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## The Legend of the Poinsettia

In Mexico, poinsettia plants grow wild. There is a charming legend dating back several centuries that explains the presence of this red and green plant and why it blossoms each year during the Christmas season.

One Christmas Eve, a small girl named Pepita traveled to church empty-handed, as she had no gift to give the Christ Child. Her cousin Pedro, who was walking with her, told her that the best gift she could give was a humble one, as long as it was given in love. So, as she walked, Pepita gathered some weeds she found along the roadside and fashioned them into a small bouquet. Although she finally had a gift, she still felt saddened by the shabbiness of it. When she finally entered the church and approached the altar, she was surprised by a miracle. The weeds had blossomed into brilliant red flowers! From that day on, these bright red flowers were called Flores de Noche Buena, or Flowers of the Holy Night. Today, we call this plant the poinsettia.

## Have A Question For Us?

We love to hear from all our good friends and clients who enjoy reading our monthly newsletter. If you have a question related to off-site document storage, shredding, imaging, or media vaulting, please feel free to give us a call or send us an email.

**814-238-6874**

[support@automatedrecords.com](mailto:support@automatedrecords.com)

### CHECK OUT MIKE'S NEW BLOG:

<http://automatedrecords.com/sullivanSpeaks/>  
you will learn what's on Mike's mind as it relates to the world of records management and a whole lot more.

**Countdown to St. Patrick's Day**

—we only have 104 Days To Go!

## Thoughts from Michael Sullivan

President of Automated Records

Whichever holidays and traditions you observe, it's interesting to think about the British interpretation of "holiday." The UK takes the word as meaning a time which to relax and have fun. As in: "We're going on holiday to Fiji." That seems a bit contrary to what many of us end up doing this time of year, doesn't it? There are lists! So many lists! If you lose one of the lists all you can do is hope you listed where you put it on another list.

Besides innumerable lists, holiday means rushing around, going to parties, buying stuff for the partner, kids, Great Aunt Mildred, (so much stuff!) and then sometimes it spreads out to the obtuse such as a pertinent gift for the meter reader.

The *meter reader*?! Goodness. I've never even *seen* him or her, let alone met them. Isn't this present-giving getting a bit out of hand (and a lot out of pocket)?

I don't want to go all smarmy with this (and neither do I want to be Scrooge-like), but it seems to me that scaling back on the gifts and bestowing good cheer would be a nifty idea. Instead of writing lists about "stuff" how about we make lists of people we want to take time to thank or compliment, or have an in-depth conversation with about what's *actually* on their minds?

Things are happening to our friends and family, losses, promotions, new births, etc., and a genuine inquiry into their sense of well-being is often more gratefully received than a material "gift." Come to think of it, I do not value friends for the things they give me, but for the time they grant me. We've all heard "they wouldn't give me the time of day." Let's give people the time of day, this time of year and then some!

We are whole-heartedly grateful for the time and trust you give us now and throughout the months. As our client, you are number one on *our list* and we wish you the most wonderful holiday season!

Cheers,



**SHREDDING:** Order a Shred Console  
and get the first **60 DAYS FREE!**

## WEBSITE OF THE MONTH

### ***Keeping Track of All the Calories***

If you are keeping track of calories, you know how difficult it can be to know the calorie count of foods when you are eating out. Fortunately, most restaurants offer nutrition information for their diners. Ask for calorie information when you visit your favorite restaurant. Even fast food places now print these statistics. You can also check on meals ahead of time by checking on the restaurant's website before you head out.

If the restaurant does not offer this information, you can also check out the USDA website at [myfoodpedia.gov](http://myfoodpedia.gov) to help with counting calories. There are even apps for your mobile device that offer calorie counters, with the added bonus of being able to track exercise and meals each day.

**[myfoodpedia.gov](http://myfoodpedia.gov)**

### ***Cut Your Cancer Risk***

Over 1.5 million Americans will be diagnosed with cancer this year. While this statistic is cause for some concern, researchers say that hundreds of thousands of people can beat the odds with some simple strategies. Consider these top three ways to lower your risk.

