

FRIDAY

MAGAZINE

A Weekly Feature
of the Daily Nexus

THURSDAY EDITION

By JOHN BAUR

SANTA MARIA—From the Town Center Mall to the Far Western Tavern the word was out and the reactions glum. Christmas would not come to Santa Maria.

Oh, the Christmas season would be there, and actually had been for months. Since early July the stores had been bedecked with wreaths, trees, and miniature elves, and the Muzak had been pumping out nothing but "The Little Drummer Boy" and "Let it snow, let it snow, let it snow," since Aug. 3.

But the word was out from the office of the mayor. Santa wouldn't come, there'd be no reindeer, no Jingle Bells, nothing. A classic case of coitus interruptus.

"That's the word from the big Claus himself," the mayor's secretary, Mimsy Horogrove, proclaimed. "No explanation, just the dire news."

Why had this come to pass? Who could be responsible?

A little must be understood about the town itself. In 1960, Santa Maria was a sleepy little town with no thought on its collective mind but to grow the best damn sugar beets in the world and perfect the oak pit barbecue.

But then the air Force put in that roman candle factory down the road, and suddenly the town was no longer sleepy. Drowsy maybe, but it grew, and as it grew, people became aware that there were bucks to be made, deals to be transacted. In a word, moolah.

Before long the used car salesmen got together, as is their wont, and formed the Society of Intercontinental Ballistics Bucks. Poor folk need not apply.

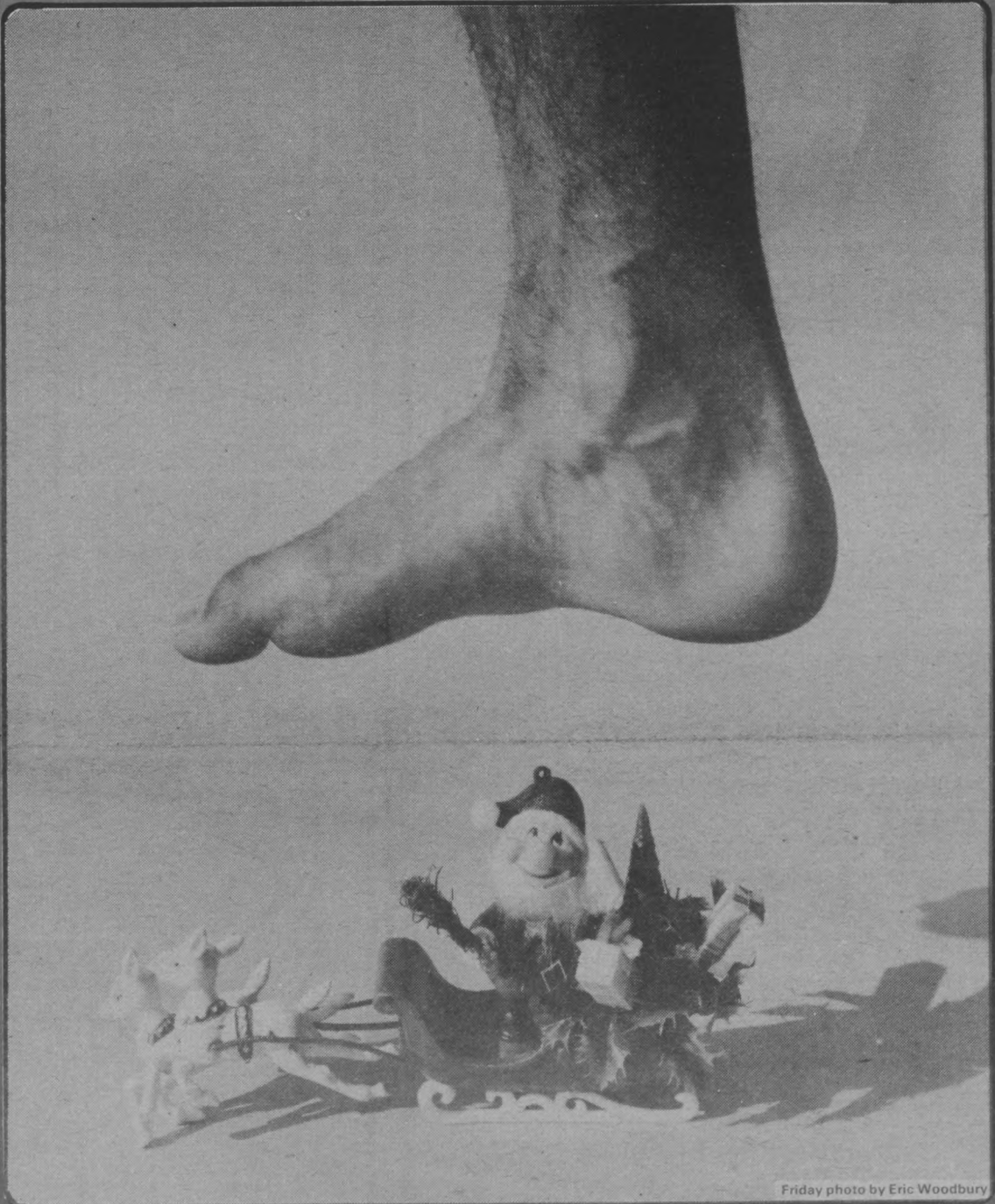
"It's for the good of the community," they chortled, adopting as their slogan the phrase, "If it's good for us, it'll probably work out for everybody else somehow."

