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SHAMELESS SANTA SLIDERS

By Theolonius McTavish

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-- SHAMELESS SANTA SLIDERS --

Every year the Ho-Ho-Ho-ing chap in the red tunic with the white whiskers gets inundated with some pretty balmy questions.

So this year, I asked him if he wouldn't mind responding to twenty-five odd, obscure, and some might even say downright obtuse queries. Needless to say, he was delighted to have a chortling chinwag with me by satellite phone from his nippy ice-fishing hut at the North Pole.

Readers who understand the value of milk and milk products plus high fibre diets also know we all pay a price for being part of the animal kingdom, perhaps more so during the holiday season. So, what's this got to do with the price of tea in China? Well, allowance should probably be made for those with vagrant airs not to mention a healthy tongue-in-cheek attitude to Life, an uncertain Universe, and Everything absurd in between.

WARNING: For readers unable to make adjustments that are dietary, linguistic, psychological and cultural in nature, please avoid reading the following shameless sliders, big whoppers, and unmitigated, unmuffled freeps -- more than likely emanating from a jolly, red-necked, foot-in-the-mouth fellow (probably wearing a plaid shirt, red long-johns, and a pair of bright yellow suspenders).

1. What does Santa do at a house with no chimney?

Hmmm...better ask the frazzled folks in Notrees (Texas), Mushaboom (Nova Scotia), and Hookey's Waterhole (Australia) -- they still believe Santa Claus will find them if they use smoke signals from blazing barbecues, outdoor cooking stoves, and hot coals from campfires.

2. Does Santa worry about his fat intake over Christmas like everyone else?

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The short answer is no...everyone at the North Pole thrives on carrots and brussel sprouts, 57 blubber recipes, plus a weekly serving of fish and chips, supplemented by Girl Guide Cookie or Hostess Twinkie treats — a perfectly balanced diet for pleasingly plump parents and a lean pack of elves with attitude.

3. How does Santa get down the chimney when the fire is going?

We're back to those blessed chimneys are we?!*... Santa wears a fire-retardant suit silly!

4. How does Santa's huge body fit through those itzy-bitsy chimneys?

What's with the f***** chimneys again? Okay if you really must know, Santa presses his "Mighty Magic Midget Button" on his red tunic faster than you can shake a stick or something.

5. What exactly are `reindeer games' anyway?

Are you over 18, in good health, and seeking a pleasurable companion for a night out?

6. Why does Santa visit people only once a year?

There's a clause in Fairy Godmothers' Union contract stipulating that in the event of a decision by Santa to visit more frequently, there will be hell to pay from a whole host of hissy-fitters not to mention a hopping mad Easter Bunny.

7. Who brings Santa his Christmas gifts?

The Man From Glad naturally --- 'cause his PVC-bag full of goodies won't break!

8. Does Santa get paid?

By that do you mean in the spiritual sense (you know warm and fuzzies), or in a pragmatic sense (\$6.50 per hour less deductions for union dues, pensions, disability insurance, health and dental care benefits, taxes and voluntary charitable donations)?

9. What kind of car does Santa drive during the off-season?

Actually, Santa enjoys the perks of a chauffeur-driven, gas-guzzling, air-conditioned stretch limo with plush leather interiors and an automatic sliding sunroof, plus a full bar service, satellite-TV, a DVD player with surround-sound, not to mention tinted shatterproof glass and kid-proof door-locks. On occasion he has been known to drive a Harley-Davidson (without a helmet) in order to save the environment but more importantly, he just gets a kick out of feeling the wind blow through his long, curly locks of silver hair, bushy eyebrows, not to mention his handle-bar, white moustache and matching trimmed whiskers.

10. Why is Rudolph's nose so red?

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Perhaps he had a run-in with the Frost-Bite Fairy, who knows. Besides, Santa doesn't tattletale on anyone, not even reindeers. ...By the way, why are you more interested in the complexion of a hooper rather than shooting the breeze with me, if I may be so bold as to ask?

11. Why do we wrap Christmas presents so beautifully only to have others rip off the paper?

Watch a blue movie or two, then you'll probably figure out the answer all by yourself!

12. If Santa has a weight problem, why do we leave him milk and cookies? Shouldn't we leave him a salad and water?

Look, there's nothing wrong with having lots of love handles. Besides, I think you're getting me mixed up with an alternative-lifestyle Easter Bunny who'd be only to pleased to smoke your weeds and walk on water, if it would make you and your friends happy.

