

# Christmas list

*Editor's note: This is Mark Luce's last Out of Bounds column. We will welcome Geoff Shackelford to the back page next month, but Luce will continue to write for Golfdom in various capacities.*

**D**ear Santa, So, I guess it's been a while. I am not so good at math, but if I am not mistaken, I last sent you a missive in 1978. That was one year after I was ridiculed in Mrs. Bridgewater's second-grade class. You see, our teacher said, "No one lives at the North Pole." But I was ever eager to challenge authority, so I claimed otherwise: "Santa Claus does," I retorted. Everyone laughed.

Well, that did cause some moments of doubt and pain, and I now must sheepishly admit that for a couple of decades (give or take a few years), I wasn't necessarily convinced of your existence. I'm sure you have heard such poppycock before, but let me say that with the birth of our first son and my repeated reading of "The Polar Express," I realized the error of my ways.

The problem, of course, was that I didn't really know that if I heard "the bell," which Chris Van Allsburg so poignantly refers to in "The Polar Express," my holiday spirit would return, replete with working elves, the

## IT'S BEEN A WHILE SINCE I LEFT COOKIES, BUT I'VE BEEN FAIRLY NICE

BY MARK LUCE

patter of reindeer, and general warmth and love.

And, while I am confessing, I guess I might as well admit that the movie "Elf" also helped diminish my doubt — especially considering you landed in Central Park and employed the help of Will Ferrell and Bob Newhart. After all, I reasoned, how could someone who supposedly doesn't exist be so smart as to utilize two hysterically funny men from such diverse (and vital) sides of the comedic street.

Hopefully, Santa, you can see where I am coming from, and accept my humblest apology for my years in the wilderness. With this *mea culpa* addressed, perhaps we can move forward. Below you will find not only the inventory of my naughty and nice, but one thing I meekly request under our permanent tree (I know, I know, but the needles were just too much).

Naughty — I am not good about ironing my clothes the night before. I also, on a couple of occasions, perhaps had one more bourbon than I needed. I also wished a couple of times that rain would wash out some of my son Miles' soccer and/or T-ball



games. Sometimes, my column isn't on time.

Nice — I routinely take the boys hiking and have been active in the Cub Scout troop. I helped coach soccer and basketball, and I wrote a passel of letters of recommendation for prospective college kids. I volunteered at a local food bank. I treat my lovely wife with courtesy, respect and love. And I redid the entire living room.

So, if you could, I would really appreciate a Canon EOS Rebel XS 18-55IS digital camera. I would like to cultivate photography as a hobby, and to do so, one needs solid gear.

Please recall my address: 113 E. 109th Terrace, Kansas City, Mo., 64114. I will leave out cookies, Gatorade and a bag of Four Cheese Doritos for you and the crew.

*Mark Luce lives in Kansas City, Mo., where he wishes you a happy holiday. He can be reached at [msluce@everestkc.net](mailto:msluce@everestkc.net).*

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