

Gift Exchange

In lieu of our normal speaker we will be having our annual gift exchange!

In order to avoid the confusion arising from previous years regarding the conduct of the Annual Christmas Gift Exchange, and to inform the newer members of how it is done, your president has decreed that this year, we will follow the ancient rules first established by the Order of the Little Sisters of Saint Zsa Zsa, the Patron Saint of cheap, but delightful gifts.

These unworldly, but wise nuns first set down these rules in the year 1327 AD at their secluded convent near Zslotywachtz, a small, but charming village in rural Hungary, noted for its production of inexpensive, but potent varietal red table wines and overly pungent cheeses. For centuries, the rules were passed down by word of mouth, for the nuns had taken a vow of illiteracy. However, in the 16th Century, a new abbess decreed that the pen is mightier than the tongue and a vow of silence was instituted in lieu of the earlier restriction. At that time it became necessary to commit the rules to parchment. Around 1653, an unauthorized copy was smuggled out of the convent in a wheel of the stinky cheese Époisses, by a disgruntled defrocked nun and eventually reached Western Europe and then the New World. Over the centuries, the archaic rules have changed little except for the recognition that males (previously forbidden to enter the convent) may now be participants in the gift exchange, and for currency conversions. Please note: The British tried to capture the unauthorized copy thus keeping the important document from The

United States. But the parchment still smelling of Époisses was smuggled through British lines to safety in 1778 give or take a few years by our brave Patriots!

The rules are as follows:

1) Each person wishing to participate will bring one gender-neutral \$10 gift (wrapped) to be placed on the Gift Table. A drawing ticket will be issued to each gift bringer. A couple may elect to bring one or two gifts, receiving one ticket for each gift.

2) The drawing will proceed as follows;

a. The first ticket will be drawn from the Ben Franklin Box. The holder of the matching ticket stub will select and unwrap a gift from the Gift Table.

b. A second ticket will be drawn. The holder of the matching ticket stub may elect either to “steal” the gift unwrapped by the first person, or select and unwrap a new gift.

c. If the second person “steals” the gift from the first person, the first person will then select and unwrap a new gift.

d. A third ticket will then be drawn. The holder of the matching ticket stub may elect to either “steal” either of the gifts already unwrapped or to select and unwrap another gift.

e. The drawing, gift selections and “thefts” will continue in this manner until everyone has a gift.

f. For each person from whom a gift is “stolen”. They will immediately elect either to “steal” any one of the other gifts already opened (subject to rules g & h) or to select and open a new gift.

g. If the holder of the matching stub of the last ticket to be drawn “steal” a gift rather than take the last remaining gift, the person from whom the gift was “stolen” shall receive the last remaining wrapped gift, and the drawing will be complete.

h. No person may “steal” back a gift which was previously “stolen” from him/her.

i. No individual gift may be “stolen” more than three times.

j. Ostentatious vocal displays of wonderment and delight are encouraged at the time at the opening of a gift. Complainers will be ostracized by their fellow Compatriots and their guests.

k. The President shall act as referee, and any issues arising will be resolved by his wisdom, with no further appeal. It is good to be the President.

In Patriotism,

Mark Torres