13. How come all the standard Christmas songs you hear on the radio are sung by dead people?

Whoa, they haven't all croaked yet. According to "Santa's Good Time News Service", Elvis was spotted just last week crooning, "Blue Christmas" at a rock'n'rolling retirement community in Bootlegger Crossing, Arizona!

14. Isn't it a worry that Santa is an anagram of Satan?

At least Santa and Satan know what's "red" hot and what's not. God probably has more to worry about in the anagram department than Santa or Satan. After all, he dislikes being called "man's best friend" and getting blamed for piddling on a fire-hydrant not to mention someone's parade.

15. If a wise woman had come to the Nativity, she would have brought diapers, wouldn't she?

If I'm not mistaken there were several signs hanging on the front door of the Inn: "No Vacancy", "No Admission Under Any Circumstances", and one in even bigger, bolder letters — "Wise Woman Not Welcome - Go Away!" ... and your point was?

16. If it's true that Santa is magical then why does Christmas Eve take so long?

Santa didn't invent grandfather clocks, glow-in-the-dark watches, or other bleeping gadgets and gizmos. If you want to complain, I suggest you contact the old coot in charge, "Father Time".

17. Where does Santa hide his claws?

Just because he wears a red and white outfit doesn't make him an "Abominable Person of Snow". Besides, Santa doesn't need to scratch anyone's back for a handout.

18. Why are Christmas colors red and green when Santa's suit is red and white?

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It all started with a few disgruntled Tarot card readers complaining about not being included in the Christmas story. So, the United Nations stepped in to stop all the whining and snivelling which was getting out of hand, (especially a campaign launched by the Society of Plus-Sized People who wanted to replace Santa Claus with the Jolly Green Giant as the symbol of rampant consumer spending, healthy lifestyle choices, and more free giveaways). Anyway, to make a long story short, a referendum was held and people the world over voted in favor of retaining Santa Claus, (dressed in his well-worn red and white suit), as star of the annual "Festival of Negative-Savers". As a consolation prize, the World Trade Organization declared that "red and green will be the official designated colours of all wrapping paper, ribbons, and note cards accompanying charitable spam and jam food hampers destined for the Tooth Fairy, the Great Pumpkin, and the Easter Bunny", (who are usually overlooked at this time of year).

19. Do you think Santa Claus believes in himself?

Of course he does! It's only celebrity psychologists who suggest that a jolly, bearded gentleman with a red-nosed reindeer in tow should "get a life". There's an old adage that says, "Behind every wet blanket lies an incontinent universe". So take my advice, get off those high-and-mighty hobbyhorses and ride a reindeer for a day. Better yet, take a break. Try watching the deer and the antelope play on the back forty..."where seldom is heard, a discouraging word, and the skies are not cloudy all day." It's

way more rewarding than watching soppy soap operas or a fancy fella dispensing dross to dysfunctional divas, disadvantaged doorknobs, desolate dorks, delusional duffers not to mention one too many detached dingbats.

20. What do parents living in warm climates tell their children about Santa Claus? After all there's no snow in most places and it's far too warm to be wearing that red suit.

Santa is a very resourceful, fit and adaptable guy with loads of charisma, not to mention tons of glad tidings and good cheer which is often in short supply around the Christmas dinnertable. As a matter of fact, he wears a chartreuse thong or a scarlet pair of bikini briefs underneath his red tunic — just in case he needs to slip into something more comfortable during his visit to Hellhole Palms (California), Boneyard (Arizona) and Weeki Wachee (Florida).

21. How come there isn't a "Trading Spaces" TV show for Christmas yard decorations?

It's not enough the world's falling apart because golfers and gadflies don't know how to swing a hammer and nail for Pete's sake! Now you want to bring out the really weird folk who think decorating their lawns with something other than gnomes, angels and fairies would be sinful?

22. Are Santa's Elves the same elves that are the Keebler Elves? After making toys, do they moonlight by baking cookies and crackers?

Our delightful, double-duty, efficient elves are far more productive and happier than the 'one-size-fits-all' sort of wee folk who work in many sweaty sylph shops around the globe. Our toy-shop offers a safe and friendly working environment, free milk and cookies during every 15-minute break,

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an opportunity to create whistle while you work songs, and an all–expense paid three–week vacation in Fannie, Arkansas not to mention a very popular and hugely successful government–subsidized retraining program for trolls.

23. Why does the Christmas season always come when the stores are at their busiest?

In the Land of Cowabunga, cowboys and cash–cow milkers, never ask why brown cows don't fly there. (Trust me, they've never heard of a kahlua coffee liqueur with a dollop of whipped cream with chocolate sprinkles on top, and a Maraschino Cherry).