#### 1. IMPROVE YOUR NUTRITION

Excessive weight is one of the biggest risks for cancer. While it is possible to maintain good health with some excess pounds, researchers have found that extra weight in your abdominal area can increase your risk of cancer. This visceral fat is linked to high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and is an indicator of increased risk of death from not only cancer, but also heart and respiratory diseases. Increasing your intake of fruits, vegetables, beans, and whole-grains is the easiest way to get the proper balance of nutrition and to lower your risk of cancer.

#### 2. KEEP YOUR ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION DOWN

Drinking alcohol increases your risk of several types of cancer, including breast, mouth, and esophagus cancer. While some moderate alcohol consumption (only one drink a day) has been shown to help protect against heart disease, the increased cancer risk should be weighed against this.

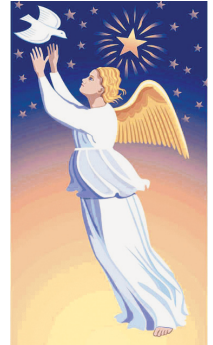
#### 3. PUT DOWN THAT CIGARETTE

Researchers agree that there is no safe level of cigarette smoking. Even one cigarette a week genetically alters the cells in the lining of your airways. This change increases your risk of lung cancer. And it also affects those around you. Secondhand smoke increases the risk for your loved ones as well, making this lifestyle change especially important.

Our New Website has been getting some rave reviews: Let us know what you think.  
What would you like to see or know about?  
Go to <http://automatedrecords.com>

## ***December Events***

- 1 World AIDS Day
- 1-7 Cookie Cutter Week
- 2 Special Education Day
- 3 International Day of Persons with Disabilities
- 4 National Dice Day
- 5 Bathtub Party Day
- 6 Miner's Day
- 7 National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day
- 9 International Anti-Corruption Day
- 10 Human Rights Day
- 10-17 Human Rights Week
- 11 International Shareware Day
- 15 Bill of Rights Day
- 17 Wright Brothers Day
- 18 International Migrants Day
- 19-25 Gluten-Free Baking Week
- 20 International Human Solidarity Day
- 21 Humbug Day
- 21 First Day of Winter
- 24 Christmas Eve
- 25 Christmas
- 25-31 It's About Time Week
- 26 Boxing Day
- 26-Jan. 1 Kwanzaa
- 29 Tick Tock Day
- 31 New Year's Eve



#### ***Astrological Sign:***

Sagittarius (Nov 23-Dec 22)  
& Capricorn (Dec 23-Jan 20)  
Flower: Narcissus  
Birthstone: Turquoise  
Full Moon: December 21

#### ***December is also:***

- Bingo's Birthday Month
- National Drunk and Drugged Driving Prevention Month
- National Tie Month
- National Write a Business Plan Month
- Safe Toys and Gifts Month
- Spiritual Literacy Month

### ***Social Security During a Move***

Moving is one of the bigger causes of stress in our lives. It can be easy to forget some of the smaller tasks when you are concentrating on the larger job of moving a household, whether it is across town or across the country.

If you receive Social Security benefits, it is important to remember to notify them of your change in address. This is critical even if you receive your benefits by direct deposit or Direct Express, or if you are receiving only Medicare benefits. Without your current address, Social Security is unable to notify you of changes that could affect your benefits.

The easiest way to change your address is with their online form at [www.socialsecurity.gov/changeofaddress](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/changeofaddress). After submitting the form online, you will receive a confirmation letter in the mail. You can also call 800-772-1213 to change your address using an automated voice system.

Automated Records Centre is now on **FACEBOOK-**

If you become a fan, your name will be entered in a drawing to win a **\$25 Starbucks Gift Card**.  
*Simply let us know your name and company.*

### NEW WEBSITE

Our new website is up and running.  
Check it out and let us know what you think.



Post comments on our facebook page.

**AutomatedRecords.com**

<http://www.automatedrecords.com>



### Win \$50 Gift Card to Zola World Bistro!

Each month we'll give you a new challenge of some type. All those who reply with a correct answer are eligible to win. At the end of this month we'll draw one lucky name.

