

## Christmas at Ford Meter Box

Christmas has always been a celebrated event at Ford Meter Box. COVID-19 may require modification of some traditions, but we still find ways to celebrate the season and give back to our employees and communities.

One long-standing tradition has been the much-anticipated Christmas lunches. Every employee is invited to a catered Christmas dinner with all the fixin's. Retirees are also invited and there is much storytelling and catching-up.



The Ford Meter Box Employees' Association also gets involved in Christmas festivities. The association provides employee participation in the downtown skating rink and Christmas scavenger hunt.

In Pell City, the annual ugly Christmas sweater contest is highly anticipated, as is Santa's visit and the Ford Meter Box display at Christmas in the Park.

Outside of work, Ford Meter Box employees volunteer to help the less fortunate during the holidays. Some sign up to ring the bell for Salvation Army. Others raise money and wrap presents for Wabash County Christmas Spirit – an organization that provides Christmas presents for families in need. In Pell City, employees donate suitcases to Lighten the Load – a campaign to provide foster children in St. Clair County with their own suitcase.



***Ford Meter Box wishes everyone a Merry Christmas and a safe and happy New Year!***



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### Long Forgotten

Pen and ink and watercolor and on paper by Phyllis Masing

## January 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>DECEMBER 2020</b> S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	<b>FEBRUARY 2021</b> S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28	 New Moon  First Quarter  Full Moon  Last Quarter				
					New Year's Day <b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>17</b>	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day <b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>24</b>						
<b>31</b>	<b>25</b>	Australia Day (Australia) <b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>

**THE FORD METER BOX COMPANY, INC.**

Wabash, Indiana

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# He Never Met A Man He Didn't Like



*A statue of Will Rogers stands in Statuary Hall in the Capitol Building in Washington, D.C. Photo credit: Library of Congress, <https://lccn.loc.gov/2016876144>*

He was born William Penn Adair Rogers in 1879 in the Cherokee Nation, Indian Territory (now Oklahoma), but to most of America he became known simply as Will Rogers. His name was once a household word, and millions of Americans saw his movies, watched him on stage, listened to his radio shows, and read his hugely popular newspaper columns.

He grew up in Indian Territory where his father was prominent in regional politics both before and after Oklahoma became a state. Will went off to school at Kemper Military Academy in Missouri, but in 1898 he abandoned an academic life for a four-year stint as a cowboy on a ranch near Higgins, Texas. He learned to ride horses and to work with a lasso, skills that eventually were his passport to show business. The lariat, in fact, was very much his trademark when he became famous.

Will failed at ranching in Argentina and sailed to South Africa where he found work as a ranch hand before hiring on as a trick roper with Texas Jack's Wild West Show. Over the next several years Rogers perfected his skills as a rider and roper, and he

found work with circuses and gained billings on the vaudeville circuit.

In about 1918, Rogers began to add commentary to his act. He found that he captivated his audiences with his laconic humor and the Oklahoma twang that was in his voice.

Dressed in cowboy garb, Rogers ambled from theater wings twirling a lariat. "Well, what shall I talk about?" he would say. "I ain't got anything funny to say. All I know is what I read in the papers." He turned what he had read in the newspapers into jokes and pointed observations of human nature, and found success in improvising on the news of the day. "I read eight newspapers a day. When I'm in a town with only one newspaper, I read it eight times," he explained.

He took delight in commenting on current politics, and he skewered both major political parties with aplomb. "I am not a member of an organized political party," he said. "I am a Democrat."

"I don't make jokes. I just watch the government and report the facts," he said. "The more you observe politics, the more you've got to admit that each party is worse than the other," is another of Will's jabs at politics.

Newspapers did indeed provide Rogers with much of his humorous material, but he joined the journalistic ranks with pieces he wrote for the *Saturday Evening Post* and syndicated weekly columns he wrote for *The New York Times*. Forty million people read a short daily item he wrote for another syndicate.

Rogers was a great advocate for aviation, and he became a friend of pilots such as Charles Lindbergh and Wiley Post. In 1935 he joined Post on a planned flight to Alaska and Siberia. Their plane crashed near Port Barrow, Alaska, and both men were killed.

But true to his word, Rogers keeps an eye on Congress, even in death. A statue of Rogers stands in Statuary Hall in the United States Capitol. The statue, done by the famed sculptor Jo Davidson, faces the entrance to the House of Representatives. Television viewers can sometimes catch a glimpse of the statue as members of the House and the Senate file through Statuary Hall under the unrelenting gaze of Will Rogers on their way to the president's annual State of the Union address.

*by Pete Jones*

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