Streets were built, sewers and power lines put in. Someday there might even be houses. Houses meant people, and people were the everybody else these folks needed.

And a new phrase was coined, "Take care of the yokel and the dollars will take care of themselves."

But as the rents on their Pismo Beach cabanas escalated, they found their needs for profits had increased.

When their plans for a giant amusement park called Los Padresland went down the toilet, flushed there by an obscene amount of liberal back-



Friday photo by Eric Woodbury

wash, they needed a new plan.

Even now the tribe of teepee dwellers and slightly pink bureaucrats from the urban slum that refused to sprawl to the south of them were threatening to cut off their natural gas supplies. Without these their frigid fannies would probably freeze, and the chili factory which provided spice for the salsa was endangered. Fast action was required.

And so Christmas was cancelled, or at least indefinitely postponed. The idea was based on the simple fact that the pre-Christmas buying season is the biggest boom for merchants and cabana owners, so extending the Christmas shopping season forever would provide a hefty bonus. Not a liberal one, since that word was anathema to them, but a hefty one.

And a curious thing came to pass.

The people liked it, for a while. Families were lining up once a week to have their kiddies' pictures taken with Santa. One tyke had his first photo with the jolly old fellow while he was still in short pants, and ended up having his wedding portraits done on the very same red-clad lap during the very same artificially extended Christmas season.

But all good things must come to an end, and so did this one.

People were becoming a little glassy-eyed, as the strains of Doris Day singing "Winter Wonderland," repeated for the thousandth time, began to do serious damage to their brains, and slowly profits began to drop off.

For a while the gold grubbers held out, as the building boom fostered by a

(Please turn to p.6, col.5)

By RICH PERLOFF

Try as they might, the Children of Israel in America have never been able to rival the Christmas holiday for pure tackiness and commercialized schmaltz. Despite the ever-increasing barrage of hype which heralds the yuletide season, Hanukkah has retained its low-key appeal. This is all well and good for traditionalists and fans of religious ritual, but for a young Jewish kid growing up in an af-

"All I Want for Christmas..." A Jewish Look at the Holidays

fluent middle-class section of West Los Angeles, it can be a traumatic experience.

For one thing, the precise regularity of Christmas was extremely unsettling; every year,

without fail, Christmas came on December 25th. I mean, we never knew when Hanukkah was officially scheduled to begin without checking the Bank of America calendar hanging in the kitchen.

It was always hard to find guys to play with around Christmas time. I remember tagging along with friends doing their "Christmas shopping" (which usually consisted of a quick trip to Newberry's) and then actually helping them wrap gifts in shiny green and red foil paper. Nothing like real boredom to put the fear of God in a man, I always say.

Speaking in purely financial terms, Hanukkah tended to be a real washout as well. By dint of a marvelous myth, and a tradition thousands of years old, we Jewish

folk were in the habit of giving eight gifts during Hanukkah, one for each day of the holiday's duration. Unfortunately, the value and quality of our presents was pro-rated over this eight-day period. While we were getting a mound of Duncan Yo-Yos and Whammo Bubble-makers, the other kids were being lavished, at one fell swoop of Santa's sleigh, with mechanical Godzillas that spit ping-pong balls, slot car raceways, bicycles, clothes, and other wonders of modern technology. God only knows how much booty could be jammed into one of those oversized stockings. It was a rough time.

Then, there was the matter of Christmas decorations; the little trappings and outward shows of

piety which adorned the rooftops and lawns of houses all over the neighborhood from mid-November until long after New Year's. Ah, but here we countered forcefully with blue and white Hanukkah lights! Fight neon with neon, as the saying goes. I always found this practice a bit perverse. Still in all, we never did manage to compete with the plaster of paris nativity scenes, cast iron reindeer, or my personal favorite, the Santa-in-a-helicopter on one roof which actually wound up in a Life magazine pictorial.

We never got a Christmas tree. I used to wander over to friends' houses soon after they got theirs, and watched the beaming families doing their trimming together. Sometimes, I would be asked to help, and I would reverently drape a single strand of tinsel as far around the tree as it would reach. I knew that I would be smitten from above if I dropped anything, or if I shook off too many pine needles. (Please turn to p. A7)

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CHRISTMAS Already?

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If there is a family get together or a Company Banquet in your future for 1, 2, or 120, R.S.V.P. Les at 964-7838. We offer facilities for quiet serene Banquets or "Parties" that want to become a part of Hobey's nightlife and dancing!