*Here is this month's mindbender.*

**Riddle:** Which reindeer knows Morse code?

**Last Month's Answer to:** *A man is six feet tall, is a clerk at a butcher shop, and wears size 11 shoes. What does he weigh?*

MEAT... he's a butcher

**Last Month's Winner:**

**LAURENE A. KECK**

*Executive Assist / Marketing Coordinator at Sweetland Engineering & Assoc., Inc.*

*Congratulations!*

Email your answer to:

<http://automatedrecords.com/riddle-answer.html>

## Doing More by Doing Less

It may sound counterintuitive, but you can often find more time in your day to get things done by doing less. Multitasking may seem to be the best way to get through your to-do list, but it can sabotage your efforts. Researchers from the University of Michigan have found that when people multitask, they are diminishing their brain productivity by 20 to 40 percent. This occurs because your brain needs to spend some of its computing power on the switching process itself. Refocusing from one task to another decreases the brain's efficiency.

To combat this, try to establish some new habits for your workflow. Instead of checking email every few minutes, only check it every couple of hours. This lets you focus on answering emails all at once. You can also use a timer when working on an important task. Using a timer helps you regulate how much time you need to spend on a single task. While the timer is going, you should not work on any other project in order to devote enough concentrated time to the task at hand.

Finally, use a to-do list, but with a twist. Instead of simply making a list of things you need to get done, use it to write down things that are distracting you. By placing them on the list, you can give yourself permission to come back to it at a later time, instead of switching away from the job you are doing right now.

Blessed is the season which engages the whole world in a conspiracy of love! -- Hamilton Wright Mabie



## A Stimulus Plan THAT WORKS!

*We have \$30,000 to give away to companies who want to save time and money on records storage.*

Qualifier: Stimulus money can be applied to any new service you currently aren't using.

**BITS and PIECES**  
is a free monthly newsletter  
from your friends at  
Automated Record Centre  
301 Rolling Ridge Drive  
Bellefonte, PA 16823  
Tel: 814-238-6874  
www.automatedrecords.com



## What's Inside This Month?

### *Thoughts from Michael Sullivan*

The Legend of the Poinsettia  
Keeping Track of All the Calories  
Cut Your Cancer Risk

### *Win \$50 Gift Card to Zola World Bistro!*

Social Security During a Move  
Doing More by Doing Less

### **DECEMBER** Specials

Have a **Happy NEW Year!**

## ***Security For Your Holidays***

The security for your apartment, flat or house needs the best provision to avoid any sort of break-in. Burglaries happen once every 15 seconds according to FBI Stats. You can definitely prevent such crimes by taking a few safety measures. Preparing yourself for such an act is mandatory. It will be useful if you keep all your valuable things in a safe place to prevent them from being stolen. The burglars prefer doing their business during the daytime as most homes are vacant during the working hours.

Ways to prevent a break-in:

- \* You should use automatic light timers to fool the burglars about your presence. Never leave your house in the dark when you are out for a vacation.
- \* Another viable option is to put a radio on automatic timer with loud volume so that it can be heard outside.
- \* Don't keep the telephone ringer on a high volume when you are out.
- \* Some people prefer putting a note on the door disclosing that they are not present. This can seriously attract a lot of attention.
- \* You should not let the newspapers and mails pile up in front of your door. Ask a trusted neighbour to pick them up.
- \* At times the burglars might call on your number to check whether it is on answering machine or not. It is suggested that you should have your calls forwarded to some other number.
- \* Garbage cans be used by your neighbour and you can ask them to take the cans out to the streets. Seeing the garbage cans empty for sometime can alert a potential burglar about your absence. You can inform the local police about your vacation plans and ask them to conduct regular checks and patrols of your house and locality.
- \* If your curtains stay in the same position for a longer period of time, it can also create a doubt in the burglar's mind about you not being there. So, it is better to give the keys of your house to a trusted family member or friend to visit once in a while.
- \* Motion detector lights are more preferable than switching on the lights for the whole night. Make sure you install these lights around nine feet high above the ground. This doesn't allow them to disable easily.
- \* The doors and the windows should be well lit and you should avoid any sort of bushes or shrubs around your windows. If you feel like planting them then make sure it puts off any sort of break in. The one with thorns are suggested to make access to your house difficult.

