

December 2011

Dear Clients and Friends:

A few years ago my wife and I were trapped in a crowded Fashion Valley parking structure for 45 minutes. This was two days before Christmas, and it felt like we would never get out of there. I made a lifetime resolve to do all my holiday shopping early.

Early means way before November. While value-conscious buyers are making their purchases on Black Friday and Cyber Monday, I'm relaxing.

Please don't use me as an example. My method is to shop early, find sales and pinch pennies. If everyone did that, we wouldn't have the record spending of the last few days. Those billions of dollars for toys, clothes, jewelry and cars are badly needed by our slowly recovering economy.

My habits are inherited. I wouldn't say my parents were miserly, but when we were growing up, Mom and Dad stuffed our Christmas stockings with oranges, nuts, a bit of candy and an occasional toy. They had to feed us anyway, and we had the fun of hunting for the toys.

Now we're carrying on this low cost tradition for our kids and grandkids. Like I said, please do not follow my example. American business needs you to do your part.

Christmas will be a special day for me and Peg, our 30<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary.

Very best wishes for the holidays,



Charles M. Shackelford