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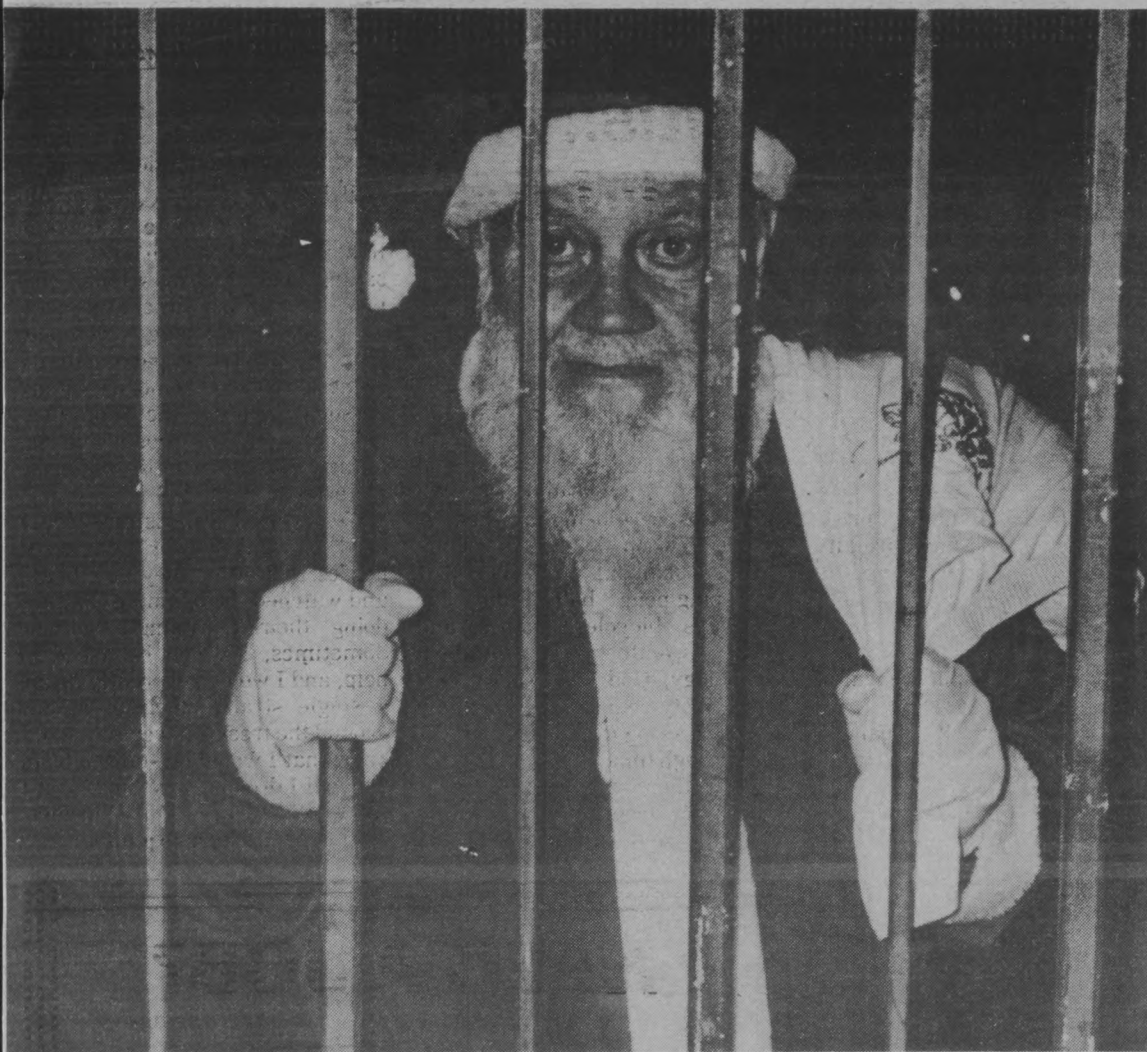
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Friday photo by Anthony Schulze

Visions of 'Why Me'

Santa Conspiracy: A Holiday Tragedy

By TOM BOLTON

I should know better than to answer the phone late at night. The results are almost always tragic, and this night was no exception.

A friend and I were well into celebrating the holidays, having just uncorked a bottle of good wine that had somehow survived the ravages of past parties, when the call came from the paper.

"Hey, what are you up to?" asked the editor in a tone that suggested I ought to have been just sitting, waiting for him to call.

"Oh, the usual," I replied, not attempting to hide the irritation in my voice. "I'm trying to catch up on a little studying." A stifled chuckle came across the phone line.

"Well, we need you to get down to the sheriff's station. We got a tip they've just arrested Santa Claus." It was my turn to laugh.

I hung up, a little bit miffed that whatever my illustrious editor had been smoking, he hadn't offered me any. The phone rang again.

"Hey, this isn't bullshit," he said. "Apparently the cops have arrested five guys who were all dressed up in Santa outfits. They're being charged with a conspiracy of some sort. You've got to get on it." He hung up before I could protest further.

