

Between You and Me x 2

By Monty Carter

What Do You Want for Christmas? (Hope)

Thanksgiving has come and gone. For Christians, the Advent Season, a four-week observance and celebration leading up to the birth (coming) of Jesus Christ, began this past Sunday. Hope, peace, joy, and love are the Advent themes for each week. Many of us celebrated the lighting of the “hope” candle in the Advent wreath during worship services on Sunday. Each week, a different candle is lit, and the corresponding scriptures from the Old and New Testaments are read, studied, and proclaimed. Advent provides an intentional framework for anticipating the coming of Jesus at Bethlehem and His second coming.

The question in the title above looms every year. It’s a question every store Santa asks visiting children. Most children are ready with their answers, and some even bring their entire list. This year, each week I’d like to explore the four Advent themes as they relate to what we want for Christmas. Make it personal, just for you. I am posting my email address below, so please feel free to share your answers with me. Let’s begin with hope. Forget human limitations, use your imagination, the sky is the limit! What do you want for Christmas regarding HOPE?

Oh, God knows there are many things I’m hoping for. However, this year I’m hoping for a breakthrough on dementia - Alzheimer’s, vascular, Lewy Body, CTE, or frontotemporal. I have witnessed firsthand the debilitating and insidious nature of this disease in close family members. The toll it takes on its victims and their loved ones is devastating on many levels. The last few years, I have worked hard spiritually, emotionally, and mentally to rid myself of hate. Hating people, groups, etc. However, I hate dementia! My hatred for it has only grown stronger as I’ve watched loved ones suffer and die from it. My hatred for it has blossomed by witnessing what it has done to caregivers I love, respect, and admire.

Dementia is death by inches. Every day, week, month, and year that passes steals more joy, dignity, peace, and patience from the afflicted and their family, most notably primary

caregivers. Watching loved ones behave in ways they would never do so in their right mind is gut-wrenching. I’ve walked away from more visits and phone conversations asking God, “Why?” so many times. I’ve pleaded for Him to end the suffering. And I weep when there is no answer. I’ve been fist-shaking angry at God about it. One night, I actually screamed at Him because of the pain it was causing someone I love very much, a primary caregiver. I have grieved for her as much as I have for our loved one. This isn’t right, it’s not fair! No one deserves this.

One of the most intelligent, critical-thinking men I ever knew and loved suffered the ravaging results and brain theft from Alzheimer’s. A man whose name still appears on many electrical engineering-related patents was reduced to watching reruns of the Game Show Channel. He was so intelligent that he could do NY Times crossword puzzles in his sleep. He loved them, and the more difficult the better. I remember sitting with him several years into the disease. He had his ever-present puzzle book in hand as we watched TV. He had worked on it for a couple of hours but hadn’t turned the page. He got up to go into the kitchen, and that’s when I saw the empty crossword puzzle with his pencil tucked inside. He had been staring blankly at the book for hours. I cried so hard that night in bed. This hero of mine had crossed an unthinkable boundary. In just a few short years, he went from independent to assisted living and finally memory care. This wonderful husband and loving father of seven children, a proud war veteran, and brilliant engineer, could not survive the mind-gobbling disease. Death was a cruel relief.

One thing I know, ALZ did not and could not separate Dad Mills from the love of God in Christ, Jesus! (Romans 8:35-39) I loved him and still do!

I am HOPING: somewhere, somehow, a team of brilliant scientists and researchers will find a cure or significant treatment for dementia. This is my hope for Christmas 2025. What is yours?

Agape, Monty

Atmos Energy Makes Donation For Winter Assistance

As communities and families prepare for the holidays and a winter heating season that is fast approaching, Atmos Energy is proud to donate an additional \$2 million in energy assistance funding across the eight states it serves. These funds, which supplement the \$1.5 million that Atmos Energy donated to energy assistance agencies in September, will help neighbors needing financial resources to pay for past-due utility bills, home weatherization upgrades, and repair and replacement of customer-owned natural gas appliances and piping.

“Fueling hope and growth for neighbors in need is a deeply rooted part of our AtmoSpirit culture, and we are proud to make this new contribution on top of the funds we donated in September,” said Public Affairs Manager Kay Coomes. “An essential pillar of Atmos Energy’s Fueling Safe and Thriving Communities initiative is to support the elderly, individuals with disabilities, veterans, families experiencing financial hardship, and other eligible individuals who need urgent access to essential resources before winter arrives.”

Here is a list of energy assistance agencies that have received Atmos Energy donations in Kentucky:

- Audubon Area Community Services
- Bluegrass Community Action Agency
- Community Action of Southern Kentucky
- Help Office of Owensboro
- Lake Cumberland Community Action Agency
- Pennyrile Allied Community Services
- Salvation Army/Kentucky
- West Kentucky Allied Services

Customers seeking energy assistance are encouraged to call 211 or visit atmosenergy.com/assistance to locate an agency. Atmos Energy encourages customers needing solutions to keep up with their monthly natural gas expenses, or seeking to reconnect their natural gas service, to contact Atmos Energy’s customer service team at 888.286.6700 or visit the Atmos Energy Account Center.

“Atmos Energy is committed to delivering safe, reliable, and efficient natural gas service so that your family can stay safe and comfortable throughout the winter heating season,” added Coomes. “Now is also a great time to review the Winter Warm-Up Checklist as a quick and easy way to prepare your household for cold weather.”

