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## President's Message: Holidays Are Made of Memories - By Mark Snodgrass

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Saturday, December 15th, 2018

It is hard to believe that 2018 is coming to an end. We are just a little over a year from turning the page to 2020. It seems like only yesterday we were ringing in the new millennium. Doomsday prophets were foreshadowing all sorts of gloom and doom. I was spending that particular New Year's Eve in Laredo and attending various festivities across the border with old childhood friends. Unlike previous New Year's Eves, the streets of Nuevo Laredo were almost eerily quiet. Fortunately, the transition to the new millennium was uneventful, and we all returned to our normal day-to-day lives after a traditional (at least for bunch of ne'er-do-wells like the crew I grew up with) New Year's Day meal of Popeye's fried chicken and black-eyed peas.

As I grow older, I find myself to be more reflective of events past, especially during this time of year when we approach the holidays. Most of my fondest holiday memories revolve around family and friends. Some who are no longer with us and some we have simply moved on from in our lives. I very seldom think back about material presents I received.

Sometimes if I listen hard enough I can still here my grandmother's voice trying to teach my sisters and me proper manners at the dinner table on Christmas day, or explaining how belching at the table was once considered a compliment to the chef in certain cultures after my mother had accidentally burped during dinner. Other times I can almost feel the sense of both fear and anticipation when I was hiding behind the couch in the living room at about five or six years old trying to see if I could catch a glimpse of Santa coming down the chimney?which soon ended when my father found me and sent me to bed. I remember hanging the ornament on the tree depicting the husband and pregnant wife when Christi and I were expecting our first child. A smile comes across my face every time I look back on teaching my then five-year-old daughter Claire to skip rocks on the stock tank she named "Hip Poop Lake" on our annual holiday hunting trip, and I fondly recall my son Luke having a BB gun with him everywhere we went on the ranch.

Quite possibly my favorite work-related holiday memory was when my mentor and first boss, Floyd Holder, who after having a fee voucher cut in federal court filed a motion titled "Motion to Reconsider Payment Because Santa Claus Has to Buy Presents." Much to my amazement, the judge reconsidered and paid the whole bill.

Floyd Holder taught me more about practicing law than I can recall. One thing that always stuck with me was that if we were not very close to a trial date or coming up on a deadline, he would walk around the office about five o'clock and yell: "Let's go home, kids. The work will be here tomorrow. Go home and have some fun with your family."

Sometimes as lawyers we forget the most important things in a never-ending quest to do more and better work. Sometimes deadlines or court settings make it necessary to work longer hours and weekends, but as a general rule the work will still be there tomorrow.

A couple of weeks ago, I attended a memorial service for Kelly Pace that was truly a celebration of a life well lived. Kelly was a board member of TCDLA. He was very active in CDLP and was a frequent lecturer at various CLE programs as well as an instructor at the Tim Evans Texas Criminal Trial College. Kelly loved helping young lawyers. He was a great lawyer and an even better person. I had many conversations with Kelly, some serious, some not so serious, but no matter what, he always left you with a smile. Kelly cherished his wonderful wife Therese and his children and always seemed to find time to talk about them and the things they had done together.

I wish all of you a wonderful and happy holiday season. My hope is that you give yourself a gift and during the holidays spend a little less time at the office and a little more time with family and friends. Time is finite. We each only have a certain amount of time. Make those memories that last with your family and friends and be like Kelly Pace and leave them with a smile. The work will still be there tomorrow. Happy Holidays.

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