

Cookie Chronicles

ENTERTAINMENT

Who's Afraid of the Cold?

This season brought the latest entertainment fad to the North Pole with a special holiday edition of *Celebrity Fear Factor*. The show featured Frosty the Snowman, the Tooth Fairy, Della Plum, reindeers Lightning and Olive, and Jack Frost.

The guests had to endure tests including a candy eating contest, bungee jumping during a blizzard, the Santa mall test, present wrapping in a bug-filled cage, and walking over hot coals.

Della Plum, the Sugar Plum Fairy, dropped out after the first round as the slowest contestant in the candy-eating contest. Jack Frost, who bragged about his fondness for snowy weather, walked away from the winterized bungee jump because he was afraid of heights.

The other contestants were tougher. Olive the Other Reindeer, famous for helping Santa years ago when former sleigh team member Blitzen broke his leg, wilted under the pressure of facing hundreds of children in the Santa mall test. The Tooth Fairy finally bugged out during the gross present wrapping trial.

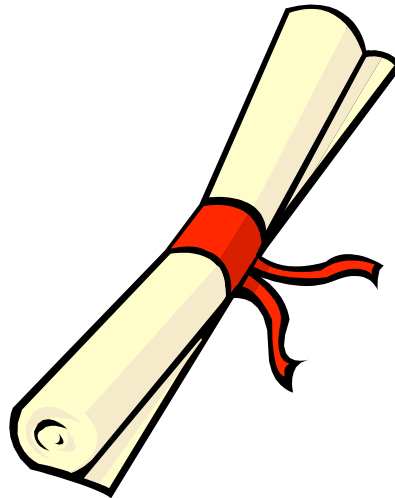
Lightning, a Santa sleigh team member, faced Frosty the Snow Man in the final showdown. The odds favored the reindeer in a traditional coal-walking test because everyone knew Frosty's fear of heat. However, the snowman even surprised himself by walking the coals ten seconds quicker than his fellow contestant.

Winner Frosty said, "I may have lost two inches in height, but it was worth it to see the look on Lightning's face at the end. He was fast, but I was faster."

Ice Angels

This week, Victoria's Secret featured a special holiday fashion show at the North Pole.

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SANTA DECIDES NOT TO UPGRADE THE LIST

This autumn, the Christmas workshop was all set to perform a major upgrade to the computer system that keeps track of Santa's massive list of good and bad children.

Hans Candle, chief of the Elves' Guild and project lead for the upgrade, explained, "We ran a successful trial run, but when it came time to implement it in September, Santa pulled the plug on the new software."

Santa Claus said, "I'd love to have the new software, but we'll just have to make do. We can't afford the expense right now. It was either postpone the upgrade or cut twenty five percent off the good list."

"We understand Santa's priorities," said Alley Tinsel, speaking for Polesoft, the software vendor based at the North Pole. "I'm sure we'll do it next year."

VS joined forces with Clauswear to show off some of Anna Claus' latest creations.

Angel Gisele Bundchen sauntered down the runway in a stunning white faux fur bikini. Tyra Banks simmered in glittering gold while doing a flamenco dance.

Host Heidi Klum said, "It's such a delightful show. Anna [Claus] knows just how to make a girl's wardrobe festive." Naomi Campbell said, "I love wearing the bold reds and greens! More, please!"

SPACE

No Space for Blitzen

The Russian Space Agency said last week that it had suspended launch plans for reindeer superstar Blitzen because his financial backers missed a critical payment deadline. The 30 million dollar space flight had included unique retrofits to Russian equipment.

Comparing the situation to the cancellation of the Lance Bass trip to the International Space Station, Russian space officials would not reveal the details of the failed transaction.

Blitzen had been in training since October for the March mission at Russia's Star City cosmonaut centre outside Moscow. He was hoping to become the first reindeer and entertainer to visit ISS.

Last month, Russian officials agreed to retrofit one of the Russian rockets to accommodate the reindeer "tourist" after receiving an initial payment from the movie star's agents.

Bugs Bunny, the famous Hollywood producer and occasional movie star, planned to make a TV series about Blitzen's trip and was organizing sponsors to pay for it. He said, "It's that Russian bureaucracy again. We just couldn't keep up with the paperwork."

"We did everything they asked," said Blitzen in an interview with ABC's Diane Sawyer. "We even negotiated a higher fee to take care of the retrofitting." Past space "tourists" Dennis Tito and Mark Shuttleworth each paid the standard fare of 20 million dollars, but the rocket needed special modifications to accommodate a reindeer. "I'd still like to go, but I guess they just weren't ready for me," said Blitzen. "Maybe we'll be able to try this again in a few years."

"We don't think it's a complete loss," said Bugs Bunny. "We're trying to convince the sponsors that this story has the ingredients for a summer blockbuster. If we can't send him up in real life, we can always do it on the silver screen."

When asked about the movie possibility, Blitzen said, "Of course, it wouldn't be the same as going up into space. But if it will inspire a new generation of reindeer astronauts, I'll do it. Besides, it would be good PR for the hardworking crews of the ISS."