

Let's talk turkey, as in the bird, not the deals on television

By Timothy Linscott

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I have many fond memories of Thanksgiving. None of them involve shopping.

My father worked in retail for over 30 years and there were many days he left for work at 7 a.m. and came home at 10 p.m. During the annual inventory he'd sleep on a couch for three days in his office. I have seen in person the insanity holiday shopping can bring and along the way learned a few lessons about life and retail.

Several large box stores, and other businesses, are going to be open Thanksgiving evening. I truly understand that because Thanksgiving is a week later this year and there is one less week of shopping for the holidays. Yes, I understand there is just over a month until 'The Big Day.' Being around retail for many years, I understand a huge part of the year's profits come during the holidays and it is important to keep profit margins up, however, when do you sacrifice your soul as a company to keep the profit margin up?

I believe in the sanctity of the family and the preservation of tradition.

How many memories will be made this year around the Thanksgiving dinner table when mom, dad or both have to get up and go to work? Thanksgiving is about giving thanks for what you have, not being thankful for huge discounts on electronics throughout the store.

I have wonderful memories of going to my grandparents' house in Sioux City, Iowa, and spending time with my cousins, playing football in the back yard, conjuring up fantasy games like we were pirates, soldiers, superheroes and the like, not to mention creating some mischief throughout the neighborhood.

As my brothers and sister had their broods grow, there were many Thanksgivings at the home of my parents. It seemed we were always passing sweet potatoes one direction and a new baby the other direction. The kids would chase each other and play, my folks would watch football and my brother, Jeff, and I would typically play video games or watch old pro wrestling videos.

Because of my father's job in retail, he worked a lot of hours and missed a lot of activities when we were growing up, which is the nature of the business. He never missed spending time with us during Thanksgiving and participating in all of the family activities.

I can't fathom a company asking their employees to give up that much time during the year only to squeeze out six more hours of time on an important holiday. Instead of time-and-a-half, I hope these employees are compensated three-times-and-a-half their regular wage.

Many families live check-to-check and are barely scraping by and I know many retail companies are in the same boat. However, what good is money, no matter how needed, when you are sacrificing memories with your family?

I relish the memories made over the years with my family and hope to make new memories with my children in the years to come.

These intangibles do not have a price tag and no matter how fabulous a deal you think you are getting on pajama pants, in the end, replaying memories of your family will be all you and they have left at the end of the day.

My wish to all readers is that they eat some incredible food surrounded by their loved ones, snore loudly on the couch as they watch TV and wake just in time to have one more piece of pie.