

## Office of the Governor

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### NEWS RELEASE

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RELEASE: December 23, 1998

#### **Governor Shares a Whitman Holiday Tradition**

Gov. Christie Whitman provides a weekly radio message to radio stations throughout the state. Each week, the message focuses on a different concern or event of interest to New Jerseyans.

This week the Governor shares a Whitman family tradition with the one family of New Jersey. She reads the classic poem "A Visit From St. Nicholas" by Clement Clarke Moore.

Attached is the text of the message.

The radio message can be accessed by calling the Governor's actuality line at 609-292-3249. It will be available today, beginning at noon, and will run through the weekend.

#### **Governor's Weekly Radio Address December 23, 1998 A Visit From St. Nicholas**

This is a special time of the year for all of us as we celebrate the holidays and contemplate the New Year. I would like to share one Whitman family tradition with the one family of New Jersey - the classic poem by Clement Clarke Moore, "A Visit from Saint Nicholas."

'Twas the night before Christmas, when all through the house, not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse; The stockings were hung by the chimney with care, In hopes that Saint Nicholas soon would be there;

The children were nestled all snug in their beds, While visions of sugar-plums danced in their heads; And mamma in her 'kerchief, and I in my cap, had just settled down for a long winter's nap,

When out on the lawn there arose such a clatter, I sprang from the bed to see what was the matter. Away to the window I flew like a flash, tore open the shutters and threw up the sash.

The moon on the breast of the new-fallen snow gave the luster of mid-day to objects below, When, what to my wondering eyes should appear, but a miniature sleigh, and eight tiny reindeer, With a little old driver, so lively and quick, I knew in a moment it must be St. Nick.

More rapid than eagles his coursers they came, And he whistled, and shouted, and called them by name: "Now, DASHER! now, DANCER! now, PRANCER and VIXEN! On, COMET! on CUPID! on, DONDER and BLITZEN! To the top of the porch! to the top of the wall! Now dash away! dash away! dash away all!"

"As dry leaves that before the wild hurricane fly, When they meet with an obstacle, mount to the sky, so up to the house-top the coursers they flew, With the sleigh full of toys, and St. Nicholas too. And then, in a twinkling, I heard on the roof the prancing and pawing of each little hoof.

As I drew in my head, and was turning around, down the chimney St. Nicholas came with a bound. He was dressed all in fur, from his head to his foot, and his clothes were all tarnished with ashes and soot; A bundle of toys he had flung on his back, and he looked like a peddler just opening his pack.

His eyes -- how they twinkled! his dimples how merry! His cheeks were like roses, his nose like a cherry! His droll little mouth was drawn up like a bow, and the beard of his chin was as white as the snow;

The stump of a pipe he held tight in his teeth, and the smoke it encircled his head like a wreath; He had a broad face and a little round belly, that shook, when he laughed like a bowl full of jelly.

He was chubby and plump, a right jolly old elf, and I laughed when I saw him, in spite of myself; A wink of his eye and a twist of his head, soon gave me to know I had nothing to dread;

He spoke not a word, but went straight to his work, and filled all the stockings; then turned with a jerk, Laying his finger aside of his nose, And giving a nod, up the chimney he rose;

He sprang to his sleigh, to his team gave a whistle, and away they all flew like the down of a thistle. But I heard him exclaim, as he drove out of sight, "Happy Christmas to all, and to all a good-night."

To everyone from High Point to Cape May, and everywhere in between, I wish you and your family a wonderful holiday season.