

Merry Christmas



A letter to all KOA homeowners

On behalf of the Board of Directors I would like to wish each of our association members and their families the very warmest of greetings and best wishes during the holiday season.

We have much to be grateful for, particularly all of our neighbors and the people who make Kensington a great place to call home.

May you enjoy the company of the ones you love and may you be blessed with peace and joy through the holiday season as well as the entire New Year.

My wife and I wish you and your family a safe and healthy Holiday Season.

Sincerely,

Daniel

Kensington HOA President

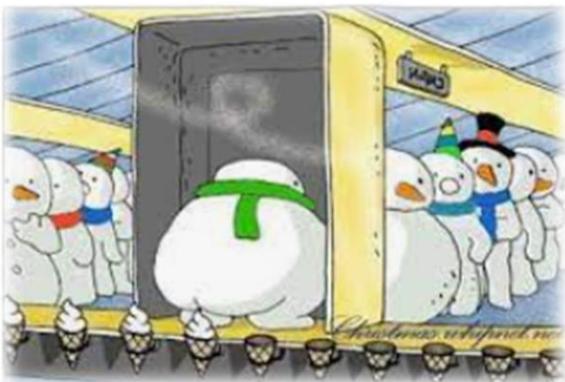
KENSINGTON



Snowball

I made myself a snowball,
As perfect as could be,
I thought I'd keep it as a pet,
And let it sleep with me.

I made it some pajamas,
And a pillow for its head,
Then last night it ran away,
But first - it wet the bed!



How snow cones are made...

"Some Assembly Required"

'Twas the night before Christmas when all through the house
I searched for the tools to hand to my spouse.

Instructions were studied, and we were inspired,
In hopes, we could manage "some assembly required."

The children were quiet (not asleep) in their beds,
while Dad and I faced the evening with dread:
A kitchen, two bikes, Barbie's townhouse to boot!
And, thanks to Grandpa, a train with a toot!

We opened the boxes, my heart skipped a beat . . .
Let no parts be missing or parts incomplete!

Too late for last-minute returns or replacement.
If we can't get it right, it goes in the basement!

When what to my worrying eyes should appear,
But 50 sheets of directions, concise but not clear,
with each part numbered and every slot named,
so, if we failed, only we could be blamed.

More rapid than eagles, the parts then fell out,
All over the carpet, they were scattered about.

"Now bolt it! Now twist it! Attach it right there!

Slide on the seats and staple the stairs!
Hammer the shelves, and nail to the stand."

"Honey," said hubby, "you just glued my hand."

And then, in a twinkling, I knew for a fact
that all the toy dealers had indeed made a pact
to keep parents busy all Christmas Eve night
with "assembly required" till morning's first light.

We spoke not a word but kept bent at our work,
till our eyes, they went bleary; our fingers all hurt.

The coffee went cold, and the night, it wore thin
before we attached the last rod and last pin.

Then laying the tools away in the chest,
we fell into bed for a well-deserved rest.

But I said to my husband just before I passed out,
"This will be the best Christmas, without any doubt."

Tomorrow we'll cheer, let the holiday ring,
and not have to run to the store for a thing!

We did it! We did it! The toys are all set
for the perfect, most perfect, Christmas, I bet!"

Then off to dreamland and sweet repose, I gratefully went,
though I suppose there's something to say for those self-deluded...

I'd forgotten that BATTERIES are never included!

IMAGINE

Imagine there's no heaven
It's easy if you try
No hell below us
Above us, only sky

Imagine all the people
Livin' for today

Imagine there's no countries
It isn't hard to do
Nothing to kill or die for
And no religion, too

Imagine all the people
Livin' life in peace

You may say I'm a dreamer
But I'm not the only one
I hope someday you'll join us
And the world will be as one

Imagine no possessions
I wonder if you can
No need for greed or hunger
A brotherhood of man

Imagine all the people
Sharing all the world

You may say I'm a dreamer
But I'm not the only one
I hope someday you'll join us
And the world will live as one

John Lennon



Here's What History Can Tell Us About the Magi

Christmas Day may be Dec. 25, but it's not the end of Christmas story. In many Western Christian traditions, there are 12 days of Christmas, culminating around Jan. 6, known as the feast of the Epiphany. That's when many believe the "Magi" or "wise men" or "three kings" arrive to see the newborn baby Jesus.