"Damn," I said, as visions of "why me?" danced in my head. Confused, I grabbed the phone book and began searching for the number of the sheriff's office. It wasn't there, or I should say the whole page was missing, probably the victim of some past attempt to phone Skip's Pizza during a munchies binge.

I tried Information but couldn't get any farther than a mechanical voice telling me to "please check my directory for the number...BEEP."

Realizing there was no easy way out, I grabbed my notepad and set out for the sheriff's station. In true Christmas fashion, all the green traffic lights turned red as I approached. It was a color combination I didn't need.

"What do you want?" a burly sergeant said as I stepped up to the watchcommander's window. A sprig of mistletoe hung between us, but I was pretty sure he wasn't going to kiss me.

"What's the story on the Santa busts?" I asked, unable to keep from smiling. "Sounds brutal: conspiracy to spread joy and happiness throughout the world. I'd have locked the bums up, too." The sergeant wasn't smiling.

"Listen, you little punk," he finally replied. "I don't need any crap from you. We've got a really serious problem here. Seems like half the nut cases in the county have taken to dressing up like Santa."

After he detailed the cases, I had to agree, it was no laughing matter.

The first suspect was a 34-year-old man named Nicholas Sainte, who was picked up in the beach area after allegedly indecently exposing himself to passing roller-skaters.

"These kinds of arrests are tough to make, what with the white beard and all," the sergeant said, "but the guy's ex-wife recognized him as she skated by and agreed to testify."

Another suspect, whose name was not released, was booked on (Please turn to p.A7, col.1)

Alternatives Has a Noble Idea, But What if They Succeeded?

Every winter, as soon as the Thanksgiving turkey is put away for another year (and sometimes sooner), shopping centers and stores cheerfully spring into the holiday spirit and drag the rest of us along with them. And at just about the same time, a small voice cries out from somewhere: Stop the commercialism!!

This year's underdog is a Mississippi and Washington based organization called Alternatives, which is sponsoring the first annual "Best and Worst Christmas Contest."

Designed to "coincide with this year's avalanche of Christmas commercialism," the contest is seeking examples of gifts from holiday seasons past that were either "particularly tacky, tasteless, extravagant, expensive, awful, useless and/or utterly crass" or have "demonstrated a more meaningful, human and socially responsible celebration."

Examples of commercialism include, according to Alternatives, \$300 Monopoly games made out of chocolate, patriotic toilet seats and stockings filled with X-rated films.

The best alternative Christmas, they say, would include things that were home-made or recycled, gifts of time and gifts given to someone else in your name.

Alternatives will donate \$500 to the charity of each winner's choice. Interested? Mail your nomination, complete with a 200 to 300 word explanation of the merits of your selection, to Alternatives, 4274 Oaklawn Dr., Jackson, Miss. 39206.

It wouldn't be surprising to see a few entries from UCSB in the running. Finals week is certainly an "awful" Christmas present, and the UCSB water polo team's NCAA championship might qualify in the alternative Christmas category because it undoubtedly gladdened the hearts of many Gauchos.

Alternative's ultimate goal in the project is to totally de-commercialize the holiday season. Certainly a noble idea, but what if it succeeded?

The place is Isla Vista. The time is five years in the future....

"Hey Jim. What day is today?"

"Christmas."

"You're kidding."

"Why would I kid you, Norm?" answered Jim. "Merry Christmas."

"How could I miss Christmas? It seems like Thanksgiving was just yesterday."

calendar.

"I didn't have a calendar last year and I remembered Christmas," Norm said. "Why not this year?"

"No commercials."

"No what?"

"No commercials. No plastic santas. No 'A Charlie Brown Christmas.' No plastic wreaths on State Street."

"That's right! Commercialism officially died out this year. No Santa sliding across the snow on his Norelco razor. No Coca-Cola kids singing about teaching the world to sing in the shape of a Christmas tree."

"You'd sing, too, if you stayed the same age every year."

"No Sammy Davis in a Santa suit going 'plop, plop, fizz, fizz.'"

"No 'ring in the holidays with Andre Cold Duck and sparkling champagne.'"

"Boy, they sure don't make Christmas like they used to," Norm sighed.

"Not since that Alternatives group in Mississippi got everyone turned on to the idea of 'human and socially responsible' celebrations," Jim said.

"I used to be able to depend on the neighbors putting up Christmas lights to get me in the festive mood," Norm said.

"People are cutting the strings into sections, stuffing flowers in the sockets and giving them to friends as necklaces," Jim explained. "That's called recycling."

"How enlightening."

"Remember the good old fashioned holiday seasons when the musty odor of plastic Christmas trees and phony poinsettias wafted through the air? When the windows of surf shops had spray paintings of Santa hanging ten? When the Eagles couldn't get their album finished on time so they

came out with meaningful numbers like 'Please Come Home for Christmas?'"

"I'm dreaming of a green Christmas...."

