2012

Not Wythe Standing: The News (Vol. 3, Issue 5)
New Hampshire Steps into the Spotlight

By Columnist Andrea Faatz (2L)

Once every four years, it’s time to live free or die harder. New Hampshire is usually a quiet state, where one of the greatest skills a kid acquires is learning how to make her own fun out of a lack of other things to do. But every four years, New Hampshire comes alive with a new level of excitement for the nation’s first primary. In the wake of New Hampshire’s big day this past Tuesday, I thought it would be appropriate to shed some light on the Granite State and its people.

Many might think that New Hampshire is relatively unimportant. After all, how is New Hampshire any different from Vermont? Both make maple syrup and have great slopes for skiers and snowboarders (albeit arguably less impressive than the hills of the Rockies). Some might even argue that Vermont is better than New Hampshire (I only accept that argument insofar as being home to Ben & Jerry’s and the Green Mountain Men is concerned).

But what makes New Hampshire so different is the spirit of its people. New Hampshirites (people from New Hampshire) are a very proud breed. New Hampshire is home to Robert Frost, Franklin Pierce, Daniel Webster, Alan Shepard, and Christa McAuliffe. It is the home of the Man of the Mountain, who will forever be in our hearts and on our quarter (though he is no longer with us, as his rocky face slipped away a few years ago). In the winter, snowmobiles and cross country skiers flood our slopes. In the summer, we are full of Celtic Fairs and mudbogs. Every summer, NASCAR calls out to New Hampshire’s redneck constituency for one of the biggest parties of the year, centered on the big race up at Loudon.

Celebrities like Steven Tyler take to their summer homes on the shores of Lake Winnipesaukee. Authors seeking solitude spend time at the MacDowell Colony in Peterborough, NH (incidentally, the town where I went to high school. If the fact that authors from across the nation go there to write in peace and quiet doesn’t prove that it is a very sleepy quiet town, I don’t know what will). Mount Monadnock, a very spiritual site for local Indian tribes, graces our landscape. From the peak of that mountain during a full moon in January, the stars have never seemed to shine so bright.

We have no sales tax, which lures people from across our borders. Our liquor is cheap and liquor stores are conveniently located off of the highway—like a rest area—for quick and easy pit stops (or refueling, if you will). But not to worry, many of our towns (my hometown, for example) have part-time police departments. We have cell phone numbers for emergencies.

Even if our pride may seem relatively unfounded, I recommend approaching people from “the Shire” with caution if criticizing our beloved state. Our pride is deep-rooted, and can be blinding. For example, I grew up thinking that the New Hampshire primary was extremely important and one of our biggest claims to fame. I was extremely disappointed, and perhaps even angry when, upon leaving the state, I found out that Iowa’s
first caucus was practically the same thing and preempts us.

But once every four years, our pride isn't unfounded. The general quiet town atmosphere transforms itself into an excitement that infiltrates the entirety of New Hampshire. During the primary, presidential candidates fill local town halls and diners. Political activists fill our town parks to "occupy the NH primary." Nights are spent drinking in the bar with national newscasters and watching the debates.

Looking back at New Hampshire’s role in the primary election, the Chief of Staff of the New Hampshire House of Representatives stated: “New Hampshire voters have become great at taking candidates for a test drive and kicking the tires. We have become uniquely qualified at vetting candidates and getting to the heart of the issues facing America.” It will be interesting to see how closely the other states of the nation mirror our ranking of the Republican candidates- 1) Mitt Romney, 39.3%, 2) Ron Paul- 22.9%, and 3) Jon Huntsman- 16.9%.

Another fun fact about this year’s New Hampshire primary is that Vermin Supreme got third in the Democratic primary with over 800 votes. Yes, his legal name is Vermin Supreme. He had it legally changed so it would show up that way on the ballot. He runs as a candidate regularly, only ever spending about $1,000 on his campaigns. His signature look: crazy—I’m talking a boot on his head and many ties. He has run as both a Republican and a Democrat, and offers free ponies for all if elected in almost all of his campaigns. At a New Hampshire Institute of Politics debate for lesser-known candidates, he became famous for walking behind another candidate, reaching into his front coat pocket to grab glitter, and sprinkling it over the other candidate. This has become lovingly known as “glitter bombing.” I’m not sure why (other than by virtue of my New Hampshire nationality) but I feel a strange sense of pride—or maybe just amusement—that so many voted for him.