But were these men inspired by any real historical figures? While it's difficult to tie their depictions to any specific people, the very brief descriptions of them in the Gospel of Matthew do track with understandings of the world at the time the Gospel was written, thought to be sometime between 70 CE and 85 CE.

The only reference to these men in the Bible is in Chapter 2 of the Gospel of Matthew, and they're not called "wise men," or "kings." There's also no mention of how many men were there. It only describes "some men from the East" and "visitors from the East." Matthew's Gospel says soon after Jesus was born in the town of Bethlehem in Judea, ruled by the Roman King Herod, "some men who studied the stars came from the East to Jerusalem and asked, 'Where is the baby born to be the king of the Jews? We saw his star when it came up in the East, and we have come to worship him.'" According to the Gospel, the men had followed a star to the house where Jesus and Mary were and presented gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.

Then, like now, gold represented wealth and power. Frankincense was a type of incense and perfume. Myrrh is the "outlier," according to Kristin Swenson, an Associate Professor of Religious Studies at Virginia Commonwealth University and author of the forthcoming *A Most Peculiar Book: The Inherent Strangeness of the Bible*. It's been used as a perfume and in ancient Egypt, in embalming processes, and which Christians have interpreted as foreshadowing Jesus's death. In Mark 15:23, Jesus is offered wine with myrrh before his crucifixion, because to be a painkiller, Swenson says. Myrrh would also be used in oil used for anointing kings, which is significant given that the Magi had come looking for the king of the Jews.

These luxurious gifts indicate that these visitors from the East "are people of great wealth and power, that's kind of obvious based on the things they bring," says Swenson. "They are called Magi in the Greek, which was a term that referred to a kind of subclass of Persian priests. But they have come to be known as wise men..."

Their orientation was much more in what we might today identify with science." Looking to a star is "very much in keeping with the religious tradition of this place in time of looking to the heavens, the stars, and the planets for information about the gods' wishes and doings, and some stars or planets were identified with God."

Swenson also points out that the Gospel of Matthew reimagines a prophecy from hundreds of years earlier, found in the book of Isaiah in the Old Testament, which describes nations of the world recognizing Israel as the light of the world and celebrating that with gifts of gold and frankincense and other gifts of value.



A Kensington Night Before Christmas

Twas the night before Christmas, and through our Kensington community
Not a complaint was heard, there appeared just pure unity.

The homeowners were nestled all snug in their beds,
no worries of dogs barking, speeding, stopping or such bothering their heads,
and the board of directors in their home beds, and I in mine too,
had just settled down after reviewing the Kensington budget and upcoming 2024 dues.

When out in my yard there arose such a clatter,
I sprang to my porch to see what was the matter.
Away to the front door I flew like a flash,
only to see neighbors with several gripes to again rehash.

I couldn't figure out in the dark of the night
exactly what they thought gave them the right,
but I knew from my time on the KOA board,
my meetings these neighbors I cannot not ignored.

Then in a flash I noticed a visitor,
who tried to join this group of Dover Ct. inquisitors.
He wore a red fur coat over an ample belly, and
his hearty laugh made it shake as it were jelly.

His smile quickly faded as they all turned away.
They told him as homeowners we've got nothing to say,
the jolly man disappeared as quickly as he came here,
amid the sound of our ~~s~~x, now seven wandering deer!

In a moment came another neighbor, without much ado,
he arrived with a viewpoint needed and new.
I knew in a flash it was, a neighbor on Wembley, "Nick"
he knew what was needed and he brought it up quick.

He exclaimed "Now, members! Now, neighbors! Now, Bylaws and Covenant,
please read the rules before bringing your comments and judgements!
Now back to your homes, and back to your Kensington castles,
please, just for tonight, have a cease to your KOA Board hassles."

He said "you by choice bought into this community,
which works at its best when all live in unity,"
remember that your board serves you for free,
So how about joining a committee - or three.

Amidst headshakes and handshakes, my front yard then cleared,
I wished them all Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Daniel