"Exactly."

"Now that was the holiday spirit. How are merchants surviving the no-frills Christmas?"

"I'm not really sure. But Hallmark just came out with a new line of 'sorry I missed your (Please turn to p.A6, col.3)

FRIDAY
MAGAZINE

KARL MONDON
FEATURES EDITOR



Friday Mag Forced Into Early Closure

By KARL MONDON

Well, this is it. The final issue of Friday magazine.

Look, Saturday Evening Post, Friday... seems like all the fine magazines are folding these days. In our case, it was simply a lack of advertising support that spelt demise. We were barely able to reach a 70% ad ratio for this, our special yuletide issue.

But it wasn't just economic considerations that governed our decision to bail out. We had to admit it, we're losing our spunk. We knew we didn't have much talent, but goddammit, we had spunk!

We were going to produce the most beloved periodical to ever hit the campus by the sea. First, we needed to come up with a killer name. It would have to be a name highly cherished by the masses, in effect creating a degree of subliminal acceptance of the weekly feature despite the publication's quality.

Friday! Everybody loves Friday (except maybe bank tellers, but we didn't figure they made up much of our readership).

We set our graphics man, Mr. Tony Garzio, to work designing an appropriate logo. What he brought back was a leaning, off-balance Friday with racing stripes. He figured, "When people think of Friday, they're thinking weekend, and how to get there as quickly as possible." Sure. Tony

Another Visit From Saint Nick

By RICH PERLOFF

(with apologies to Clement Clarke Moore)

Twas the night before finals at UCSB,
More than ten thousand students as scared as can be,
The coffee was flowing, the night lights were on,
In hopes that a miracle would come with the dawn.

The students quite bleary-eyed, longed for their beds,
While visions of four-week breaks danced in their heads;
My roommate with his No-Doz, and I with my Zoom,
Were preparing to cram, barricading our room,
When I heard such a scream as I'll never forget,
And I said, "Holy shit! that guy can't be done yet!"

(Please turn to p.A5)

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Another Visit

I fell off my chair, banged my head on the door,
And left all my lecture notes strewn o'er the floor.
I ran to the window, peered out at the lawn,
And guessed as to what the hell was going on,
When, what to my bloodshot, red eyes should appear,
But a shopping cart pulled by eight sick-looking deer,
With an old, drunken driver, who stopped with a skid,
And I thought, "Who's this pervert attempting to kid?"
More rapid than eagles his deer found our trees
(After flying all night, they required some ease).
Then the old guy, he bellowed, "Screw Bio! Screw Chem!
Screw Math! Screw Physics! Who in God's name needs them!?"
Then he sucked at his bottle, and yelled at the deer,
"Hey, you guys! Off the roof! Get your fuzz-batts down here!"
But the deer barked not to his words most sublime,
So, at length he shut up, and proceeded to climb.
I watched his grim struggle as long as I could;
"Call the cops," said my roommate. I said, "What's the good?"
The old man reached the rooftop, and started to curse,
And I thought to myself, "Things just couldn't be worse."
Then, the ceiling caved in with an ear-splitting roar,
And this guy and eight deer were all sprawled on our floor.
He was dressed in red rags; they were tattered and worn,

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By DREW ROBBINS

While I've never made a point of advertising it, the fact is that I've never really cared too much for Christmas. "Godless Communist," is probably what you're thinking. Now that may be true, but it does not have anything to do with my feelings about Christmas.

You see, my father owns a toy store. "How neat," you think. Well, just for your information, having to work in a toy store is no fun at all. Perfectly normal people can suddenly turn into greedy cut-throats once they get inside a toy store. I have seen some kids who would kill their grandmothers for a certain toy.

Right about now you're probably saying to yourself, "Yeah, real tough, the kid grew up with all the toys he ever wanted." Not so. True, I did get a lot of toys, but only the ones my father could not sell. Do you have any idea how depressing it can be to grow up with all the toys the other kids did not want?

And then there's Santa Claus. I'll bet you believed in Santa Claus when you were young (In fact, some of you may still). I think the Santa Claus idea stimulates creative and healthy thoughts, but I never got to believe in Santa. It sort of blew the whole thing when I found out my dad wasn't home because he was out selling toys to parents for Christmas.

Working for eight consecutive Christmases in a toy store, however, has given me some amusement. I think I will always hold a special place in my heart for the woman who called asking if we had electric tarantulas. Isn't that something you always wanted for Christmas?

