p.m. to 4 p.m. on Christmas Eve*. (Newsday, as it appeared in The Week magazine, December 10, 2004)***

**The worst calorie culprits on a holiday spread? Pecan pie (as many as 500 calories a slice), chocolate fudge with nuts (about 300 calories per 2.5-ounce piece) and canned eggnog (about 400 calories in one cup with an ounce of rum), according to the Calorie Control Council, a food-industry trade association. *(Stephanie Earls, in Albany Times Union, as it appeared in the Rocky Mountain News, December 24, 2003)***

**Ninety-five percent of companies plan to have a holiday celebration this year, up from 83 percent in 2001. *(USA Today, as it appeared in The Week magazine, December 10, 2004)***

**25% of dads shop for their wives the week before Christmas. 13% of dads wait until Christmas Eve to buy gifts. *(Internet survey of children ages 6 to 14 by C&R Research, as it appeared in the Rocky Mountain News, December 22, 2003)***

**Americans will spend almost $8 billion on holiday decorations this year, an increase of 4.5 percent over 2003. The average household will shell out $119 this winter. *(CBSmarketwatch.com, as it appeared in The Week magazine, December 17, 2004)***

**According to a 1995 survey, 7 out of 10 British dogs get Christmas gifts from their doting owners. *(absolutetrivia.com)***

**Rich indulgence: 12.2 million gallons - Amount of eggnog sold in 2002, mostly during the holidays, a 21 percent increase over 2001. An increase also is expected this year. *(American Dairy Association)***

**About 5,800 Americans will require emergency-room treatment this holiday season for falls incurred while decorating Christmas trees or hanging decorations. *(USA Today, as it appeared in The Week magazine, January 7, 2005)***

**Faith and Christmas: Newsweek polled by telephone 1,009 adults on their thoughts regarding the story of Christmas. Some results: 79% of Americans say they believe that, as the Bible says, Jesus Christ was born of the Virgin Mary without a human father. 67% believe the story of Christmas – that is, the Virgin birth, the angelic proclamation to the Shepherds, the Star of Bethlehem and the Wise Men from the East – is historically accurate. *(Newsweek, as it appeared in The Rocky Mountain News, December 7, 2004)***

**32% - Increase in sales of fake Christmas trees the past four years, to 9.6 million, as demand for natural trees dropped 16 percent, to 23.4 million. *(Natural Christmas Tree Association, as it appeared in the Rocky Mountain News, December 21, 2004)***

**$20: The fee to talk to Santa at Santaspeaking.com. For another $10, you can get a CD recording of the conversation. *(Rocky Mountain News, December 20, 2004)***

**Retailers ranging from discounter Target Corporation to luxury goods seller Nordstrom Inc. are among the U.S. merchants counting on the rising popularity of gift cards to bolster sales this holiday season. Target, the No. 2 discount chain, is advertising $5 cards as stocking stuffers. Seattle-based Nordstrom sold an $82,250 card earlier this year, spokeswoman Shasha Richardson said. Card sales will surge by as much as 30 percent from the year-earlier period to as much as one-tenth of retailers’ holiday sales, according to Smith Barney Inc. Sales of gift cards, which work like debit cards, are expected to reach about $17.2 billion this holiday season, according to the National Retail Federation. *(Rachel Katz, in Rocky Mountain News, December 23, 2003)***

**The swans, dancing ladies, and other goods itemized in “The Twelve Days of Christmas” would cost $ 96,824 this year, a 10.8 percent increase over last year, says PNC Wealth Management in its 27th annual valuation of the song’s inventory. Five gold rings saw the biggest jump – a 30 percent rise to $ 649.95. *(USA Today, as it appeared in The Week magazine, December 10, 2010)***

**Nearly one in four people said they have more headaches during the Christmas season than any other time of the year. Of those surveyed, 75 percent said that not having enough time caused them to have headaches; 73 percent said crowds and traffic created their headaches; and 51 percent said skipping meals gave them headaches. *(absolutetrivia.com)***

**Internet shoppers spent a hefty $485 million on non-travel spending on "cyber Monday,” the Monday after Thanksgiving that's now considered the official start of the online holiday shopping season. Many consumers prefer to do their online shopping at work, where Web connections are usually faster than at home. *(Associated Press, as it appeared in The Week magazine on December 16, 2005)***

