



Glenn Dromgoole: West Texas Christmas Stories
Abilene Country Club, Noon, Wednesday, December 4th



Though diverse, the pieces in this book have a few things in common. Geography, for one--they are either set in West Texas or written by West Texans. Length, for another -- none of these stories take very long to read. And finally, all are intended to help make this Christmas a little more meaningful. Join us this week as Glenn Dromgoole, editor along with contributors Jim Richmond, CEO of Western Bank, and Betty Davis, civic leader and former school board president, read their works.

You will laugh, cry and recall your own special memories of the season. Books will be available for purchase.





Eliminate Project

From November 23-29, 2013, a Kiwanis International and the U.S. Fund for UNICEF delegation made a special visit to Madagascar, an island country off the southeastern coast of Africa, on behalf of The Eliminate Project.

While there, the delegation observed UNICEF activities related to prenatal health care, immunizations and education.

Delegates included Kiwanis International President Gunter Gasser, his wife Christiana Gasser, Greg Beard, Gus Lamond, Kiwanis International Executive Director Stan Soderstrom and Kiwanis magazine managing editor Kasey Jackson.

Check out The Eliminate Project blog, Facebook and Twitter for updates from Madagascar, including a special preview from Lead Gift donor Gus Lamond and the two updates from the field.

Celebrate the Holidays

Looking for fun ideas to celebrate the holidays and winter? Spread cheer and inspire generosity for The Eliminate Project with these ideas:

1. Be part of the giving movement. You've heard of Black Friday—and maybe even Cyber Monday—but do you know about Giving Tuesday? Spend your money in a way that fits the season of hope and generosity. Participate in Giving Tuesday and save lives.
2. Craft something. Provide a fun, interactive workshop such as ornament making for children, wreath-making or baking for adults. Ask local businesses to donate supplies.
3. Deck the halls—or windows. Offer to decorate the windows of local businesses for the holidays and ask for a gift to The Eliminate Project in exchange.
4. Honor loved ones. Honor a loved one, business associate or fellow Kiwanis member through a gift to The Eliminate Project. Give or ask for a gift that will help protect the connection between mothers and children.
5. Party with a purpose. Throw a party like a wine and cheese party and ask guests to donate to The Eliminate Project as a holiday gift.
6. Raise your hand. Host an auction at your holiday event or Christmas party. Ask guests to offer their time, talents and treasures to auction off to the highest bidder.
7. Serve others. Partner with Kiwanis-family members on a joint service project.
8. Show off your ugly sweater. Challenge your friends to find the ugliest holiday-themed sweater and come together for an evening of festivities—and saving babies. Create giving incentives: Offer to match gifts given by the guests with the most creative sweater or the person who gives the most before the party.
9. Sing a song. Invite fellow Kiwanis-family members and their families to go caroling. Carry a can or jar to collect donations from listeners who are in the giving spirit.
10. Take the plunge. Host a Polar Plunge and attract a large crowd of energetic donors that want to go to the extreme (by collecting donations to run or jump into a lake, ocean or other body of water) to raise money for women and babies.
11. Try on black ties for size. Host a holiday gala to raise much-needed funds to immunize women against tetanus, protecting them and their future newborns from the disease. . If you don't like formal attire, choose a different dress theme.
12. Wrap it up. Offer holiday services such as gift wrapping, shopping or childcare services. You'll raise money by collecting donations or charging a fee for your services.

SPIRITUAL AIMS THOUGHT TO PONDER

By Mark Hoover

The Simple Blessings of Christmas

Norman Vincent Peale, noted minister and author from the previous century, tells this story. "A young girl from Sweden spending Christmas in big, bustling New York City. She was living with an American family and helping them around the house, and she didn't have much money. So she knew she couldn't get them a very nice Christmas present—besides, they already had so much, with new gifts arriving every day.

With just a little money in her pocket, she went out and bought an outfit for a small baby, and then she set out on a journey to find the poorest part of town and the poorest baby she could find. At first, she received only strange looks from passersby when she asked them for help. But then a kind stranger, a Salvation Army bell-ringer, guided her to a poor part of town and helped her deliver her gift. On Christmas morning, instead of giving them a wrapped present, she told the family she served what she had done in their name. Everyone was speechless, and everyone was blessed—the girl for

giving, the wealthy family for seeing others with new eyes, and the poor family for receiving an unexpected gift.

All of us have opportunities both large and small to show kindness, especially at Christmastime. We can help strangers by delivering gifts to needy kids or serving homeless families at a soup kitchen. Or we can simply look for everyday ways to be kind, like allowing someone to go ahead of us in a lengthy line at the department store, or giving that bell-ringer a little change and a few encouraging words."

Maybe it's because we're in gift-giving mode anyway that giving to others becomes so important at Christmas. Or because we're more aware of our families and friends and communities. Or maybe it's because two thousand years ago, the earth received the most perfect, most loving gift of all, helping us to understand true kindness.

Whatever the reason, don't let Christmas pass you by without showing kindness to someone. Because it is truly more blessed to give than to receive.

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Kiwanis is a global organization of volunteers, dedicated to changing the world, one child and one community at a time. Walk the Talk!

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