Over the years I have noticed a

Longing Lost Li



change in toys. There was a time when I was happy with a set of blocks. Nowadays the kids want something called Merlin. I guess to understand them you either need to be a year-old or have a degree

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Tom Saint Nick

(Continued from p.A3)

And his soot-blackened skin showed through where they were torn.
 He sat swilling wine from a one-gallon jug,
 While the eight deer were busy befouling our rag.
 His eyes were unfocused, his white beard was frayed,
 He barbled and giggled and tittered and swayed.
 His mouth twisted into a sick-looking grin,
 And he said, "Thanks so much for inviting us in."
 A cigarette butt he held clamped in his gums,
 And he just sat and stared, marching loudly on Tams;
 His face needed washing, his belly was huge,
 His cheeks, I could see, were smeared thickly with rouge.
 He was greasy and dirty (I don't think he cared),
 And I grinned when he saw me, but Shit! I was scared;
 He gave me a wink, and he rose to his feet,
 And I wondered if they'd hear me scream 'cross the street.
 He spoke not a word, but went straight to his task,
 Which was looting our house while draining his flask.
 Then, cramming a finger up into his nose,
 He left with his deer, calling out "Thar she blows!"
 He leapt into his cart and lashed out with his whip,
 And he said, "Hey, let's roll! We've got more folks to clip!"
 And I heard him speak once more before he was gone:
 Hell! I think I'll run Christmas like this from now on!"

The Long Lincoln Logs



something wrong, the kind of buzzing that says, "Hey dummy, what the hell do you think you're doing?"

I don't want to leave you with the impression that I hate the dozens of electronic games that are sold. After all, they are helping to pay for my college education. Few things make me happier than to see a father walking out of the store with a very small bag, all the time knowing that the bag contains three electronic games costing about \$150.

Another disturbing trend I have noticed in toys is the manufacturers' ability to take a simple game and make it complex (and more importantly, more expensive). Remember the game you used to play in elementary school called "hangman?" Back then you played with a pencil and paper, and for a 50-cent investment you could play hangman until you dropped. Now the game is packaged by Milton Bradley; same game, fancy plastic score-keeper, and it costs \$10. Something is wrong.

My favorite new toy on the market this season is something called "Big Trak." For only \$50 (that seems to be the standard price) you can buy a programable truck that will roam about the house shooting "lazer blasts" at people. The instruction book alone is about 25 pages, most of which I can't understand at all. The toy is supposed to be for 10-year-olds.

After trying to get "Big Trak" to work, and only hearing the "Hey stupid" buzzer, I found myself longing more and more for the days when Lincoln Logs were popular. I would even settle for an electric tarantula.

computer science! ... of-hand I would say, there are at three dozen popular computer games. My father carries at two dozen, of which I can only four. The rest are beyond. The thing I really object to, however, is the noise the nine makes when you do

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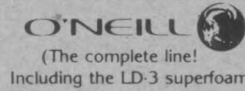
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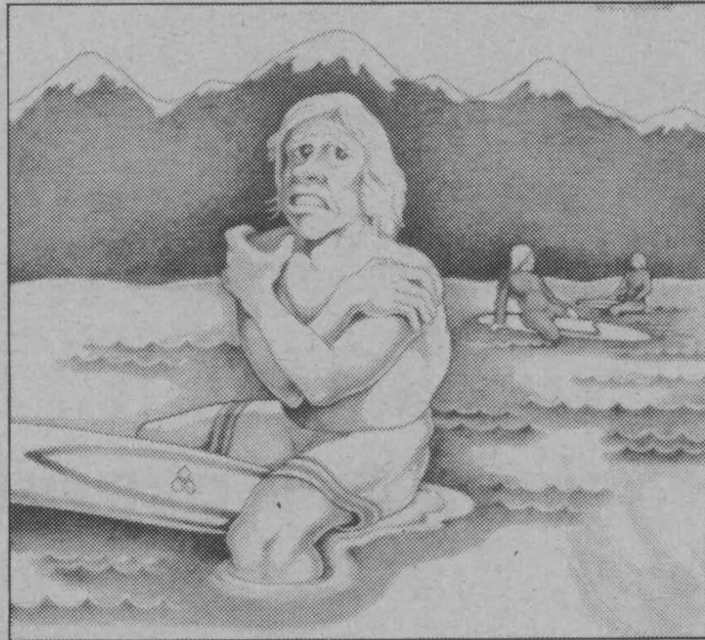
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Contest

(Continued from p. A3)
sellers."
"I'll bet," Norm said. "How did so many people get into this alternative Christmas business? What exactly is an alternative Christmas?"

"I'm not sure. But I understand the company behind the whole project has a series of catalogues you can buy that tell you how to develop alternative celebration styles."

"Wait a minute, Jim. Isn't that why Christmas commercialism was rejected in the first place? Because it seemed phony, to have stores and magazine ads and radio and television telling us what to buy and where to buy it and when?"

"I don't remember."
"There's something fishy there...."
"Merry Christmas, Norm."
--John M. Wilkens

Friday

(Continued from p. A3)
Anyhow, after sticking it on the front page we decided to use it. Besides we didn't have any other option. We were more preoccupied with what to put inside the cover. Whatever, it would have to be hard-hitting, responsible journalism.

And there we were throughout the quarter, covering the biggies: bird watching, frisbee golf, avocados. Soon the excitement got to us; we lost our spunk. We could no longer keep up with our logo's frisky image.