In more serious news, New Hampshire has recently passed a Preemption Bill through its House of Representatives. The bill is believed to reaffirm through legislation the fundamental right to bear arms on state-owned property. It prevents local governments and state agencies from prohibiting guns on public property, unless they get specific legislation enabling them to do so. One of the institutions most affected by this bill could be the University of New Hampshire. UNH has declared itself a "gun free zone." Many feel that this is a direct violation of constitutional rights. Government staffers have argued that the new bill may be unnecessary, as a New Hampshire court would be constitutionally obligated to throw out charges related to having a gun on campus.

The argument for the bill is that if someone at UNH were to bring out a gun and threaten students, students should be able to protect themselves and fire back. Despite how crazy this may sound to those from city regions, maintaining the right to bear arms and to have guns is extremely important to many, especially in rural communities in New Hampshire. This is most likely fueled by the already largely libertarian ideology of the state. We tend to be very wary of any encroachment on personal liberties by government powers. Nonetheless, I must admit that I found some level of relief in learning that the bill would not allow guns on public elementary and secondary schools since those properties are owned by townships and excluded from the bill.

So where does the bill go from here? Its next stop is the Senate and then on to the Governor. If the Governor vetoes the bill, it would take a 2/3 vote in the House to keep it alive.

That was all of the exciting news from my neck of the woods over break. Now it’s back to Virginia for some nice weather and another semester of law school.
It Really is a Wonderful Life

By Special Contributor Scott Lawrence (2L)

Every year, my family waits until my siblings and I are all home from our respective colleges/grad schools to begin that most treasured of Christmas traditions: watching the same fifteen Christmas movies that we have watched every year for the past twenty-five years.

My mom and sister love the old musicals, so (sad to say) I can probably sing all the words to all the songs in *White Christmas* right along with Bing Crosby. I’m a fan of the classic cartoons: *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*, *Frosty the Snowman*, and those puppet movies like *Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer* and *Santa Clause is Coming to Town*. Almost all the old Christmas movies are great – even on the twenty-fifth viewing when your mother and sister are singing harmony to Kermit in the *Muppet Christmas Carol*.

The only movie I can’t stand is *It’s a Wonderful Life*. Every time I see that movie, I want to jump off the bridge with Jimmy Stuart. I feel like the title is ironic – his life kind of sucks. I know it’s about the importance of friends and family, but still – harsh, man, harsh. Plus, the fact that the movie is in black and white somehow makes everything more depressing. (On an unrelated side note – every time we watch the part where George sees what the world would be like if he didn’t exist, my sister spends ten minutes railing on how the fact that his wife is a spinster is not that terrible and wouldn’t she have married the man she was dating before George?… This is seriously how I spent my pre-Christmas holiday evenings.)

I’m sure many of us probably relate to George around the holidays – especially since that’s when we take exams. By the first week of exams, we’ve all been studying for what we feel like is forever, yet we know is not long enough. I had discovered upon reviewing my notes that I seem to have slept through every other class and have no idea what FRE 806 means and maybe I should just quit now and drive to Hawaii to take up professional surfing (which sounds logical in my stress addled state – both the driving across an ocean and the professional surfing).

My roommate (let’s call him “Blitzen”) has been studying at the law library all day, every day because our apartment is about 50 degrees. We’ve been too stubborn and poor to turn on the heat. According to Barney, whose grandfather was a polar bear, 50 degrees is short sleeves weather. Tip: I found that walking around the apartment as you read your notes is both good exercise and keeps you from losing the feeling in your feet.

