

Alice

Princess of Communications - J. Keese

The Millennium Issue

NOTES FROM THE THRONE

Au revoir, 1999

It's almost here! The fabled and mystical "Year 2000". It seems like it was just 20 years ago that I was 15 years old, looking ahead to the big 2-0-0-0 and not really thinking that it would actually arrive. Hopefully, you will be re-reading this 1999 last/2000 first edition in January, laughing along with all of us about the millennium hysteria...

...and what better way to start off that hysteria than with revered, cherished, seasonal traditions; a little baking, a little singing, a little freedom of speech. Let's start off with that time-honored Ashwood favorite, the fruitcake...

Fruitcake Recipe

- 1 cup water
- 1 cup sugar
- 4 large eggs
- 2 cups dried fruit
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup brown sugar
- lemon juice
- nuts
- 1 gallon whiskey

Sample the whiskey to check for quality. Take a large bowl. Check the whiskey again to be sure it is of the highest quality. Pour one level cup and drink. Repeat. Turn on the electric mixer; beat 1 cup butter in a large, fluffy bowl. Add 1 teaspoon sugar and beat again. Make sure the whiskey is still OK. Cry another tup.

Turn off mixer. Break 2 legs and add to the bowl and chuck in the cup of dried fruit. Mix on the turner. If the fried druit gets stuck in the beaterers, pry it loose with a drewscraver. Sample the whiskey to check for tonsisticity. Next, sift 2 cups of salt. Or something. Who cares? Check the whiskey. Now sift the lemon

juice and strain your nuts. Add one table. Spoon. Of sugar or something. Whatever you can find. Grease the oven. Turn the cake tin to 350 degrees. Don't forget to beat off the turner. Throw the bowl out of the window. Check the whiskey again. Go to bed. Who the hell likes fruitcake anyway?

Christmas Carols for the Psychiatrically-challenged

SCHIZOPHRENIA: Do you Hear What I Hear?

MULTIPLE PERSONALITY DISORDER: We Three Queens Disoriented Are

DEMENTIA: I Think I'll Be Home for Christmas

NARCISSISTIC: Hark the Herald Angels Sing About Me

MANIC: Deck the Halls and Walls and House and Lawn and Streets and Stores and Office and Town and Cars and Busses and Trucks and Trees and Fire Hydrants and...

PARANOID: Sauta Claus is Coming to Get Me.

PERSONALITY DISORDER: You Better Watch Out, I'm Gonna Cry, I'm Gonna Pout, Maybe I'll tell you Why.

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OPEN LETTER

Dear Santa

Irarely ask for much. This year is no exception. I don't need diamond earrings, handy slicer-dicers or comfy slippers. I only want one little thing, and I want it deeply.

I want to slap Martha Stewart.

Now, hear me out, Santa. I won't scar her or draw blood or anything. Just one good smack, right across her smug little cheek. I get all cozy inside just thinking about it.

Don't grant this wish just for me, do it for thousands of women across the country. Through sheer vicarious satisfaction, you'll be giving a gift to us all. Those of us leading average, garden variety lives aren't concerned with gracious living.

We feel pretty good about ourselves if our paper plates match when we stack them on the counter, buffet-style for dinner. We're tired of Martha showing us how to make centerpieces from hollyhock dipped in 18 carat gold. We're plumb out of liquid gold. Unless it's of the furniture polish variety.

We can't whip up Martha's creamy holiday sauce, spiced with turmeric. Most of us can't even say turmeric, let alone figure out what to do with it.

OK, Santa, maybe you think I'm being a little harsh. But I'll bet with all the holiday rush you didn't catch that interview with Martha in last week's USA Weekend. I'm surprised there was enough room on the page for her ego. We discovered that not only does Martha avoid take-out pizza (she's only ordered it once), she refuses to eat it cold (No cold pizza? Is Martha Stewart Living?) When it was pointed out that she could microwave it, she replied, "I don't have a microwave."

The reporter, Jeffrey Zaslow, noted that she said this "in a tone that suggests you

shouldn't either." Well lah-dee-dah. Imagine that, Santa! That lovely microwave you brought me years ago, in which I've learned to make complicated dishes like popcorn and hot chocolate, has been declared undesirable by Queen Martha. What next? The coffee maker?

In the article, we learned that Martha has 40 sets of dishes adorning an entire wall in her home. Forty sets. Can you spell "overkill"? And neatly put away, no less. If my dishes make it to the dishwasher, that qualifies as "put away" in my house! Martha tells us she's already making homemade holiday gifts for friends. "Last year, I made amazing silk-lined scarves for everyone," she boasts. Not just scarves, mind you. Amazing scarves. Martha's obviously not shy about giving herself a little pat on the back. In fact, she does so with such frequency that one has to wonder if her back is black and blue.