**Approximately 10% of the Jewish households in the U. S. have Christmas trees during the holiday season. *(Quentin Compson, in Amazing Facts & Trivia, p. 111)***

**20 billion – That’s the number of letters, packages and other items the Postal Service is expected to handle this holiday season. Some other postal facts: The heaviest mailing day should be December 15, with up to 900 million letters and packages going out. The business delivery day would follow two days later. The Postal Service’s average of 670 million pieces of mail a day would circle the globe three times, but December 15 could add another lap. *(Associated Press, at it appeared in the Rocky Mountain News on December 2, 2003)***

**52% of Americans say they are not offended if a Christmas tree is called a holiday tree. 44% are offended. *(Fox News/Opinion Dynamics, as it appeared in The Week magazine on December 16, 2005)***

**$8.4 billion – The amount home parties account for in sales nationwide last year, up from $7.1 billion in 2000, according to the Direct Selling Association. But sales consultants aren’t rolling in that dough – the association says only 8 percent earn more than $50,000 a year. *(Rocky Mountain News, December 24, 2004)***

**The U.S. Postal Service will be a little busy in the coming weeks. 20 billion: That's the pieces of mail it expects to handle between Thanksgiving and Christmas, up slightly from last year, the agency said Monday. *(Rocky Mountain News, November 30, 2004)***

**64% of children say their mothers do the most work preparing for the holidays. 1% say dad does the most, according to an Internet survey of 1,088 children ages 6 to 14 conducted by KidzEyes, a service of Chicago-based market-research firm C&R Research. *(Rocky Mountain News, December 15, 2003)***

**In the past five years, the numbers of American homes that display real Christmas trees has dropped, 33 percent, to just 23.4 million. About twice that many have fake trees. *(USA Today, as it appeared in The Week magazine, December 10, 2004)***

**Ten percent of total Christmas spending – about $5 billion a year – goes to gifts that recipients return or don’t use, according to Wharton economist Joel Waldfogel. *(Money, as it appeared in The Week magazine, January 7, 2005)***

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**51.8% - Percentage of last-minute shoppers who plan to finish the remainder of their holiday shopping at discount stores. That compares with 46.1 percent at department stores and 35.4 percent at specialty stores. And 33.3 percent also plan to shop online. *(Rocky Mountain News), December 24, 2004)***

**More than 21 million men have yet to begin their holiday shopping, while about 16 million women have not started. Consumers over the age of 65 are most likely to be completely finished with their holiday shopping. *(Rocky Mountain News, December 24, 2004)***

**The crucial post-Thanksgiving shopping season got off to a record start, with U.S. retailers ringing up $10.3 billion in sales on “Black Friday,” the day after Thanksgiving, said Jonathan Birchall in the Financial Times. But the 8.3 percent increase over last year’s sales totals “did not guarantee strong sales for the rest of the holiday season.” *(The Week magazine, December 7, 2007)***

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**4,796,250 mph - The speed Santa Claus must travel to visit all of the world’s households in a single evening. *(The Christmas List: A Holly, Jolly Treasury of Seasonal Stats)***

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**Americans spend about 2 percent of their annual incomes on holiday gifts and other seasonal expenses. Roughly half of those who put their purchases on credit cards are still paying off the splurge nine months later. *(Real Simple, as it appeared in The Week magazine, December 17, 2004)***

**The average American will spend $ 907 on Christmas gifts in 2006. By making only the minimum credit card payment at a 13.9 percent interest rate, it would take more than six years and $1,225 to pay off that amount. *(Money, as it appeared in The Week magazine, December 29, 2006)***

**Shoppers spent a record $462 billion during the 2010 holiday season, topping the $453 billion spent in 2007, says the National Retail Federation. But because the U.S. population has expanded by 8 million since 2007, per-person spending actually declined last year. *(USA Today, as it appeared in The Week magazine, January 28, 2011)***

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**Pennsylvania, with 2,164 Christmas tree farms, provides more cultivated Christmas trees than any other state. Oregon, with 2,024 tree farms, and Michigan, with 1,798, are next. *(USA Today, as it appeared in The Week magazine, January 6, 2006)***

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