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WINTER OUT WEST IS WONDERFUL

by *Ken Shroyer*

provide every kind of game thought possible—while the wife is making a favorite holiday candy.

Poor old Winter takes a beating, though. Most people like winter best when it's summertime and summer best when it's wintertime. At least that's what they say. Mention winter and many folks just say "Bah." The mere word *winter* sends shivers up and down their bodies. Such attitudes aren't fair, really, because winter offers many advantages.

We should just think about Christmas and the birth of our Savior, a time of worship, a time of exchanging gifts with our loved ones. Then, later, we enjoy the opening of packages and watching the children's eyes light up as they gather around the glittering Christmas tree.

Then one week later, it's New Year's Day—a time of making resolutions to strive for a better life. But some folks make resolutions knowing



illustration by *Mike Sigurdson*

One nice thing about winter out West is that it's a wonderful time for romance. Sitting around the fireplace eating a big bowl of popcorn is my ideal way of spending an evening. And if a person likes basketball, the TV will

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with the thought that we can do better.—even break some of those bad habits we've had for years.

Then before we have time to get the snow off the driveway, "Ground Hog Day" pops up. And we're hoping that little rascal doesn't betray us and go back into his hole for another six weeks of bad weather. However, wintertime is an excellent time for crops. The snow gives new growth to what we have planted; the cold kills off most of the insects. Too, we can plan what we are going to do next spring and summer—even schedule a vacation if we have a good crop.

Winter also gives us a chance to give honor to our two best-known Presidents' birthdays—Washington and Lincoln. Of course, we have to squeeze Valentine's Day in there between holidays. Then somehow some government officials thought it would be good to have a special day, so they declared a President's Day for everyone.

Now, in order to end our wintertime in patriotic style, we conclude

with Saint Patrick's Day. We put on anything green we can find and strut ourselves down to a local store or restaurant displaying our four-leaf clover and bragging about our Irish blood.

For sure, wintertime out West has many advantages—no lawns to mow, no shrub-pruning, no car-washing, staying at home to pamper a cold or the flu, no listening to golfers telling their tales, no salesmen or solicitors during snowdrift times disturbing our rest. We enjoy missing those things.

In short, wintertime in Western Oklahoma is great. Living and loving out West during the winter is like heaven on earth, and it's a deposit that can be made even without visiting a bank.▲

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