

Stressed-Out Santa

Dear Tim:

OK, here's what I know. Santa Claus has got a big job in front of him next week. He only works one day a year, he's got an international distribution operation that's more complex than FedEx, his clients have zero tolerance for missed deliveries, and the one day he works he pulls third shift. Is there anybody more stressed out than this guy? No wonder his beard is as white as the snow. How does he do it?

—Wiped on Willard

Dear Wiped:

Red Bull. Aisle 1.

Dear Tim:

Everybody leaves cookies out for Santa. I'm inclined to, as Emeril would say, kick it up a notch. Any ideas?

—Treater on Tremont

Dear Treater:

Everybody may leave out cookies, but does everybody leave out Pepperidge Farm cookies? I think not. I'm a little partial to the Milanos. Aisle 6. They're small and thin, but they pack a punch.



DEAR TIM

Kind of like the Olsen twins on a bender.

Dear Tim:

Baby, it's cold outside.

—Chilled on Chelton

Dear Chilled:

I hear what you're saying, but go easy with the baby. My wife reads these. If you want to warm things up – for yourself I'm saying; I'm married after all – pick up some kindling and firewood from out front, get yourself a nice fire going and curl up under a blanket with a good book. Something like *The Book Of Virtues*. That way

you can warm your soul while you warm your body.

Dear Tim:

I know it's not quite last minute yet, but by the time I get to my shopping, it will be. When I come to you in a panic on Monday, what will you have for me?

—Waiting on Waddington

Dear Waiting:

No need to panic. Even on Monday. We've got you covered. For fruit and gift baskets, check in the back. For hostess gifts, how about Baileys original in a decorative canister or six bottles of Winter Warmth from Columbus Brewing Company – both in aisle 1? And if you're looking for something seasonally special for the chef in your life, how about one of our Rosemary trees up front between aisles 1 and 2? They're beautiful and useful. I could go on, but the more ideas I give you, the more likely you are to procrastinate. Shop safely, and happy holidays!

Dear Tim is presented as a public service by Tim Huffman, owner of Huffman's Market. Write to him in care of Huffman's Market, 2140 Tremont Center, Upper Arlington, Ohio, 43221, stop by and say hi, or visit www.huffmansmarket.com.