

OPINION

- Columnists
- Letters to the Editor

Merry Christmas one and all ■ Advocate Publisher Sam D. Kennedy

We wish you and yours a merry Christmas. And a bah humbug to those that do not believe in Santa Claus.

My days of Santa are about over as my grand children scorn the stockings and grab for the big stuff under the tree.

There is hope, since Santa has promised, if we are very good, that we will be given the wonderful gift of a great grandchild in March. The only problem is that the proud parents and grandparents may consider us too old and feeble to hold the baby!

Just maybe next Christmas I will spend Christmas Eve listening for sleigh bells for the fourth time in my life.

My personal Santa Claus days came at the very height of the great depression. Some said that Santa had no money for hay and his reindeer might be too weak to fly, But somehow he made it, though any of us foolish

enough to ask for expensive things like bicycles, basketballs, and BB guns had to settle for a small ten cent store toy, an apple or orange, a bit of candy, and hopefully, a pack of firecrackers. Santa was big on firecrackers back then before Mamas against nearly everything fun and dangerous in our nanny world, outlawed anything that might pose a risk for their hot house darlings.

Times might have been hard but we had fields to walk, woods to hunt, land to raise food, and a river to fish and swim in. We were much better off by far than many hungry and desperate folks, some roaming the roads looking for work and a place to sleep. Those who would compare the recent recession to those times, obviously did not live in them.

Santa for our children was better. There was no war and people had jobs. But still a great deal of our stock-

ings came from Yellow stamp prizes that any child could assemble, but I couldn't, which were finally put together about four o'clock in the morning just before Santa arrived.

Christmas with our grandchildren was pure joy, as we got to see their shinning eyes as they emptied their stockings, and we only had to watch with no responsibilities.

All that is to say Merry Christmas to you. We hope you are warm and safe, surrounded by children, grandchildren, family and friends, and that Santa comes to your house.

Remember that it is the day to celebrate the tidings of great joy the angels proclaimed, that unto us is born a savior, who is Christ the Lord. That is the good news of this season and we wish for you the joy and peace that promise offers.

MERRY CHRISTMAS!

Antimicrobial soap: friend or foe?

■ TYRADES!

Danny Tyree

If one of your resolutions for 2014 was to use more antimicrobial soap, your plans might be all washed up.

According to the New York Times, the Food and

Drug Administration (FDA) announced on December 16 that it is

giving soap manufacturers one year to demonstrate that their antibacterial chemicals (a) are more effective than ordinary soap and water and (b) do more good than harm. Soaps that fail must be reformulated, relabeled, removed from the market or dipped in lead paint and used in a cultural exchange with China.

For one thing, regulators think consumers have been lulled into a false sense of security, and that the soaps may actually promote drug-resistant strains of bacteria. Restaurant owners are already printing up bathroom signs that dictate, "All employees must body slam mutant bacteria before returning to work. May God have mercy on your soul."

Don't view this as an abrupt development. Although the order was issued this month, the preliminary version was drafted (I kid thee not) in the late 70s! This may explain references such as "Frampton Comes Alive - And So Does The Drug-Resistant Microbe."

Granted, in 2005 the FDA did at least issue a SUGGESTION that the industry study the situation and forward the data to the feds. This was assertiveness paralleling the lofty heights of "Um, you wouldn't want to go to the malt shop with me after school, would you? I didn't think so. Don't hit me."

The FDA has a reputation for foot-dragging and lollygagging. Cutting-edge statements issued in 2012 included "splinters from covered wagons may expose you to New World pathogens" and "Eating magic beans can be hazardous to your health."

On the other hand, 2013 has seen a more activist FDA - phasing out the use of antibiotics in animals raised for meat and all but banning trans fats in prepared foods. If the tough-guy act with the soap companies sticks, future endeavors include helmets for Mexican jumping beans and a less depressing name for tongue depressors.

Some 2,000 soaps (and countless unrelated products far from the world of personal hygiene) are now marketed as "antimicrobial." It's all part

For unto
US
a child is
BORN.
Unto US
a Son is
GIVEN...
Merry
Christmas
to US!

©2013 THE AUGUSTA CHRONICLE 12/25
EAGLE CARICATURES.COM



'Tis the season to examine our hearts

■ By Emily Weathers Kennedy, guest columnist

There's a stanza to a song by a band called The Tragically Hip that goes like this: "Lining up, waiting on the trickle down / Something's up, taking time to get around / Belly up, all the drinks are on the crown / It's just a matter of trickle down."

Humorist Will Rogers actually coined the phrase back in the 1920s saying, "The money was all appropriated for the top in the hopes it would trickle down to the needy." But it was Ronald Reagan who embraced this supply side theory and made it his economic policy as president, even after his Republican challenger, George H.W. Bush, called it "voodoo economics."

Barack Obama used the term to clinch his 2008 presidential campaign, highlighting the widely held belief that the latter Bush administration's trickle down economic policies contributed to the painful recession. Not many would dispute the disparity between the wealthiest Americans, who enjoyed large tax breaks, and the middle and lower income people. During the recent recession, this gap between rich and poor became an even deeper crevice.

Recently, none other than Pope Francis has thrown in his two cents on trickle down economics. As his admonishment with the ideologues whose focus centered around social issues, he lashed out at the abuse of capitalistic practices and economic policies. In his words:

From 53: "Today everything comes under the laws of competition and the survival of the fittest, where the powerful feed upon the powerless. As a consequence, masses of people find themselves excluded and marginalized: without work, without possibilities, without any means of escape.

