

# PowWow #26



**PowWow #26** is by Joyce Worley Katz, created for the monthly assembly of Apa V, Dec. 1 1995. Thanks to Arnie for doing the onerous chores. This is Mailing Number Twenty-Six, the first day of the Holiday Season. Our topic this month is a testimony to my very favorite time of year. As we gather to Deck The Halls, our thoughts may be on mistletoe and holly, but our muscles are turned to the perennial activity of fanac, as we begin our Third Year of Apa V activity. Who would have ever thought it.

## The Holidays

Today is the best day of the year. It's tree-trim day, and I'm all aglow, as I trot out all the favorite balls and baubles to start my Season of Decoration.

### Lift Your Voice

JoHn said to me yesterday, when I told him of my plans to put the Vegrants to work, "Oh, we'll be drinking mulled cider and singing carols." I hopped right on that one.

Normally people aren't quite that anxious to hear me sing, at least after they've heard it once. But hardly anyone would be so heartless as to deny me one chorus of *Deck The Halls* or even (my fave) *God Rest Ye. Marry, Gentlemen, let not your hart dismay*.

I like to think about happy harts at play, gamboling across the lawn, and sadden to think of the dismayed ones, especially since the song tells us that marriage would cure it all.

(This song, you know, is the reason that deer statues are such favorite decorations. Never you mind that nonsense about reindeer.)

### Me and Rudolf

I like my birthdate, January 9. Oh, yes, it ran into Christmas and cut down on the presents, but it has a good firm sound to it, yet near enough to the beginning of the year to fit with the feeling of fresh starts.

I worried about the Curse of Capricorn when I was in my teens. Then I stumbled across one text that said I was born under the sign of the fixed star Deneb that cancelled out all my bad tendencies. I was relieved to know it, and clung to Deneb

with great fondness.

Alas, another calendar and another year revealed I was born on the same day, if not the same year, as Richard Nixon. This threw me into a decade of gloom, since he too was apparently under Deneb, but look where it got him.

Imagine my glee when I learned that no less great a personage, a cultural icon, a guru to all generations was born on my day. That most graceful of guides, Rudolf the Rednosed Reindeer, sprang to being just when I did.

A recent history of Rudolf explained that he was the creation of a group of Montgomery Ward execs who, sitting around the conference table one January morn, determined to give away a Christmas book for children. They assigned the chore to Robert L. May, a young copywriter who created the concept and wrote the story, and Monkeys gave away 2,500,000 that year.

### Speaking of Monkeys

The first Christmas I remember was out on Twin Springs farm. We'd no electricity, and I remembering coming down the stairs into the room aglow with kerosene lanterns. A glass teaset, a doll named Emily, and a big monkey-clown named Jocko sat gathered around a tiny red table.

It must have been when I was only two or three. But here they are again, with me for the Holidays.

Ah, tree-trim day.

Every year I think to myself, "Well, this year I'll do less, and leave some of the stuff in the box." But the ornaments, dolls

and cars and ponies and bears, call out to me, longing for their day in the sun. I'm convinced each lies in state for eleven months, dreaming of the day it'll be brought forth to do its sparkly best. How could I disappoint these tiny hearts?

I love the careless clutter of the seasonal companions, the frivolity and warmth, the casual-yet-studied arrangements of bows and bells. They provide continuity to my life, and tie me to all the holidays before.

I've been watching Ken Burns' *Baseball* with Arnie. One remark, by a poetically inclined sports historian, really stuck with me, and for the first time, made me see its timeless appeal. "Baseball is a matter of continuity...." I can really get behind that philosophy, for that's the way the Holiday Season is for me. As I hang each ornament, and place each statuette, I recall my Mother, my siblings...the old ties are renewed through time-and-space.

And through time-and-space, I recall each and every fan who tied a bow to my tree. Fans, with their mixed bag of politics and religion, sometimes have an off-hand manner about Sacred Icons. Yet, the Cup is hoisted, the Yule is rung, the Carol sang.

And as all look toward The Tree, *let nothing you dismay*.