24. Should we mail our packages early so the Post Office can lose them in time for next Christmas?

Ah yes, the Post Office, everyone's favorite pastime — flogging dead horses. Take my advice, stop your faultfinding ways and use your positive energy flow to find a Flying Nun willing to take those parcels off your hands in return for all your Airmile points.

25. On artificial Christmas trees, why do they always make the center trunk green? Wouldn't it be more realistic if it were painted brown?

What do you expect from fake things, perfection? If you're not doing anything useful besides asking questions that require answers few have time to ponder, come and join our Toy–Shop Team at the North Pole. We have no trees, we have no bananas, and we just love elves who can hum along, otherwise this year there'll be no presents under the tree (be they fake or real).

Oh and if by chance you should get stuck beside a "Bah Humbug" type at Christmas dinner, remind the foul miscreant that miracles do happen. Thankfully, at midnight some turn into whoopee cushions to amuse family or friends. Fortunately, others find redemption, (if only for a day), by riding the winds of change which usually means donning a red jump suit, handing out equal–opportunity goodies to those who've been naughty and nice, and last but not least — remembering to say, "Ho Ho Ho ...and to all a good night!"

Theolonius McTavish is a ripsnorting reporter of ribaldry and eccentric clairvoyant in the court of The Quipping Queen at www.quippingqueen.blogspot.com

10 Reasons Santa's Broke This Year

By Darlene Arechederra

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1. Santa Spends More Than He Makes

Santa's paychecks are nothing to sneeze at, but he stays focused on his next raise. (Yes, of course

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Santa gets a raise each year!) He has no idea what it costs him to live the Santa life. He doesn't track his earnings nor his spending. Santa's got to provide for his reindeer, his horse and his North Pole home – just like the rest of us.

2. Santa Has No Emergency Account

Santa's transportation tends to break down right in the middle of major blizzards. Only last week, he had to whip out his credit card to pay for sleigh-towing. When Santa finally made it to the repair shop, he again had pay for the sleigh repair with credit. Just last year, he nearly had frost bite after his brand new sleigh had broken down.

3. Santa Lives Paycheck to Paycheck

Santa cashes his paycheck at the North Pole Bank, but most of the money gets spent before it makes its way to his checkbook. If it makes it there, most of the money is already owed to the credit card company. Santa has no other money set aside.

4. Santa Doesn't Enjoy Balancing His Checkbook

Santa forgets to balance the checkbook. He spends money, but is never sure what he has available to spend. Santa doesn't know how to build in some fun to help him enjoy working in his checkbook.

5. Santa Spends His Raises and Bonuses

Santa got a nice raise back in January, following his Bonus check in December (bonus based on number of chimneys completed for the year). He thought he'd have plenty of money this year. But Santa likes nice, updated equipment at all times. He bought brand new gear for all his reindeer, even though last year's would have done the job.

6. Santa Eats Most of His Meals Out

Since Santa's job requires that he spend a large amount of time traveling, Santa tends to eat out way too much. He also has to feed his reindeer each time he sits down to eat. The tips alone are enough to keep him in the poorhouse.

7. Santa Lives on the Edge

Santa keeps himself so busy that he can't sit down and plan his life. He hasn't set up a plan to build

extra money into his checkbook, nor has he made a decision to actually save any of his money. Even setting up automatic deposit would be helpful. Another emergency could wipe him out. (No more Santa?)

8. Santa is Not Preparing for the Future

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Santa, jolly fellow that he is, has no money set aside to work for him. He may end up working until his hair is much whiter (or gone). It's pretty much a given that Santa will need to replace that sleigh and maybe even some of the reindeer over the years. Because most of his money now goes to pay off credit cards, Santa just can't picture tucking away any money.

9. Santa Spends Too Much on R & R

Even Santa needs a little rest and relaxation after all that hard work. If he runs out of cash, he charges it. (No, I promised not to tell what Santa does for R & R. He does know who's been naughty or nice ...)

10. Santa Can't Stay Motivated

Santa gives himself a good lecture from time to time. He knows he should be doing better, but he just can't get any traction. Saving his money seems like an overwhelming obstacle. Santa hasn't discovered there are tricks out there to make saving money a fun thing, something he can look forward to doing.

Darlene Arechederra offers simple, unique strategies to help you become a saver. She believes the trick is to discover which ideas work best for you — because your money is not one-size-fits-all. Discover your **own** unique strategy today! Free weekly newsletter.



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