From 54: "...People continue to defend trickle-down theories which assume that economic growth, encouraged by a free market, will inevitably succeed in bringing about greater justice and inclusiveness in the world. This opinion, which has never been confirmed by the facts, expresses a crude and naïve trust in the goodness of those wielding economic power and in the sacralized workings of the prevailing economic system. Meanwhile, the excluded are still waiting. To sustain a lifestyle, which excludes others, or to sustain enthusiasm for that selfish ideal, a globalization of indifference has developed. Almost without being aware of it, we end up being incapable of feeling compassion at the outcry of the poor, weeping for other people's pain, and feeling a need to help them, as though all this were someone else's responsibility and not our own. The culture of prosperity deadens us..."

From 56: "The thirst for power and possessions knows no limits. In this system, which tends to devour everything which stands in the way of increased profits, whatever is fragile, like the environment, is defenseless before the interests of a deified market, which become the only rule."

From 58: "A financial reform open to such ethical considerations would require a vigorous change of approach on the part of political leaders. I urge them to face this challenge with determination and an eye to the future, while not ignoring, of course, the specifics of each case... The Pope loves everyone, rich and poor alike, but he is obliged in the name of Christ to remind all that the rich must help, respect and promote the poor. I exhort you to generous solidarity and a return of economics and finance to an ethical approach which favours human beings."

The pope is not condemning Capitalism, but he is railing against the unbridled, under-regulated markets that practice exclusion and inequality and leave most of the world deprived of the spigot that delivers the trickle down. He recognizes the need to protect those things that

cannot protect themselves, like the poor and the environment. He is not saying for churches to handle this responsibility alone; he is charging politicians to work for these causes.

For many, he is a breath of fresh air, as the promise of spring that floats into a darkly ornate, stuffy room whose heavy door is thrown wide. No longer threatened by its own staleness, the room bids people to enter, to come and soak in the goodness that was meant for everyone to enjoy. As we celebrate this glorious Christmas holiday, we should remember the pope's words, count our many blessings, and examine our hearts to determine how we can affect changes so that everyone can enjoy the prosperity the world offers.

'Tis the season.

Emily Weathers Kennedy is a freelance writer, blogger, artist, photo stylist, and decorator. Her work is online and in product catalogs and her award winning kitchen design was featured in the September 2008 issue of Better Homes & Gardens. She lives with her husband, 3 dogs, and 2 cats and writes from their farm in Loretto, where she was born and raised. She is a member of The Alabama Writers' Forum and the Tennessee Writers' Alliance and participates in several online groups of writers, editors, and publishers.



The Kennedys home for the holidays (left to right): Annelise, Kerry, Claire Kennedy, Methvin, Emily, Will Methvin, and Catherine Kennedy.

Lawrence County

Advocate

Sam Kennedy, Publisher
John Finney, Managing Editor
Janice Butler, Assistant Manager

<p>NEWS STAFF Elizabeth K. Blackstone, Editor Nancy Brewer, Assistant Editor Sandi Mashburn, Staff Writer Joe Baxter, Sports</p> <p>ADVERTISING STAFF Tamisha Wilburn, Sales Amber McIntyre, Sales</p> <p>PHOTOGRAPHER Howard Johnston</p> <p>PRODUCTION STAFF Renee Fleeman, Ad Designer Chris Pettigrew, Ad Designer Rachel Weaver, Layout</p>	<p>OFFICE STAFF Katy Adams, Bookkeeping/ Classifieds/ Receptionist</p> <p>PRESS & CIRCULATION Ralph Yeager Donnie Howell Brian Chandler Keith Matthews Chris Dickey Robert Corbin</p> <p>DISTRIBUTION Dorothy Belew</p> <p>16,300+ published & delivered twice weekly</p>
--	---

Published each Wednesday and Sunday at
121 North Military Ave., P. O. Box 308, Lawrenceburg, TN 38464
Phone # (931) 762-1726, FAX # (931) 762-7874

www.lawrencecountyadvocate.net

Capitol Hill Week in Review

■ State Senator

Joey Hensley MD

Christmas at the Capitol

If you have the opportunity during this Christmas season, come and tour the 154 year old State Capitol in Nashville. Here you will see the official Tennessee



State Christmas Tree, a 50-foot Norway spruce from east

Tennessee that has been decorated with more than 6,000 LED lights. The entire inside of the Capitol is decked out in its holiday finest with wreaths, garland and trees.

You can also see a statue of President Johnson on display and the dramatic one of President Andrew Jackson on a horse that has been on the grounds since May 1880. Another Tennessee President honored at our state's Capitol is President James K. Polk and his wife Sarah, who are buried on the north side. Other statues on the Capitol grounds are those of Sam Davis, "boy hero of the Confederacy," Sergeant Alvin C. York, the "greatest enlisted soldier of World War I; and Edward Ward Carmack, "statesman and journalist."

I am always pleased when school children from our Counties and Leadership groups come to visit the Capitol. I have found that two aspects of this building capture their attention. The first is the fact that William Strickland, the architect of the Capitol who died before the building was finished in entombed there. He is not alone. Also entombed on the other side of the Capitol is Samuel Morgan, Chairman of the Capitol Building Commission when the Capitol was erected.

The second fact that captures the attention of the school children is the bullet mark on the grand staircase to the House and Senate Chambers. This scar is from a bullet fired from the stair during a particularly bitter fight in the Legislature over the ratification of the Reconstruction Act of 1867. The vote was opposed by the Confederate-sympathizers in the General Assembly who did not have enough votes to block passage of the amendment. They attempted to flee armed guards so there would not be a quorum and an unwilling guard fired a shot that prevented them from leaving. The amendment subsequently passed.

I cannot help but think of the historic significance of the actions taken in these Chambers, as we were reminded upon the 75th Anniversary a few

Continued on A-5