Atmos Energy customers looking for ways to support their neighbors are invited to consider making a Sharing the Warmth donation on the website – every penny of your contribution will help those in need. Financial assistance may also be available through a variety of federal, state, and local programs. The federal Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) releases funds to all states and territories to help pay utility bills. Atmos Energy is also a member of the National Energy & Utility Affordability Coalition (NEUAC) which works to end energy poverty through advocacy and education.

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Deaths And Funerals

Billy VanHoose

Billy Earl VanHoose died on Friday, December 5 after fighting a one year battle with ALS.

Billy was autistic and had suffered two strokes; however, he participated in Special Olympics and Kentucky in past years. He loved life and competition and was very athletic.

He enjoyed fishing with family members and loved sports teams, especially the Detroit Tigers. He also enjoyed trains and had ridden the Amtrak from Carbondale, Illinois to Detroit.

He is survived by his father, Larry VanHoose and step-mother, Gail VanHoose of Fenton, Michigan; his mother, Hanna VanHoose of Murfreesboro, Tennessee; a sister, Lisa Bartolotto (Enu) of Lascassas, Tennessee; a brother, Robert VanHoose (Chrissy), also of Lascassas; a half-brothers, Scott Conn (Veronica) of Allen Park, Michigan and Larry VanHoose of Michigan; his half-sisters, Shari Rehs (Bob) of Richmond, Michigan and Kimberly Machado of Michigan; and nieces,

nephews, and cousins.

Funeral service will be Saturday, December 13, 12:00 P.M. at Whitsell Funeral Home in Sturgis.

Burial will be in Pythian Ridge Cemetery in Sturgis.

Visitation will be 10:00 A.M. to service time at the funeral home.

Bobby Rhea

Bobby Rhea, 84, of Salem, Kentucky died on Saturday, December



6 at his home.

He was born June 30, 1941 to the late W. J. Rhea, Jr. and Elizabeth “Libby” Wedding Rhea in DeKoven.

Bobby was a lifelong farmer who enjoyed hunting, fishing, and listening to classic country music. He also enjoyed playing cards and pool and telling

jokes.

In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by a sister, Lynn Davenport and a daughter, Rena Stewart

He is survived by his companion of 35 years, Susan Markham of Salem; three sons, Rodney Rhea of Newburg, Indiana, Kevin Ray of Morganfield and Brandon Rhea and wife, Jerdon of Morganfield; four daughters, Rhonda Armstrong of Newburg, Shannon. Blackburn and husband, Mark of Morganfield, Christina Lee of Salem, and Misty Markam of Fredonia; a sister, Betty Curry of Clay, Kentucky; 17 grandchildren; 18 great-grandchildren; and one great-great-grandchild.

Funeral service will be Thursday, December 11, 1:00 P.M., at Whitsell Funeral Home in Morganfield. The Rev. Jerry Chesser will officiate.

Burial will be in Odd Fellows Cemetery in Clay.

Visitation will be 10:00 A.M. until service time on Thursday at the funeral home.

Voter Registration Increasing In State

Secretary of State Michael Adams announced that voter registration continued to grow in November, despite no state elections in the off-year.

“Despite the exhaustion many voters now feel with this era of politics, that has not stopped them from registering to vote in significant numbers, even in a year when we don’t vote,” Adams said.

In November, 3,748 voters were removed: 2,982 who were deceased, 385 felony convicts, 259 who moved out of state, 65 adjudged mentally incompetent, 26 who voluntarily de-registered, 19 duplicate registrations, and 12 non-citizens.

Republican registration constitutes 48 percent of the electorate, with 1,595,408 voters. Republican registration grew by 2,412 voters, a .15 percent increase. Democratic registration accounts for 41 percent of the elec-

torate, with 1,379,958 voters. Democratic registration fell by 1,914, a .14 percent decrease. There are 371,955 voters registered under other political affilia-

tions (mostly independent), making up 11 percent of the electorate. “Other” registration rose by 1,209, a .33 percent increase.

PUBLIC NOTICE

THE FOLLOWING ESTATE HAVE BEEN PROBATED IN UNION DISTRICT COURT. PERSONS HAVING CLAIMS TO FILE AGAINST SAID ESTATES MUST FILE SAME NOT LATER THAN SIX MONTHS FROM THE DATE OF THE APPOINTMENT OF THE FIDUCIARY.

Estate of David Charles Alvey. Executor William A. Alvey, 10588 State Route 109, Sturgis, KY 42459. Date of appointment December 4, 2025. Attorney Arnett Law Office, PLLC, P.O. Box 416, Morganfield, KY 42437

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PUBLIC NOTICE

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

Request for Proposal for design services for the design of a new bridge on Hitesville Road over Mason Creek, located in Union County, KY, will be received by the Union County Fiscal Court until 8:30 a.m. Central Standard Time on January 13, 2026. They will be publicly read in Union County Fiscal Court, 2nd floor of the Union County Courthouse, 100 West Main Street, Morganfield, KY, on January 13, 2026, during the regularly scheduled court meeting at 9:00 am.

The Contract Documents, including technical specifications and drawings, may be examined at the following locations:

Union County Judges Office
100 West Main Street
Morganfield, KY 42437

Copies of the Contract Documents may be obtained at the office of the Union County Judge’s Office, 100 West Main Street, Morganfield, Kentucky 42437. Copies may be obtained via email by emailing jill.hunley@unioncountky.gov.

The Union County Fiscal Court shall reserve the right to waive informalities and to reject any or all proposals.

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We accept appointments for one-on-one consultation.

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