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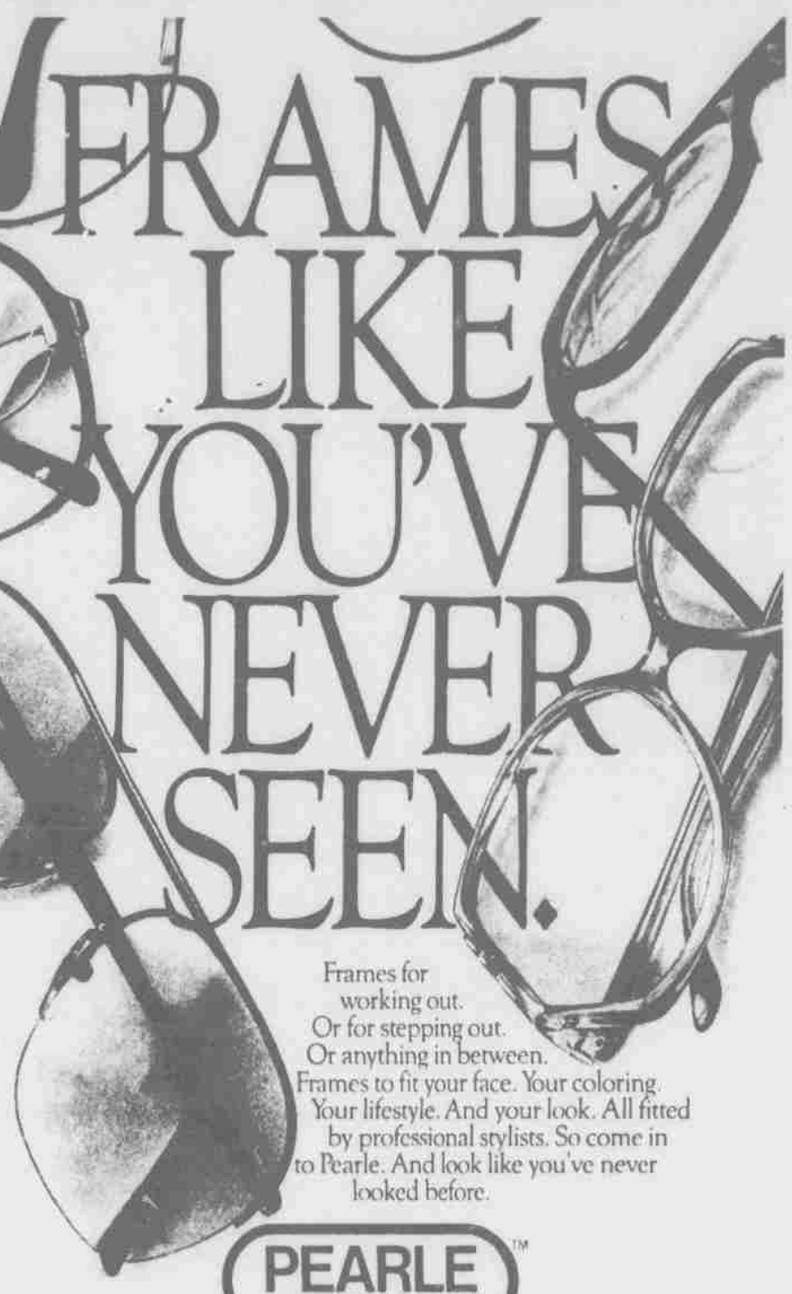

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About gifts. . .

By Geoff Goodwin
Night News Editor

Christmas time and the living is easy. And it's time to buy presents again for our friends and loved ones. But if you're like most college students, like most people in fact, expenses are a problem. Therefore, we offer you this helpful guide to buying presents for those on a budget.

First of all, if you're on a budget, Lazer Tagg is out. It would be great but hey, the thing costs about $50. Too much. It'll come down. VCRs did.

