

It's not easy being Santa Claus

By Siobhan McAndrew, Reno Gazette-Journal

It's hard to be Santa Claus.

The commercialization, the money-making department store Kris Kringles and the people who don't realize the greatest gift you can give a child comes from the heart might make even the jolliest man in a bright red suit want to scream, "Bah humbug."

And then there are the commercials that endlessly use Santa to encourage spending. The worst is by electronics retailer Best Buy.

In the ad, an overzealous and vindictive shopper, played by "Parks and Recreation" actress Jama Williamson, mocks Santa. Santa tries to fit a simple wooden toy into a stocking. The shopper looks on, proud that she outdid Santa by scoring great deals.

"Oh, I guess I didn't leave any room for you," she says, as a frustrated Santa stands in front of her family's Christmas stockings. "Maybe you can fill his," she smirks, as she points to the dog, who is holding an empty stocking in his mouth.

The commercial ends with the line, "Game on, Santa."

"Gifts are not what the holiday is about," says Santa Claus, an Incline Village man who legally changed his name from Patrick O'Conner to Claus in 2005.

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