It showed. A cynical taint crept into our reporting until even the sacred and lucrative institution of Christmas had Friday mud smeared over it.

So you see we had to abandon our journalistic endeavor. What started out as bright, starry-eyed feature of the Daily Nexus, within three months became a tired, spiteful rag. We considered con-

tinuing as Monday magazine complete with a new drippy logo Garzio. But what the hell, why let optimism under new leaders take over the reigns?

We here at Friday magazine are confident that our successors will be as amusing to the masses as we were. We tried. We're not proud. We know the mention of Friday will always bring joy as long as the five day work week exists.

Say good-night, Karl.
"Good-night."

Xmas Off

(Continued from p. A1)
need for storage space for all Christmas presents spread a little extra wealth around. But soon it too faded, and once again the beach front property was threatened with foreclosure.

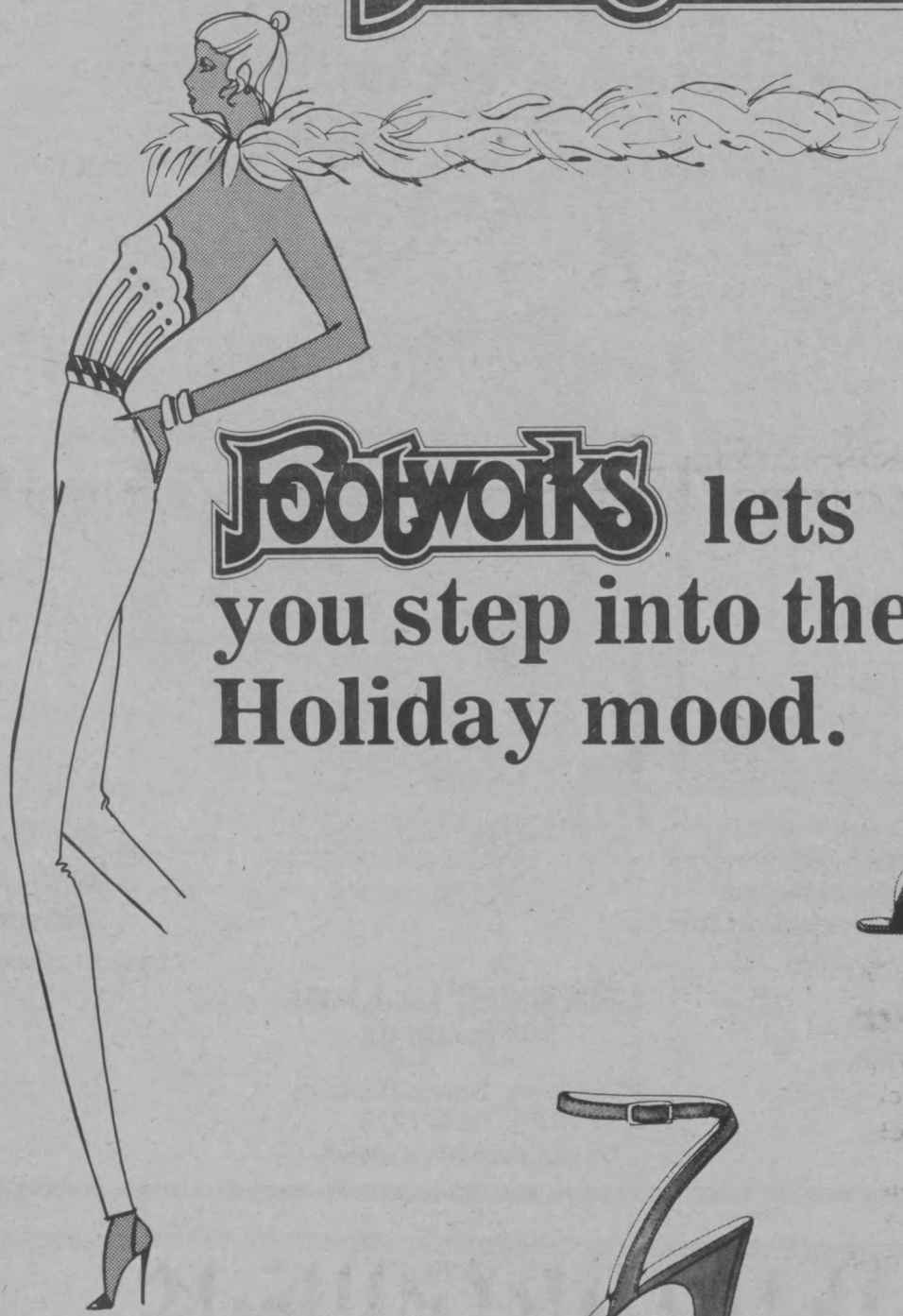
So Christmas came at last, with the sound of one last sale being rung up (KaChing!), and the cash register slamming shut.

And the community prospered and continued to grow, such be the nature of busy little communities. For it had grown up, and was developing some self-awareness. The used car salesman couldn't keep good folks down forever.

