Christmas SHOPPER'S GUIDE

Santa not harmful to youngsters

THE OLD MAN himself, Santa Claus, shares a pre - Christmas chat with two - month old Deonta E. Julius at Mondawmin Mall.

By Carl Korn

BALTIMORE (UPI) — If your child peels the cotton beard from the surprised face of a department store Santa, or some impish know-it-all informs your youngster there's no such thing as Santa Claus, parents shouldn't feel guilty for having left those never-eaten milk and cookies for Old St. Nick.

Children, according to experts, just don't seem to care.

Although Dr. Stanford Friedman, director of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry at the University of Maryland Hospital, calls the Santa Claus myth "a bad custom," he says little to no damage results from parents perpetuating the age-old white lie.

"It ought to have some effect. You would think children would feel deceived later on," Friedman said, "But there is no evidence of this."

Friedman said young children, perhaps associating Santa Claus with gifts, love and happiness, tend to accept disclosure there is no Santa "as a fairy story."

More commonly, he said, parents experience guilt knowing they lied about Santa's existence to their children – and their children found them out.

He said other parents fear the "upsetting reaction" that discovering Santa Claus is really "Uncle Joe" will have on their children.

"This just shows there are differences between adults and children," Friedman said. "Little children don't seem to care."

But sometimes children do care, coming to their parents questioning the whispers they heard in school, or why they saw three Santas walking together downtown.

"An honest approach is the best approach," said Dr. Alicia Guttman, a child psychiatrist at the University of Maryland Hospital who recently had to answer claus-related queries from her child. "It should be in concrete terms according to the level of understanding of the child, and the age.

"It depends on each family, but generally it is good to get back to a little history," she said. "It helps to tell the story of Santa Claus, how it started, and present to (the child) that Santa Claus is a symbol of someone who is giving, a grandfatherly figure.

"What is important," Mrs. Guttman would tell children. "Is the symbol of giving."

Mrs. Guttman said belief in Santa Claus is not as great as in "old times" when parents were stricter, had narrower views on child-rearing, and were against softening and spoiling their children by giving presents.

"It was much easier for them to say someone else (Santa Claus) was giving to the child," Mrs. Guttman said. "They also believed that it was important for the child to believe that someone was checking on his behavior."

Now, Mrs. Guttman adds, "There is less of a need for an external force."

Blue and White Ball is Jan. 14

Allen Quille, one of Baltimore's outstanding business and community leaders and president of Quille's Parking Company, will serve as chairman of the Jewish National Fund's 1984 Blue and White Ball. Ball co-chairman will be Samuel Winik, co-founder of the Haar-Win Parking Company.

The annual gala will be held at 7:30 p.m. on Saturday, January 14 at the Baltimore Convention Center.

The announcement was made by JNF Executive Director Bernie Kiewe. "We are delighted to have two such distinguished community leaders heading this year's Blue and White Ball committee", said Mr. Kiewe. The 1984 ball will honor Alleck Resnick, national president of the Zionist Organization of America (ZOA).

A strong supporter of Israel, Allen Quille is involved in numerous business ventures and community activities. In addition to owning a chain of parking lots, he is vice president of the Harbor Bank of Maryland and has several real estate businesses.

Mr. Quille's community activities include serving as an officer or board member of a wide variety of local and international organizations. He is presently Vice President of JNF and President of the Safety First Club of Maryland.

A life member of NAACP, Mr. Quille served as 1977 General Chairman for the NAACP Mississippi Campaign, which raised the largest amount of any state in the nation.

He is also a life member of ZOA and is a member of the University of Maryland Advisory Board, Awards Board for the City of Baltimore, Advisory Board of the Department of Economic and Community Development, the University of Maryland Hospital Advisory Subcommittee and the Board of Regents of Morgan State University.

He is a board member of many organizations including Equal Opportunity Commission, American Red Cross, Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts of America, Better Business Bureau, United Fund, Provident Hospital, Coppin State College, Retinitis Pigmentosa Foundation, Democratic National Finance Committee, American Diabetes Association and Israel Bonds.

He also serves on the boards of America-Israel Society, Chamber of Commerce, Salvation Army, Presidents Club, Advertising Club of Maryland, Prime Ministers Conference for the State of Israel, Patient Employment Program, Stella Maris Hospice and Mayor Schaefer's Civic Fund.

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Christmas SHOPPER'S GUIDE

Consumer commission releases suggestions for buying safe toys

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission has pointed out while toys as a whole may be safer, shoppers cannot assume that all toys which they might buy are safe.

CPSC recommends these guidelines for selecting a safe toy:

— Select toys to suit the skills, abilities and interests of the individual child. Federal safety requirements concerning sharp points and sharp metal and glass edges apply to all toys for children under eight years of age. Toys intended for children under three by law cannot be so small or contain parts so small that they can be swallowed or become lodged in a child's windpipe, ears, or nose.

— Be a label reader. Look for and heed age recommendations, such as "Not recommended for children under three." Look for other safety labels such as "Flame retardant-Flame resistant".

— Make sure that all instructions are clear to you... and when appropriate, to the child.

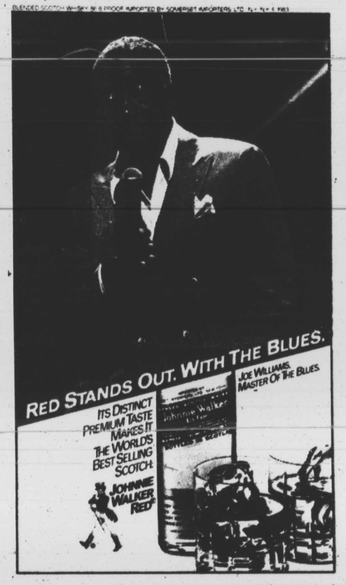
— Discard plastic wrappings on toys immediately, before they become deadly playthings.

— Toys with long strings or cords are not recommended for infants and very young children because they can cause strangulation.

— Electric toys with heating elements are recommended only for children over eight years old.

— Arrows or darts used by children should have soft cork tips, rubber suction cups or other protective tips. Check to be sure tips are secure.

— When buying toy guns and caps, be wary of those that can produce sounds at noise levels that can damage hearing. Federal law requires this warning on boxes of caps producing loud noises: "WARNING—Do not fire closer than one foot to the ear. Do not use indoors." Parents should not give these caps to children too young to understand this warning.



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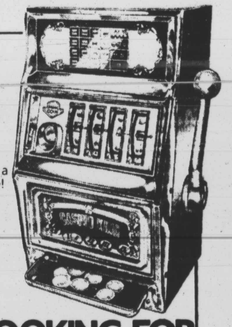

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