While driving to my first exam, I took the time to seriously consider what would happen if I just kept on driving (to Hawaii). By this point, I have written down the reasons I can’t quit law school on a sticky note that I keep in my pocket (my jeans pocket since I’ve worn the same pair for the past three weeks) just in case I need it. I’ve read it and stuffed it back in my pocket so often that the paper now has the consistency of tissues – not the bargain brand ones, the fancy on’s with ads on TV. I repeat the reasons to myself as I sit down to take my first, second, and final exam: $50,000 in student loans, I have no marketable skills, and I want to be a lawyer. Blitzen says I should add that we’re half...
way finished, but that just makes me feel like we have to do all this over again.

However, as I watched this depressing movie, I realized that my life is, at the very least, much better than George’s. I finished those exams with reasonable competence – at the time, I even knew what FRE 806 said. I have money, food, and an apartment where heat is, at least, an option. Even though I don’t have a wife or four children who repeat disgustingly cute things their teacher told them about angels, I do have a great family, who sits together every night before Christmas watching these old movies, I thought were vastly more interesting. Instead, my grandfather’s marginal interest in the match-up between the Dallas Mavericks and the Miami Heat prevailed. Thus began the most awkward, uninformed viewing session I’ve ever seen.

My father, grandfather, and I knew next to nothing about the NBA. My grandfather actually fell asleep during the game, likely lulled to sleep by the lackadaisical jogging of giants who were gently placing a basketball into a hoop, but I’m jumping ahead. None of us really said anything. Nothing when someone hit a three-pointer, nothing when Lebron James broke the opening day record for the Miami Heat, and especially nothing when the Mavericks raised their championship banner. Someone from the living room may have thought we were watching a funeral rather than the hyped rematch of the NBA finals.

Words were spoken twice. My seven-year-old cousin, Cody, walked in and asked, “Who do you want to win? I want the Heat to win. They’re my favorite team.” To which I responded, “I don’t really care but aren’t they a team full of bad guys?” Cody looked me straight in the eyes for five seconds, never smiled or frowned, just indifferent derision, before he turned around and left. The second words spoken occurred when I asked, “Wait, is this the first game of the season?” My grandfather responded, “Yes.”

What did come out of this viewing was a once (hopefully) in a lifetime opportunity to really observe the NBA. The very first thing I noticed was that Dirk Nowitzki never stopped smiling the entire game. Not once. The Mavericks were down 30 points and Nowitzki was on the bench laughing with the no-name Mavericks next to him. Now it has been a long time since I’ve played organized sports: I played high school football, and there were times when I remember losing so bad I thought it was borderline hilarious, but I never dared show it. I would have run until I passed out. But, at the same time, I was fourteen, never felt stress, and realistically, our team wasn’t the best out there. The only thing that kept me from laughing was the fact that I would be disciplined for it.

So, back to Nowitzki. His smiling made me even less interested in an already torturous game. Did his coach see him? Was the score being shielded by the lights from the roof? I thought maybe Nowitzki forgot who he was playing for and that he was doing really well – even that they had it in the bag. Nowitzki just looked like he had a lot of better things to do.

The second thing I noticed is a common issue that people have with the NBA. I’m going to have to pick on it here because it’s just the absolute truth. A friend that I follow on Twitter wrote, “… these jokers that continue to say there is no defense in the NBA don’t know basketball.” It’s true, I don’t really know basketball that well, but I also find it offensive that what those players were doing was called defense. It makes sense. With a – I don’t know – fifty something game season, this game doesn’t really matter. It’s like voting. Your vote doesn’t really count on an individual level – there’s no such thing as a swing vote – but on the whole they add up. However, it doesn’t seem that anyone in the NBA is that far-sighted. So this is what we get. There were six blocks the entire game and the Mavericks had none of them. These players range in height from 6’3 - 6’10 and beyond. That blocking number is impossible unless the Heat’s offense was just extraordinary. The final score was 105-94. I’ve seen college basketball teams score that much with the games shorter and with vastly better defense on both sides.

