

Christmas Wrapping...

It is a time honored tradition in our family that I am not allowed to wrap gifts. No matter the occasion, if you must tear into a gift from the Parrish family, I was not involved in the packaging. As a matter of fact, rarely am I even entrusted to stuff a present into a gift bag, my skills being what they are. This is not a male chauvinist trait (I do not refuse to bundle gifts.); it's just that I am really bad at wrapping a gift beyond the fourth grade level. As I recently learned, my wrapping skills are possibly worse than that. I'm really at about the three year old level.

By circumstance, this season I had acquired a few straggling Christmas gifts that showed up in boxes unwrapped. Seeing that they were for my wife, I felt a little twinge of guilt in boxing them and sneaking them into her pile of gifts to wrap. Plus, she caught me doing it.

My second plan included a bow, some ribbon, and a Sharpie to black out the mailing labels. After sliding the beautifully and festively decorated cardboard boxes under the tree, a sideways glance and quick witted reply told me that this plan was unacceptable. If I remember correctly, I was told, "...and you think you are going to put that where?"

I tried to explain the meaning of Christmas and how it's the thought that counts, but I was soon banished to a room with some tape, some wrapping paper, assorted ribbons, and a three year old boy. Our first twenty minutes were productively spent taping trucks and bulldozers together and dragging them around the room with the ribbon. Good times, but we were getting nowhere.

We then rummaged through the "wrapping paper" closet and managed to find one box that would hold all of Mom's remaining unwrapped gifts. This ploy cut our problem from wrapping three boxes to only wrapping one. Quite a clever plan if I do say so myself. Unfortunately, the plan backfired a bit when Parker discovered that there was a bit of *Thomas the Train* wrapping paper left in the aforementioned closet. This means that Mom's gift under the tree now appears to be wrapped for a three year old boy. Fortunately, the rest of our wrapping job makes it clearly stand out from the rest.

I'm not sure how long it took us to actually wrap the box, but I do know that there are still strips of tape in various places throughout Parker's room. I even pulled a piece off the dog this very morning. I also know that there is no shortage of ribbon on Mom's gift. You'd be amazed at how long fifty feet of ribbon appears when unrolled and wrapped around a single box.

Actually, when all was said and done, Mom got two gifts under the tree. A little surplus paper and an extra roll of tape managed to find their way around Parker's pajamas. That and a ribbon sash that made him appear to be the winner of a Santa's elf beauty pageant. As his legs and feet were taped together, I placed Parker under the tree and he was thrilled to have Mom come in and open him early. Somehow, I doubt he'd have stayed wrapped through snack time anyways.

With tears of laughter in her eyes, I thought I heard Mom mumble something about the best Christmas present ever. Maybe my wrapping skills are improving a bit.

Until next time, keep smiling.

-Questions, greetings, or comments can be sent to Drs. Parrish at ParrishDental@aol.com.