One thing a lot of people forget at Christmas are gift certificates. Any number of businesses and establishments sell them. Some people think it's chintzy to give gift certificates for Christmas, but I disagree. They provide basic human needs. You get (or give) a Valentino's gift certificate. Everybody has to eat. It's the gift for someone who has everything. (Everything that is, but a food processing plant.)

You can actually make an evening of gift certificates. Dinner at Valentino's or Tico's or McDonald's or Red Lobster — you get the idea, there's lots of these places. Then go to a movie on a gift certificate. They only problem is that after-movie drink. Why doesn't O'Rourke's have gift certificates?

Well, they might not have gift certificates by they do have T-shirts, mighty smart T-shirts, at that. And so does the Zoo Bar, right across the street. And for Mom and Dad, Nebraska sweatshirts might be just the trick, thus allowing them to see where all that money for tuition is going. T-shirts go for about nine or ten dollars, while sweatshirts are about $15 to $20. but, what the heck, it's for Mom and Dad.

Bears are in this year for Christmas. Fat bears, skinny bears, bears who climb on rocks, even bears with chickenpox.

The important thing to remember when you're out there fighting the crowds is to be inventive. Don't buy something just because it's on sale. Of course, don't refuse to buy something because it's on sale, either. The Christmas sword cuts both way.

And finally, a few hints for beating the crowds at Christmas. Don't wait until Christmas Eve to do all your shopping. You're cutting your own throat if you do. Also, try to shop at unusual hours, like 3 a.m. You'd be surprised the nice things you can pick up at 7-11. Big Gulps do make nice Christmas presents. But the most important thing to remember is the spirit of Christmas. Sure, there's too much commercialism but it's still a magic time of the year.

Be of good cheer and to all a good night.

Tradition brings community together

MINDEN from Page 4

Roman soldiers. But most of the cast and pre-recorded sound track remain the same from year to year. The year I played a heavenly host, we had a cake to honor a man who had played one of the wise men for nearly the entire 40 years of the pageant's history. That's a solid, if trivial, track record no Broadway actor can boast of.

Old-time cast members chuckled at us students that night. We had stage fright and the shivers. As angels, we had to lay on top of the built-up sets throughout the show until our time came to stand and mouth the words of "Joy to the World." I was one of the multitude. I think there were five of us.

The rest of the cast members, people such as my typing teacher, the pharmacist, a local hairdresser and my dentist just showed up the night of the production, donned their appropriate costumes and played their familiar parts without practice. For that night each year, they call each other by their stage names and smile over memories of "that year when only a handful of people braved the cold to watch."

Every year busloads of out-of-towners pull in. Once a national television network shot some tape for a Christmas special, causing an extra stir of excitment, among the hundreds of viewers standing in the icy streets. After the first lighting of the courthouse signals the end of the pageant, people "ooh" and "aah" and then scatter to their warm cars or nearby church basements for cocoa and cookies.

Mindenites take pride in their Christmas spirit.

During the energy crisis of the 1970s, many residents stopped putting the customary decorations on their houses. Letters to the editor of the Minden Courier were especially vehement those years. What would outsiders think of a Christmas city where people don't even string lights on their front porches?

Trivial? Maybe. Old Fashioned? Yes. But I guess that's the beauty of it. I've played bigger parts than that nameless angel. And you won't often hear me expounding the virtues of a town where my every move was the topic of beaty-shop conversation the next day. But there's something settling about spotting those courthouse lights miles away as I turn off I-80 to go home for the holiday.

As the Christmas city, Minden is a quaint novelty to some and a backward settlement of "hicks" to others. to me it's a needed constant and a good place to call home.

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Soft Pinto Burrito	.79	Guacamole Salad	1.75
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		Mexi-Chef Salad	1.99 2.99

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First Baptist Church

Services: 10 a.m. Sunday
Dec. 14: Christmas Cantata
Dec. 21: Youth Musical 7 p.m.
Dec. 24: Christmas Eve Service
1340 K St. 477-4198
Call Brad Grammer or Mark Schubert for details.

Spend Christmas Eve at First Presbyterian

Services: 7PM & 11PM
17th & F St.
477-6037
Collegian Fellowship Sundays 5 PM