**Christmas Cards**

**Husband: “I’m going to bed.” Wife: “Oh, no you’re not, buddy. Get down here and start addressing some of these Christmas cards.” Husband: “But it’s eleven-thirty!” Wife: “So? It’s also December thirteenth, and if we don’t get these out pretty soon, our friends will totally forget who we are!” Husband: “Speaking of that, who are these people?” Wife: “I don’t know, but they send us a card every year. Just keep writing.” *(Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott, in Baby Blues comic strip)***

**Man: “You got a Christmas card from our neighbor, Mrs. Feeny. She says she hopes you get coal in your stocking. A big ol’ hot fiery coal.” Garfield: “Yeah, yeah, I love her, too.” *(Jim Davis, in Garfield comic strip)***

**One man is credited with inventing Christmas cards. The idea for sending Christmas cards was started by Sir Henry Cole, who was director of a museum in England in the 1800s. Cole’s hobby was engraving illustrations. One year he sent Christmas illustrations to friends, and put the ones he had left over on sale in a London store. People quickly bought up the supply, and**

**the next year more were made. That started the Christmas card tradition. *(Charles Reichblum, in Knowledge in a Nutshell, p. 230)***

**Sam: “See, Liz, we don’t even have to send cards anymore! Just pick one off the internet and e-mail it to everyone on our list! No more stuffing and addressing envelopes, no more licking stamps.” Liz: “No more personally hand-written messages.” Sam: “Liz, who has the time?” Sam: “How’s this? ‘Dear (blank) and / or (blank), Happy / Merry Christmas / Hannukah / Kwanzaa / New Year. Love / and / or / best wishes, Sam, Liz and Nate.’” Liz: “Very warm / sincere.” *(Ed Stein, in Denver Square comic strip)***

**Dolly says to Jeffy: “Remember, Jeffy, every time you open a card you hafta say, Did we send them one?” *(Bil Keane, in The Family Circus comic strip)***

**50 – The years Jimmy Ortlieb of Kenora, Ontario, and Ralph “Smitty” Smith of Canoga Park, California, have exchanged the same Christmas card back and forth. The tradition started when Ortlieb and Smith, both 19 in 1955, were the starving shortstop and second baseman, respectively, for the Kenora Legion semipro baseball team and could barely afford a card. “That old card we send back and forth every year tells us all we need to know. That we’re still OK, still thinking about each other,” Smith said. *(Los Angeles Daily New, as it appeared in the Rocky Mountain News, December 16, 2005)***

**As early as 1822, the postmaster in Washington, D.C., was worried by the amount of extra mail at Christmas. The preferred solution was to limit by law the number of cards a person could send. Though commercial cards were not available at that time, people were already sending so many homemade cards that 16 extra postal workers had to be hired in the city. *(Absolute Trivia Web site, in Catholic Digest)***

**First commercial Christmas cards in this country were converted business cards, with “Merry Christmas” and “Happy New Year” in place of the giver’s name. They were printed on one side only and about the size of playing cards. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**One man received a Christmas card from the savings and loan association where he had his mortgage: “Merry Christmas from our house to our house.” (Charlie Hanson)**

**A famous writer once sent Christmas cards containing nothing but twenty-five letters of the alphabet. When some of his friends admitted that they had failed to understand his message, he pointed to the card and cried, “Look! No L!” (Michelle Geiman, in I Found It under the Tree, p. 13)**

**My friend Shirley had written her last Christmas card and wearily moved on to writing checks to the phone company, the electric company and a department store. After the holidays, the extent of her pre-Christmas exhaustion became apparent when the bank returned one of her checks with an “incorrect signature” notation. She had signed it “Shirley, Bernie and the girls.” (Beth McMaster, in Reader's Digest)**

**A group of school youngsters were told to draw the pictures for Christmas cards they would give their parents, but to get the verse from a card they found at home. That’s why one mother and father received this greeting from their daughter: “It’s been a pleasure to do business with you.” *(Mississippi Educational Advance)***

**\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\***