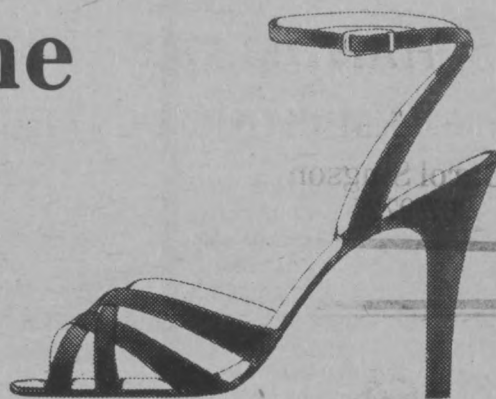
And everybody lived happily, at least reasonably so, ever after.

John Baur is one of the few Nexites in recent memory to actually leave UCSB when his time came. During his tenure on the staff he was a legend in his own mind. He is now a staff member at the Santa Maria Times, and professes to like the town. If the piece indicates otherwise, explains, "It's satire dummy. Where have you been?"

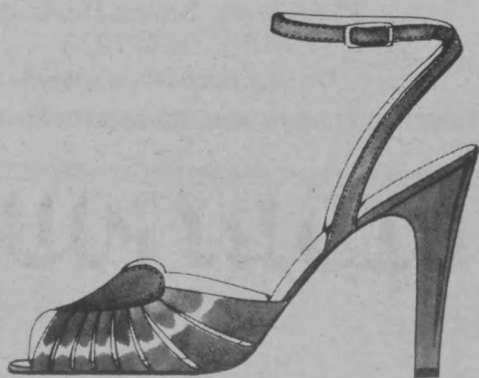
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Santa Conspiracy:

(Continued from p.A3)
 eral drug charges, including session of cocaine and counting to the delinquency of a or. "It was incredible," the geant exclaimed. "This guy set up on a corner in Goleta the kids were coming up, ng on his lap, and ordering r drugs. We were tipped off n a 23-year-old college student down and told Santa he wanted white Christmas. We may be nb, but we're not that dumb." decided not to argue the point. he third case was really rather mless, what you might call ta-on-the-brain. The suspect, a dle-aged gentleman with the d of a three-year-old, was covered by an Isla Vista couple le he was trying to enter their se through the chimney. He s charged with trespassing ding a psychiatric examination er deputies discovered the se actually had no chimney. he most brutal crime by far, ever, was allegedly committed an out-of-town pair who were tting to take the fun out of istmas and discredit the good ne of Santa Claus.

Seems these two, who were kng different sections of the r, never got anything for istmas when they were kids," sergeant said. "Every year it s the same thing, a lump of coal. Frankly, there ain't a lot you do with a lump of coal, ecially in Southern California." was strange, but I was starting get choked up. These two men been so disturbed by their own dhood experiences that they e conspiring to ruin for today's s one of the greatest myths of time; Santa Claus. What did they do?" I asked ntively.

It was pretty gruesome. They l one kid that Santa was just a y by big business to increase ir sales. The kid took it hard. They told a bright-eyed third-

Jewish

(Continued from p.2)

hen I got home, I would confer th my brother about the ssibility of cajoling our parents o getting us a "Hanukkah sh," but somehow we both knew wouldn't be the same. Christmas Eve was tolerable. I ould sit in front of the television sipping egg nog, and watch rosty the Snowman." "Rudolph e Red-Nosed Reindeer." "Miracle on 34th Street," and ery version of "A Christmas rol" ever made. I would go to d wondering what visions of gar-plums were like. So, there was a certain amount jealousy connected with not ng able to celebrate Christmas. t now I'm older and hopefully a wiser. I learned some time ago at people, if they are so inclined, n co-exist despite their ilosophical and/or religious bringings. And, to prove it, this ar my friends and I are going to t shamefacedly swackered at a ristmas Eve party and laugh r way through the most garish dnight mass we can find. Ho-ho-ho.

grader that he wasn't getting any toys for Christmas, just spelling workbooks. We finally nabbed them when they told one of our undercover agents, posing as a 5-year-old, that a string of toystore bombings was planned.

"That's illegal, you know," said the sergeant.

I nodded that I understood, thanked the sergeant, and left for the office to type up my story, a few paragraphs for the next day's police blotter section. When I finally returned home some three hours later, I sat down, somewhat disillusioned, to drink the wine I had opened earlier.

After I had succeeded in draining most of the bottle, the

phone rang. I hesitated. Deja vu? Bad drugs? The phone kept ringing. I knew better, but the curiosity became overwhelming. What could they want at this time of night. I picked up the phone... It was my editor.

"Hey, what're you up to?" he asked.

My suspicions were aroused. "Why?"

"Well, I've got this great story for you..." he began to say as I hung up.

With that out of the way, I pulled the phone off the hook, scrounged another bottle of wine out of the cupboard, and set about trying to recover my lost Christmas spirit.

Cheers!

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