The fact is, these teams were shooting 37% and 48%. There wasn’t even good offense. “But, Matt, it’s the first game of the season! You can’t expect them to play at the top of their game this early in the season!” Point taken, but it never stops. Those numbers will hold constant throughout the season. The free-throw
Food Corner

Christmas Feast

By Columnists Diana Cooper (2L) and Matt Turtoro (2L)

Diana:
This year was very different for my family. I was in Wisconsin visiting my eldest sister Amy and her family. My other sister Moogega was in Las Vegas winning ridiculous amounts of money (and losing about the same amount), and my brother James was in Virginia with my mom and dad. Because of this separation, I had the distinct privilege of participating in THREE Christmas dinners.

The first occurred in Wisconsin with Amy and her family. This was about a week before Christmas, and Moogega and James were there for a couple of days. Because they were leaving before Christmas, my sister wanted to make sure they got the full Christmas dinner experience. Her husband made a gigantic turkey which he soaked in a brine overnight and then baked in the oven with select herbs and spices (Col. Saunders wouldn't even know what hit him). I got to make my homemade mashed potatoes (guaranteed to cause awkward groans of pleasure from around the table--don't say I didn't warn you). The secret is cream cheese, butter, and freshly mashed po-

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week before Christmas, and Moogega Amy and her family. This was about a THREE Christmas dinners.

The Dallas-Miami game had 59 defensive rebounds. The score of the Xavier game was 87-77. With higher shooting percentages, this is solely due to the length of time played.

What about good old fashioned hustle? There are things that don't show up in statistics and one of them is how the players are moving. I perfected a way of jogging that, to a coach watching from afar, looked like I was running. I had all the movements down for a full on sprint, but I was going so slow that someone casually walking could pass me. It served its purpose: I would just pick up the pace when I got closer to the coach. I hadn't seen that kind of trickery in a few years. But suddenly I realized, NO ONE IS RUNNING. There was not a single person on that court at anytime who was running. Even when there was a breakaway, the players on “defense” would give up and stay on the other end – I can only assume this was so they didn't have to jog back the other way. No one drives toward the hoop. They pass the ball around for a few seconds, pass it inside the three point line, then you can see it in the movements, you know exactly what's coming next. Everyone stops moving because they know the play's over. There's no backup plan. The guy dribbles three times, fakes one direction, jumps backwards, shoots and misses.

I wish there was a stat for fade-away jumpers/copouts. It's literally the most boring thing I've ever watched and it's no wonder that for the longest time I didn't think there were plays in basketball. It just looked like they were doing the same thing every time. Well, as I learned, they were. The good news is that there is a stat for fast break points and points in the paint. The Heat are a good example. Thirty-one fast break points and forty-four points in the paint. That means that 31-44 “points in the paint” were off passes way up the court to someone waiting – similar to what many college students call “Ultimate Frisbee”: throwing the frisbee as far as you can hoping someone comes down with it.

I guess the really sad thing about all this is that people watch and people enjoy. These are perhaps much more exciting than good, technical basketball. But riddle me this. If you woke up every day and received a present from your family. Every single day you got something new. For the first two weeks maybe you would have trouble sleeping cause you knew what was going down in the morning. It was going to be incredible. But then, all of a sudden you're a month in and there's no thrill in it anymore. There's no surprise, no dividing line between normal days and days you get presents. You take two months off and that makes it a little more exciting when it starts back up again, but it loses its appeal more quickly. The thrills are found in the little book you keep by your bedside in which you track the numbers of presents you get.

“That's my third microwave, setting a new record...for microwaves!”

“I opened my present in 13 seconds! Yes!”

A world that's no longer filled with the thrill of the presents but with numbers which, in some way, represent milestones. I guess what I'm trying to say is that the NBA is a lot like the MLB in that there is no sport being played. Those guys you see running around, that's not real. There isn't really anything happening, it's all fake, like wrestling. The sport known as the NBA is taking place on the table behind the sidelines where a statistician is busily keeping track of everything that's going on, so people can read it later and have some way of proving that the person they were watching was actually playing basketball.

