

## It's beginning to look a lot like tur-key.

R.J. Foster, Community Columnist – 11/08

There's no denying that I'm crazy for Christmas. On November 1<sup>st</sup>, I'm playing holiday music and putting up Santa Clauses.

"What about Thanksgiving," you ask? Well, I don't know. What about Thanksgiving? Sure it's important. I guess it just doesn't pack the same punch as Christmas. Wouldn't it be great if it did, though? Just imagine...

First thing we'll need is some Thanksgiving carols. Nothing gets a person in the spirit like a catchy song that, through years of media saturation, becomes synonymous with the season.

*"Hark the Tur-keys  
Sing with cheer,  
'How 'bout ham,  
Or beef this year?'"*

Or maybe something a bit more Silver Bells-ish...

*"See the turkey, and the stuffing,  
And the mashed po-ta-toes.  
In the air there's the smell of Thanks-gi-ving.*

*Oh there's jel-lo, with marsh-mal-lows,  
And a big pumpkin pie.  
I think I'm going to need one more plate.*

*"Turkey day..."*

Perfect. Once we get some first-rate singers to record the songs, we can get some third-rate wedding band to make the lame versions for piping into the stores.

Ah, the stores. Round about July, we notice the shelves are adorned with the icons of the season – the one that's over three months away. Forget the fireworks. It's turkey-time in the city; Thanksgiving throw-rugs, turkeys t-shirts, even pilgrim pajamas.

And look over there! Life sized animatronic pilgrims, hacking the head off of the first Thanksgiving turkey! Man I hope they've got one in stock.

My thoughts about the perfect spot in my home for the mechanical butcher are suddenly interrupted when my wife

calls out, "Honey, have you checked the Thanksgiving lights yet? Those little corncob ones are on sale." Oh yes!!!

"I gotta check out light-up lawn-figures too," I reply. "I need a new Squanto, remember, after that windy..." but my sentence goes unfinished. My illuminated figurine drops to the floor as I stand frozen, filled with awe and wonder.

My wife eventually finds me gazing, mouth agape, at a ginormous - inflatable – Mayflower!

She snaps her fingers in front of my face a few times and says, "Uh, I don't think so." Walking away, she shouts, "Let's go! And don't forget your plastic Indian."

"It's Squanto," I murmur, "the famous English-speaking Native American who helped the Pilgrims (and, as I just learned, not the Lone Ranger's side-kick). I sigh as I retrieve my fallen lawn ornament, and slowly trudge away from the big blow-up boat. "Oh, Squanto."

Maybe what this unsung holiday really needs is a central figure that we don't eat. I mean c'mon! You never see anyone fighting over the Easter Bunny's wish bone.

How about, Peter Pilgrim. Yes, Peter Pilgrim – a hearty yet soft-hearted Puritan, who journeyed across the ocean for religious and political freedom – and to bring maize (that's Pilgrim for corn), to good boys and girls. Forget about Santa Claus Lane. Because...

*"Here comes Peter Pilgrim, here comes Peter Pilgrim,  
Right down Plymouth Rock Lane.  
He's got a bag of corn-or-maize-or-whatever,  
It's time to eat again!"*

Or maybe we could re-assign that tune about the snowman.

*"Pe-ter the Pilgrim,  
Had a suit of black and white.  
Sailed across the sea,  
But he got scur-vy,  
Prob'ly won't live through the night."*

I don't know. Maybe I'm just missing the real spirit of Turkey Day. Perhaps the true meaning of Thanksgiving lies simply in recognizing all the truly important things we have to be thankful for; family, friends, and health.

Then again, a big blow-up Mayflower would be pretty cool.