

Sept. 4, 1958

Mr. Guy Neff,
Meredith Publishing Co.,
Davenport 3, Iowa

Dear Mr. Neff:-

Please pardon the delay in answering your most interesting letter, but Fiesta has been upon us and there were certain commitments I had to attend.

I am sure there is plenty of material here for a Christmas story. I have long wanted to do just that. First there are the charming Luminarias, the little bonfires built to welcome the Christ Child, then the Farolitos which are unique to this region. If you are not acquainted with these, it is the native Spanish-American's way of festive illumination. Just ordinary No. 3 or No 4 brown paper bags are filled to about three inches with sand, and in the sand a candle. The top is folded over about two inches, and the bag makes a very inexpensive lantern. These are placed along roof lines, walls, etc. at a spacing of two or three feet with a most enchanting effect. This is unique to this region. Then I know where to hunt up much more native Spanish material. Then there is always the colorful Indian corn, I have seen as many as six different colors, white, yellow, dark blue, dark red, a blending of red and white making a lovely pink, and other mixtures.

There are two lots of prizes for Xmas decorations (house) given here. One by the Public Service Co., which of course calls for electric lights, the other by the Old Santa Fe Assc. offered specifically for the old native things.

Santa Fe abounds in talented people doing all sorts of crafts. One beautiful decoration I saw a year or two ago was a tumble weed, a rayed with silver, decorated with just a few very small Christmas balls and hung up by the stem end. One of our outstanding citizens is Alexander Girard, the very famous textile designer, architect etc. He lives here, but works everywhere. If I could get him interested he would come up with beautiful sophisticated decorations using local material. And there are many others.

I feel sure we could produce quite a group of things with great variety. All in all this sounds like something I am greatly interested in and would love to do.

Sorry I did not see you, but I hope you really will be back. Sincerely yours,