I watched all this on a court with the words “NBA Cares” painted on it. In the fourth quarter, Lebron James almost choked on the irony.
tatoes—no boxes allowed! Trust me. You won’t taste the cream cheese much, but it will increase the smooth creamy texture of the potatoes and bring out the buttery taste. My sister made green beans, corn, a honey glazed ham, freshly made gravy, three different pies (pumpkin, apple and peach), cookies (too many to list), and enough ice cream to make any lactose intolerant person cry a little on the inside. It was delicious, and it was guaranteed to put you to sleep in 10-15 minutes flat.

On to the second meal... Amy decided that since we had the traditional Christmas binge eating meal already, she would go traditional Korean style for our actual Christmas dinner. She made Vegetarian Mandu, which is essentially a pan fried dumpling filled with vegetables and dipped in soy sauce and a hot sauce paste. Due to a previous bad experience in which I was told the sauce was “more of a marinara sauce,” I decided to skip the scene where I cried tears of regret while my mouth burned like the fires of Mordor. It was a rookie move, and I’m sure my ancestors shook their fingers at me.

We also had your standard pot of sticky white rice, Kong namul (a bean sprout salad with bean sprouts, sesame oil, cayenne pepper, soy sauce, minced garlic, and sometimes green onions and sesame seeds), and homemade Kimchi (Essentially spicy fermented cabbage. People say it’s delicious. I wouldn’t know because I’m afraid to eat it... Because it can be very hot. Yes, the finger shaking is happening here too...). Amy also made a spinach salad very similar in taste to the Kong namul.

Finally, the pièce de résistance was the freshly grilled galbi. As explained in a previous article, galbi is a beef short rib cut against the bone, so that each piece of meat has 3-4 oval pieces of rib bone surrounded by delicious, tender, juicy meat. I tried to get the recipe for you guys, but she won’t tell me the recipe until I’m “older.” I don’t know what that means, but it probably had something to do with the onesie I was wearing while I played rock band III with my 5 year old niece and 3 year old nephew (side note: I won). This was, by far one of the best meals I had all year. If you want to try something similar, I would try Kyung Sung on Monticello next to the bike shop near the Bloom. It wasn’t as good as my sister’s, but it’s close.

My final meal was in Hampton with my family. While I was away, my mom made Siopao (a little bun with yummy marinated beef or other type of meat in the center), Pancit (a dish made with noodles, vegetables, and usually chicken) and other Filipino dishes. My brother James made sure to remind me constantly of how good it was and how infrequently my mother makes these dishes. With my homecoming on the 26th, I figured they would have some leftovers since my mother can only cook these foods in batches made for 15+ people, but no. Almost all of it was gone, and all that was left was a baggie full of pancit that my mother claimed was promised to their dog, Angel. Unfortunately for me, instead of eating homemade goodness, my parents brought me to Applebee’s. Although thankful that they fed me at all, I refuse to talk about the experience because who the heck ever wants to hear a review of Applebee’s other than Ricky Bobby.

Overall, this was a great reminder of what the holidays are really about... Food. You don’t gain 5-10 pounds from Love, ya’ll; it comes from butter. But whether your holiday season was filled with homemade goodies or chain food grossness, I hope that you all had a wonderful holiday break filled with family,
Organization Spotlight: 
Black Law Students Association

By Special Contributor Jonathan A. Peterson (3L), President of BLSA

This spring, the Black Law Students Association (BLSA) continues to serve our law school community and the greater Williamsburg community. BLSA kicked off last semester with our annual 1L Welcome BBQ. Over one hundred new law students attended. It was great to see students eager to support BLSA’s work throughout the semester.

Consistent with BLSA’s spirit of community service, this past semester, BLSA hosted its Thanksgiving Basket Competition with some of our most successful results. The Legal Skills firms that participated collectively donated 2,681 non-perishable food items. Just a couple of weeks later, BLSA partnered with the Christian Legal Society for our annual Angel Tree Drive. Once again, our law school community reached out to donate toys and clothes to families in the Williamsburg community. It is through the support of students and faculty that BLSA has been able to sustain our spirit of community service.

