

The holidays have arrived in Bancroft

By Sarah Sobanski

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas; Ev'rywhere you go?

Hold on, one second, settle down.

Take a look at the five-and-10, it's glistening once again ?

Slow down! What do you mean it's almost a month until Christmas?

With candy canes and silver lanes that glow.

It seems to me that it's time once again to get into the holiday spirit. The Bancroft BBIA has started wrapping the trees in lights and hanging sap buckets on lampposts downtown. Pretty soon there might even be snow to match.

Me, I don't start decorating until Christmas Eve ? that isn't to say I don't like the holidays. I just rarely can find time until then, but by Dec. 24 it's a matter of if Santa is going to have a tree to put presents under. That tree is going up no matter what. Of course, the decorations stay up until the first day of February after that ? because who wants the holiday season to end?

Time must have moved more slowly when I was a kid. Christmas seemed to take forever before it arrived. After that, drifting out of dinners, through presents, and into the back of my dad's old Chevy in a food coma seemed to be a season that lasted for the whole year.

The holidays have been on my mind lately, as I'm sure they've been on yours. The flood of questions that come with making holiday plans have started knocking at my door. Is it too early to be excited? When do I decorate? Should I have started my shopping? Do I have to buy for Cousin Eddie? How many groceries can one family dinner possibly need?

It's these questions, the planning and the prepping, that make the holiday season fly by so quickly. It's as if the Grinch is standing ready to get us all wrapped up in the wrong things. I'd rather not end up on the conveyer belt like Cindy Lou Who.

I used to think that decorating before Dec. 1 was a kind of corporate shenanigan. The stores wanted to sell, sell, sell every possible bauble to every mom, tot and grandfather that stumbled in. Without a little eggnog and rum to warm my heart it's hard to turn a blind eye to how materialistic the holidays are.

Lately I've been thinking about the holidays, as I'm sure you've been, and another way of looking at the race to the holidays has come around. It might be as easy as people wanting them to stay.

Now I'm sure you're still going to worry about finding that perfect, ridiculously expensive, American Doll knock-off for your daughter whose been asking for it since August. I'm sure you're going to stress over buying the right wine to go with the turkey and whether or not Grandma is going to mix the after dinner coffees too strong again this year ? how are you supposed to sleep your whole family in your house? I'm sure everything will still feel last minute even if you're reading this right now.

That being said, remember to take a moment to breathe. When you hang the wreath, grab a picture in front of it. When the first snow comes and stays, play in it. When the dog sneaks the ham off the table, laugh about it.

Risk the wooden spoon for a swipe of icing off the cake. Risk hoisting the youngest onto your shoulders to put the angel on the tree ? who really needs a good back? Risk a kiss under the mistletoe.

Whatever moments are inspired by the lit trees outside your Bancroft windows, take them. If you're like me, and you can't believe it's already time to hang the garland, embrace it. This is the one time of year when joy is free, love is plentiful, and anything is possible. Rock that ugly sweater. It'll be over before you know it.