



THE SHUTTLESWORTH SENTINEL

Personal Injury
Product Liability
Wrongful Death
Nursing Home Abuse/Neglect
Assisted Living Abuse/Neglect

12.2019

GETTING AWAY FROM IT ALL ESCAPING THE COMMERCIALISM TO BE WITH FAMILY

A lot of people tend to spend Christmas Eve and Christmas Day with their extended family: grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins. But that's not the case in my family. While we see extended family at other times during the holiday season, it's usually just me, my wife, and my daughters right around Christmastime. We like to keep things simple and avoid the stress and commercialism of the holiday. It's really easy to let the TV ads, billboards, and storefronts swallow you whole, but, at the Shuttlesworth house, we try to eliminate as much of the material celebration of the season as possible.

For several years, one way we did this was by spending Christmas in the mountains. During the week around Christmas, we would pack up some camping gear, hide the kids' presents under some blankets, and just detach from society. When we have only each other to talk to and focus on, it's a lot easier to become closer to one another during the holidays. As the girls have gotten older, they've become less interested in escaping to the mountains around Christmas. They have friends from high school in town they want to reconnect with, and that's fine. It just means we've had to adjust our tradition a little bit.

We're one of those families that opens their Christmas presents on Christmas Eve. I know that might be unbearable to some people, but we really don't have a lot of presents anyway. We decided a while back that the money we use for gift shopping might be better spent on a charitable cause. I don't need something new every year. We're very fortunate in all we have, and I just think there are people out there who need more things around the holidays than we do.

Christmas Day has mostly become a day to lounge around. We warm ourselves around a wood-burning fireplace, play Christmas music in the

background, and watch our favorite Christmas movies. Our family's go-to movie is "A Christmas Carol" with George C. Scott. It might be quiet and quaint, but those Christmas mornings are some of my favorite memories.

I don't share any of this because I think everyone should celebrate the holidays like we do. Some people love shopping on Black Friday, immersing themselves in all the sales, and going to Christmas parties every single night of December. If that's how you celebrate, and it brings you and your family joy, do it. When our daughters were really young, we did all the standard, commercial Christmas activities with them. We took them to see Santa at the mall, and they cried hysterically on his lap. We went and looked at Christmas lights, and we went to the zoo because all of that stuff is magical for little kids. If I ever have grandkids, I'll probably do all that stuff with them, too.

I don't like the commercial aspects of the Christmas season, but the holidays aren't about just doing what I like — they're about coming together with family to celebrate in whatever way brings us closer together.

Merry Christmas, everyone!

-Perry Shuttlesworth



MOVE OVER, RUDOLPH!

THE 4 MOST UNDERRATED HOLIDAY SPECIALS



KEEPING THE ROADS SAFE ONE FORGONE DRIVE AT A TIME

When the weather outside is frightful — or your family is on your last nerve — there's nothing like settling in to watch a classic holiday special. "A Charlie Brown Christmas" and "It's a Wonderful Life" hold top spots on the TV guide, but there are plenty of overlooked specials that are sure to delight. Here are a few seasonal suggestions that might become your new family favorites.

'A MUPPET FAMILY CHRISTMAS'

In this musical masterpiece, Kermit and friends prepare to celebrate the holiday season. What makes this special truly unique are the appearances by characters from "Sesame Street," "Fraggle Rock," and "Muppet Babies." There's even a cameo from the Muppet creator, Jim Henson, himself. If you can find this holiday special, consider yourself lucky. Complicated copyright laws can make it hard to track the movie down.

'THE LIFE AND ADVENTURES OF SANTA CLAUS'

The stop-motion film "The Life and Adventures of Santa Claus" is one of Rankin/Bass Production's lesser-known works. Based on a story by L. Frank Baum, the author of "The Wonderful Wizard of Oz," this fantasy epic introduces a new Santa Claus story, one with light elves, wood nymphs, and benevolent immortals. It's an unusual tale, but the strange elements are what make the story worthwhile.

'A RUGRATS CHANUKAH'

Praised by critics and audiences alike, "A Rugrats Chanukah" covers the story of Chanukah through the eyes of Nickelodeon's beloved animated babies. In addition to putting a "Rugrats" spin on the Chanukah story, this special episode also features themes of family and forgiveness. "A Rugrats Chanukah" is a delightful experience for audiences who celebrate Chanukah and those who would like to learn more about the holiday.

'DOCTOR WHO: A CHRISTMAS CAROL'

Here's one for your nerdy family members. In this episode of the British sci-fi classic, the titular Doctor, an alien who travels through time and space, must save his friends by teaching a bitter old man the true meaning of Christmas. Time travel shenanigans ensue as the Doctor reminds us of the importance of kindness, the value of loss, and the magic of spending the holidays with those we love. This special puts a unique spin on the Christmas Carol formula and is even accessible to audiences who have never seen "Doctor Who" before.

May these specials bring you some much-needed cheer and a moment of relaxation this holiday season.

Holiday party season is here, and, while no one should be discouraged from celebrating this season of peace and good will, we should still try to stay safe — especially when it comes to drinking. New Year's Eve is one of the most dangerous evenings to be out on the road, and thousands of people get involved in drunk driving incidents every year. If you're hosting a party, or going to a party with some friends, here are some ways to make sure everyone stays safe.

OFFER TO BE A DESIGNATED DRIVER

If you're not planning on drinking, let your friends know you can give them a ride to the party so they don't drive themselves. Or, if one of your friends who did drive to the party tries to drive themselves home, offer to give them a ride home instead. If they protest that they don't want to leave their car at the party, tell them you can drive their car home after you drop them off.