BLSA has also been very supportive in the academic development of our members and their participation in student organizations on campus. We started last semester with our annual “Survive with Sundaes” program. While eating ice cream, 2Ls and 3Ls shared their wisdom on how to succeed during the first semester of law school. We also held an outlining session, partnered with the Business Law Society and Women’s Law Society, our annual job search panel discussion, and held a program for students interested in trying out for the trial team. Members of the trial team shared tips about tryouts and gave a trial team demonstration.

BLSA has also been working to reach minority college students who are interested in law school. This past semester, BLSA held its 24th annual Law Day! Law Day is our annual program for minority undergraduates. The day started with an overview of law school, a presentation by Dean Shealy on the admissions process, a presentation on the types of financial aid available to law students, a law school class simulation, and ended with a student panel and moot court demonstration. Dean Douglas opened Law Day by giving the students a little history of the law and its role in our nation’s founding, our law school, and the versatility of a legal education. Professor Marcus led the classroom demonstration, where he engaged the students by asking them challenging questions dealing with criminal law. Next, Lisa-Thomas Hicks, the Secretary of Administration for the Commonwealth of Virginia, gave the keynote address.

BLSA also spearheaded the founding of our College Student Division on the undergraduate campus. The College Student Division allows BLSA to reach students while they are in college to better enhance their decision to enter law school. So far, they have held LSAT preparation workshops and will be assigned mentors from the law school community. BLSA is extremely proud of our outreach to minority students who are interested in entering law school.

Next semester, BLSA plans to be equally active. For Worlds Aids Day, we tabled in the lobby, providing information about HIV/Aids and safe sex practices. Picking up where we left off, this semester we plan to introduce a resolution in the Virginia Assembly to help increase funding to help fight against the spread of HIV/Aids in Virginia, especially in communities most vulnerable to the disease.

In addition, we will be helping ex-felons get their right to vote restored by holding trainings to help them navigate the complex application process. In Virginia, citizens convicted of felonies must apply to have their rights restored. Last semester, our members were trained by our alumnus, Thomas Fitzpatrick, who currently works for the ACLU, on how to complete the voter restoration application. We plan to hold trainings throughout the Hampton Roads community this semester.

Finally, BLSA will continue with its other annual programs. Our 5th annual symposium, which will deal with the impact of environmental regulations on minority communities, will take place in the early part of the semester. In addition, we will hold our annual Oliver Hill Banquet during Admitted Students Weekend. BLSA has been very committed to honoring the legacy of Oliver Hill, a champion of civil rights here in Virginia. BLSA will also hold our annual staff appreciation breakfast and our annual Fashion Show during Admitted Students Weekend. BLSA officers - Back: Candace Headen, Jalyce Mangum, Gabriel Walker, Kevin Barrett, T. Briscoe, Eliza Epps, Eric Charity, Danielle Jarvis; Middle: Difie Osborne, Diana Cooper, Jonathan Peterson, Alexzandria Poole, Jennifer Dilworth; Front: Ashley Wright; Not Pictured: Ashley Heilprin
Weekend. The Fashion Show has become one of the main events during Admitted Students Weekend. Last year, proceeds from the Fashion Show benefited Williamsburg's Avalon Women's Shelter.

BLSA also encourages our members to have an active social life here at the law school. We held a pre-PSF Halloween costume party. We also sponsored a Game Night at Sterling Manor Club House. This semester, our members will be touring the White House on Friday, March 13. We work hard, but we also believe in having an active social life.

I would like to thank all of our members who have helped to make this past semester a success with a special shout out to the members of the board, faculty, and staff. I appreciate your dedication to BLSA, and I look forward to an equally active Spring Semester!

Jonathan A. Peterson
BLSA President

Food Corner Continued from page 7

friends, love, happiness, and, most of all, lots of food.

