

## **“IOWA the STATE”**

by

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*Eye- Oh-Way....* That’s how Professor Harold Hill pronounced the name of the state whilst trying to flamboozle the good folks of River City into starting a marching band. “You got trouble right here in River City... trouble that starts with ‘T,’ that rhymes with ‘P’ and stands for pool.” The American presidential election won’t have officially begun until the good folk of this same heart of America state has had their say, first and foremost. The question I, and a great many other people are asking, is why is that? How come those running for the highest office in the land are willing to spend so much time and money in an effort to get the residents of this tiny state of 3 million people to say they like them? The trouble that’s in River City now still rhymes with ‘P’ but these days the ‘P’ stands for politics.

January 3<sup>rd</sup> is the day the good people of Iowa will come out to attend the Caucuses held by many of those who want to be President of the United States and the good people of Iowa will give them a thumbs up or thumbs down, but what will that really mean in the scheme of things? If we think about it...Iowa really doesn’t represent a microcosm of the entire United States as a few other states do. Also, there have been plenty of candidates who have been approved by the voters of Iowa only to be ignored by the rest of the country. So why should we as Americans, or the candidates themselves, really care about the outcome of the Iowa caucuses?

Well, according to some dear friends of mine who are also neighbors and previous residents of Iowa, the reason Iowa is so important is because of its ability to introduce new ideas and new products to the world. If you were to ever get Sally and Sarah in a conversation about their beloved state you must prepare yourself to listen to the many..... many... many contributions the state of Iowa has made to the United States and the World. I’m talking about more things than corn, soybeans and hogs

**Did you know:**

**That George Gallup, of Gallup Poll fame, was born in Iowa?**

**That those darling and catchy Burma-Shave roadside signs made their debut in Iowa in 1927?**

**That Russian Premier Nikita Khrushchev made special trip to Iowa to learn the right way to increase corn production on Soviet farms?**

**That studded tires were first approved on highways in Iowa?**

**That John Wayne, Mark Twain, Glen Miller, Ann Landers and twin sister Abigail, Buffalo Bill Cody, the Everly Brothers, Wyatt Earp, Mamie Eisenhower, Frank and Jesse James, Don Ameche, Donna Reed and Nick Nolte were all born in Iowa? Johnny Carson lived in Nebraska but was born in Iowa, as was Fran Allison of Kukla, Fran and Ollie fame. Also, Meredith Wilson, the gentleman**

who wrote “The Music Man” musical and movie was born in Iowa. His “River City” was really representing Mason City, Iowa.

So, you can see Iowa is a true heart of America state and while it does not represent a cross-section of all the ethnic, racial, and religious groups and factions in America, it does, according to those from there, represent the homespun, down to earth, middle of the road, “you can’t put one over on me,” values and ethics that most Americans cherish. Hence, those aspiring to public office know that, to win America, it would be a good beginning to win over the picky and resolute voters of Iowa.

Come January 8<sup>th</sup>, the good folk of New Hampshire will also get their opportunity to voice their preferences on those running for office when they hold their Primary Elections. For the first time ever, you guys out there, Florida will also have a Presidential Preference Primary election on January 29<sup>th</sup>, 2008, several months earlier than normal. Their election could be a true harbinger of who is going to be each party’s ultimate nominated contender because with the many retirees who live there from all over the globe Florida is a true microcosm of these great United States.

Well, three more days until Christmas will make its appearance one more time and hopefully we will remember whose birth we’re celebrating and His teachings of love and peace among men. No matter how old, young, ugly, nasty or mean a person is, the Spirit of Christmas seems to change the hearts of men and women throughout the world. Our chorus recently sang a beautiful song that has a closing line we all could do well to remember and make it a mainstay of our lives. It goes... “The secret of Christmas is not the things you do at Christmas time, it’s all the Christmas things you do all year long.” There’s wisdom there, give it a try.

Since we’ve only got three days until Christmas I’ll close with a little humor from actual essays written by students at a Christian school from whom I’ve quoted in the past.

- 1- When Mary heard she was the mother of Jesus, she sang the Magna Carta.
- 2- Jesus enunciated the golden rule, which says to do unto others before the do one to you. He also explained a man doth not live by sweat alone.
- 3- St. John the blacksmith dumped water on his (Jesus’) head.

Let’s keep our sense of humor folks. All you folks have a great week and if you’re traveling over Christmas please drive carefully and return home safely.

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