OFFER TO PAY FOR A RIDE

If you're drinking at the party as well, and you're trying to stop your friend from driving drunk, offer to call a rideshare service and pay for their ride home. You could even take a rideshare service to the party with your friends to eliminate the possibility of drunk driving altogether. If you don't want to pay for a rideshare service, you can also look into cheaper forms of public transportation, like buses if stops are close by.

OFFER TO LET THEM SLEEP ON THE COUCH

If the party is at your house and you have a spare guest room, mattress, or couch, offer to let inebriated party guests with no other options sleep it off at your house. That way, any guests who are insistent about driving themselves home can still do so, but they'll be able to wait until morning, when they're sober, to do so.

The dangers of driving drunk are well known, but accidents involving alcohol still happen every year. If you or a loved one have been involved in an auto accident involving drunk driving, give Shuttlesworth Law Firm a call using the number on our website to see what we can do for you.



THE AFTERMATH OF RIDESHARE ACCIDENTS

2 KEY DIFFICULTIES TO GET AROUND

Trying to obtain fair compensation after involvement in an auto accident can turn into a headache. If that accident involved a vehicle that does ridesharing, however, additional complications can make contacting an experienced lawyer even more of a necessity. If you're a pedestrian who has been hit by a rideshare vehicle, a passenger in a rideshare vehicle who gets in an accident, or another driver in an accident that involves a rideshare vehicle, these are two additional complications you should be aware of.

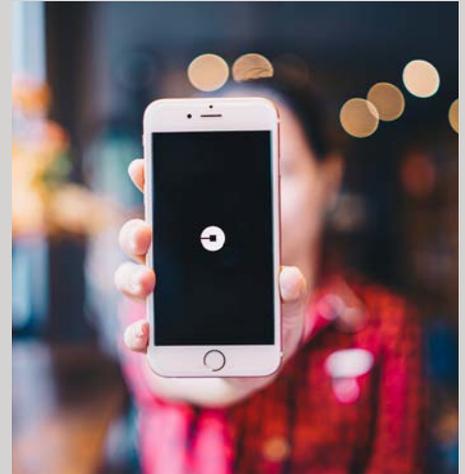
TWO INSURANCE PROVIDERS INSTEAD OF ONE

The gig economy has created some interesting gray areas when it comes to liability in accidents. Rideshare drivers work as contractors for their respective rideshare services, not as full-time employees. They may get paid by Uber, Lyft, or whichever service they work for, but they're not always "on the clock" when they're driving since the vehicle they use is also their personal vehicle. In the event of

an accident, the rideshare service's insurance company will point the finger at the driver's personal insurance company and vice versa. If you thought getting compensation from one insurance provider was hard enough, try dealing with two companies that don't want to pay!

ON THE CLOCK OR NOT?

In all seriousness, it can be difficult to determine whether or not a rideshare driver was on the clock. Typically, if their app is open, meaning they're currently transporting a passenger or on their way to pick one up, that means the rideshare service will foot the bill for any compensation for injuries. If their app isn't open, however, you'll probably have to try the driver's personal insurance provider for compensation. Even then, getting compensation for your injuries is rarely straightforward.



Instead of trying to sort it all out on your own, consult attorneys who have a track record for winning rideshare crash cases. Call Shuttlesworth Law Firm today at (205) 322-1411.

TAKE A BREAK

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SOLUTION
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STRANGE FACTOID

ONE COUNTRY'S FRIGHT IS ANOTHER'S ORNAMENT

No holiday in the world is as ubiquitous as Christmas. That said, the holiday can look vastly different in each place it is celebrated. One culture's time-honored tradition can be another culture's fright.

In the United States, if you found a spider in your Christmas tree, you might scream or try and find the nearest tissue or paper towel to smush it. But in Germany, Poland, and Ukraine, finding a spider in your

Christmas tree is actually good luck. One legend says that a spider wove the baby Jesus a blanket when he was born. Another says spider webs in Christmas trees turned to gold or silver when the sun hit them.

While there's not much credence to these stories, it doesn't stop millions from decorating their Christmas trees with artificial spider webs in order to bring luck and prosperity to their families.





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LIGHT UP THE NIGHT WHY DO WE HANG CHRISTMAS LIGHTS?

The first string of twinkling lights illuminating your neighbor's house is always a telltale sign of the upcoming seasonal festivities. Christmas lights are a holiday staple, but have you ever wondered where this beloved tradition started?

The tradition of hanging lights on the tree originally started with candles. Because this posed an immense fire hazard, Edward

Hibberd Johnson, a close friend of Thomas Edison and vice president of the Edison Electric Light Company, vowed to find a better way to decorate Christmas trees with light. In December 1882, three years after Edison's invention of the lightbulb in November 1879, Johnson hand-wired 80 red, white, and blue lightbulbs together and wound them around a Christmas

tree in his parlor window. A passing reporter saw the spectacle and declared in the Detroit Post and Tribune, "One can hardly imagine anything prettier."

Johnson continued this tradition, increasing the number of lights each year and eventually putting them up outside. But because electricity was still a new concept, many years passed before the fad took off for regular Americans. In 1923, President Calvin Coolidge began the tradition of lighting the National Christmas Tree, which spurred the idea of selling stringed lights commercially. By the 1930s, families everywhere were buying boxes of bulbs by the dozen. Today, an estimated 150 million Christmas lights are sold in America each year, decorating 80 million homes and consuming 6% of the nation's electricity every December.

Whether you'll be putting up your own lights or appreciating the most impressive light displays in your neighborhood or town, let the glow fill you with joy this season. Just don't leave them up until February!