Matt:

Unlike Diana, I celebrated merely one Christmas this season. I love Christmas. My countdown starts in mid-August at 125 days, and shopping was complete by early December. Its truly the perfect holiday—an ideal combination of my two favorite things: gluttony and materialism. In recognition of these sacred holiday values, I set out to make fifteen different types of cookies. With the help of my handy Cuisinart stand mixer, 36 sticks of butter (I'm not kidding), six lbs. of sugar (granulated, brown, and confectioners) and a healthy dose of “holiday cheer” (gin) this goal was accomplished over the course of two days. I was able to make approximately four-dozen each of raspberry shortbreads, blackberry shortbreads, chocolate chip cookies, double-chocolate chews, chocolate rum balls (the key with rum balls is to use crushed Nilla wafers and double the amount of rum any recipe calls for), sour-cream cookies with apricot filling called Lekvars (jokingly referred to as “hell-cookies” by my relatives because of the arduous process of chilling, rolling, filling, and folding that complicates the cookie-making process), Italian ricotta cookies with lemon icing, St. Joseph's Day cookies (a bread-like cookie scented with cinnamon and cardamom and filled with a compote of pureed figs, grappa, orange zest, and walnuts), vanilla Pizelle, chocolate-mint wafers, coconut sugar cookies, almond crescents, citrus and cream-cheese spritz cookies, cherry spritzes, salted-caramel macaroons with dark chocolate, and finally, white-chocolate, almond and dark cherry biscotti (recipes available upon request). After falling into a prolonged diabetic comma brought on by carefully tasting each and every dough, I awoke to find Christmas Eve nigh upon me!

A quick bus ride into New York City ensured that the family was amply supplied with Champagne truffles from Teuscher’s (an absolutely phenomenal Swiss Chocolatier right by Rockefeller Center that flies over handmade truffles from Geneva twice a week and sells them for only $4 per truffle!), recordings of medieval choir and orchestral holiday songs from the Cloisters Museums, and challah bread from Zabar’s for Christmas Morning’s French toast.

Now, my mother takes a truly demented pleasure in the holidays. Each year she welcomes me back with proffers of banana bread, banana bread from Zabar’s for Christmas Morning’s French toast.

Christmas Tree in Seattle, Washington

Jonathan A. Peterson
BLSA President

with cinnamon and cardamom and filled with a compote of pureed figs, grappa, orange zest, and walnuts), vanilla Pizelle, chocolate-mint wafers, coconut sugar cookies, almond crescents, citrus and cream-cheese spritz cookies, cherry spritzes, salted-caramel macaroons with dark chocolate, and finally, white-chocolate, almond and dark cherry biscotti (recipes available upon request). After falling into a prolonged diabetic comma brought on by carefully tasting each and every dough, I awoke to find Christmas Eve nigh upon me!

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 amazingly airy egg casserole, home fries, homemade blueberry and crème tea scones with clotted cream and local preserves, sausage, Taylor ham (kind of like Canadian bacon for anyone not from the great state of New Jersey), bacon, egg-nog, Mimosas, coffee, and hot chocolate.

After a respite lasting less than an hour, my obesity-inducing mother plied the family with homemade escarole and egg-drop soup, each garnished with mini-meatballs and carrots. With nary a pause we moved on to a Italian repast, consisting of lasagna, meatballs, sausage, artisanal breads, salad, and a cold cuts platter. This was accompanied by a very decent 2007 Mendoza Valley Malbec (at least I think it was; by this point in the day the combination of egg and cream-based alcoholic beverages, sugar and red sauce had left me in an enfee bled and dazed state). The meal finally ended with a platter of cookies, 4 kilos of red-and-green fruit salad, coffee, and a 2002 Port (the gift of a satiated, if stu pedied, college roommate who mistaken enly stopped over for the holiday—he was last seen making plans for adapting Ancient Roman vomitoriums to modern times while wondering how it was pos sible to put on 4 lbs. in one day). It was a fantastic holiday, but now that the New Year is here, it’s time to ready my jogging shoes and begin some kind of fad juice cleanse.