She goes on to tell us that "homemaking is glamour for the 90s", and says her most glamorous friends are "interested in stain removal, how to iron a monogram, and how to fold a towel." I have one piece of advice, Martha: "Get new friends." Glamorous friends fly to Paris on a whim. They drift past the Greek Islands on

yachts, sipping champagne from crystal goblets. They step out for the evening in shimmering satin gowns, whisked away by tuxedoed chauffeurs. They do not spend their days pondering the finer art of toilet bowl sanitation.

Zaslow notes that Martha was named one of America's 25 most influential people by Time magazine (nosing out Mother Theresa, Madeline Allbright and Maya Angelou, no doubt). The proof of Martha's influence: after she bought white-fleshed peaches in the supermarket, Martha says, "People saw me buy them. In an instant, they were all gone." I hope Martha never decides to jump off a bridge.

A guest in Martha's home told Zaslow how Martha gets up early to rollerblade with her dogs to pick fresh wild blackberries for breakfast. This confirms what I've suspected about Martha all along: She's obviously got too much time on her hands. Teaching the dogs to rollerblade. What a show off.

If you think the dogs are spoiled, listen to how Martha treats her friends: She gave one friend all 272 books from the Knopf Everyman Library. It didn't cost much. Pocket change, really. Just \$5,000. But what price friendship, right?

When asked if others should envy her, Martha replies, "Don't envy me. I'm doing

this because I'm a natural teacher. You shouldn't envy teachers. You should listen to them." Zaslow must have slit a seam in Martha's ego at this point, because once the hot air came hissing out, it couldn't be held back.

"Being an overachiever is nothing despicable. It is only admirable. Never lower your standards," says Martha. And of her Web Page on the Internet, Martha declares herself an "important presence" as she graciously helps people organize their sad, tacky little lives.

There you have it, Santa. If there was ever someone who deserved a good smack, it's Martha Stewart. But I bet I won't get my gift this year. You probably want to smack her yourself.....

Every Woman

(reprinted from the Internet, with as much permission as possible...)

1 Gossip

Thanks to the thoughtful neighbor who helped jump another neighbor (the car battery, sillies. And don't worry, I would never tell anyone about her blue flannel nightie...)

I heard that someone in Ashwood (I won't name names) is having a Merry Christmas, Hellacious Holiday, Silly Season, Happy Hannukah, Peace on Earth, and all that jazz. Pass it on...

2 Transitions

Well, "The Place" has been a bad neighbor and been hidden away during the summer (and pretty well hidden away so far this winter, too). We have at least 3 new neighbors that I know of, but the scoop will have to wait, pending Ashwood Place getting off its collective butt. I dare any new neighbors to come a'calling at 2840 Ashwood Place, or better yet, just calling to (404) 288-0712. I'll be there...

3 Committees

Here's the scoop on the committees...

LANDSCAPING

Stewards - Paul Chamiles & Will Smith
Phone - (404) 289-3477

Help continue the cash savings! Give Paul and Will a call to help out with trimming and clean-up one Saturday before Spring.

ARCHITECTURAL

Steward - Cathie Herman
Phone - (404) 286-9504
Members

- Sandee House - Karen Dessables
- Kelly Dak - Terry Pickard
- Brett Norton - Claire Phillips
- Beth Wilson - Linda Brooks

In its 6th year of balancing change and property values...

SOCIAL

Steward - Jeff Keesee
Phone - (404) 288-0712
Fabulous Committee in of herself
- Sandee House

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

Steward - Michele McHale-Pickard
Phone - (404) 284-2800

Careless things are happening. Keep updated with your Block Captain. Keep those garage doors closed. Don't give them any reason to come back...

Be Nosy! Be Safe!
Be Informed! Be a Neighbor...

WELCOMING

Steward - Robin Moore
Phone - (404) 286-4490
Members - Brent Henderson
- Karen Dessables
- Kelly Dak
- Beth Wilson
- Michele McHale-Pickard
- Lynn Briggs

FINANCIAL

Treasurer - Robin Moore
Phone - (404) 286-4490

Beware! Ashwood dues will be appearing next year! (Robin is Y2K compliant). Plan ahead! Be ready! Best bargain in town.

4 Events

CLIP AND SAVE ASHWOOD CALENDAR

February thaw-out and get-out.

(Event and time to be announced)