



Podcast Episode 163
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“Rapid Fire Holiday Questions with Andy”

David Loy: Hi and welcome to *In the Loop* with Andy Andrews, I’m your host David Loy. And I am welcomed. Welcomed, really, am I going to say it that way? We’re not going to edit this because I have flaws, I can’t even do an intro to a podcast.

Andy Andrews: You certainly do. Oh my gosh, can we do a podcast about your flaws?

David: You and my wife can do that at some point. She would have a long list.

Andy: That’s a mini-series.

David: Andy Andrews, thank you for joining us once again. We’re glad to have you here. We have kind of an interesting format today. We’re wrapping up the year, you know, it’s holiday season, Thanksgiving, Christmas, all of that stuff going on. We try not to go too specific into any of those specific, too specific into any of those. Matt I’m gonna need you to take that one out.

Andy: Maybe you want to start over again, I don’t know. What you’re trying to say is, it’s beginning to look a lot like Christmas.

David: There you go. And I thought it would be interesting.

Andy: Everywhere you go.

David: I thought it would be interesting.

Andy: Take a look at a Grand hotel

David: The Grand Hotel, ok.

Andy: Here we go.

David: For us to do a semi rapid fire question and answer with Andy Andrews.

Andy: Well, we certainly gotten off into the deep end so far.

David: Alright. I'm just going to ask you a series of...

Andy: Is this holiday stuff, or Christmas stuff or?

David: Mostly holiday related questions, we might throw in a couple of random other ones. But I think it's a good opportunity for people to hear a little bit more about the inner workings of the Andrews family, your upbringing, your holiday.

Andy: Oh my gosh.

David: History, all that stuff. Ok, so we'll start of simple. Andy what is your favorite Christmas carol?

Andy: Oh my gosh, that's simple to you?

David: Yeah. absolutely.

Andy: I really have two favorite Christmas songs. One, and I have connections to both of them. One is, *Mary, Did You Know*. And that was written by Mark Lowry and Buddy Greene, buddies of mine. And then there is another song that is not as well-known but just blows me away in the same way, and it's called *Labor of Love*, and it's done by The Isaacs. So you want to go on iTunes and see *Labor of Love* by The Isaacs, put in The Isaacs. And that song blows me away. Those are both very major-ish type of, about the night when the Christ was born. I just love both of those songs, both of them are just amazing. And then if you want to throw in kind of a white trash song, I think that *Merry Christmas from the family* song is just hilarious. I don't know if you ever heard that.

David: I don't think I have.

Andy: The one by Montgomery Gentry is my favorite version of it. And it is, just like, just, we have all known people like this.

David: Yes, ok. That's something that I need to listen to. Ok, along those lines.

Andy: You don't really need to listen to it, trust me. I probably shouldn't even said anything about it, now people listen to it, I bet it's like, total waste of time, but it is pretty funny.

David: Right, ok. Here's potentially a funny question. Who is the most unique family member from your childhood? Did you have any family members that stick out to you, from holiday gatherings or Christmas Eve services or something like that?

Andy: You know, my granddaddy Sawyer, I was always amazed at granddaddy because he would always guess his gifts. And I was

David: Is this your mom's dad or dad's dad?

Andy: My mom's dad.

David: Ok.

Andy: My mom's dad. And Adam is named after him, Adam Sawyer Andrews. And so he's named after, my granddaddy was Mac, Mac Sawyer. And granddaddy, I was always just kind of amazed that granddaddy could guess his gifts. And I don't know if he only got the same few things all the time. I think back on this and how did, but I was always blown away. Granddaddy would go, oh, there's my golf balls. Oh, there, that handkerchief, thank you so much. And he'd open and it would be a handkerchief.

David: And he nailed it every time.

Andy: Yeah, he nailed it every time. And so it was always very funny to me.

David: That's fantastic. Ok, what about, what's your favorite Thanksgiving food? Your favorite Thanksgiving dish?

Andy: Dressing. Not stuffing but dressing.

David: Dressing, there's a difference.

Andy: Corn bread dressing and my mom made it, my grandmother made it, my wife's mother made it and her grandma. And they made it in the same way. It was very odd. You know, because

David: Aah, family recipe.

Andy: Because, well, I mean, their family and our family, just kind of, it taste the same. And you know, dressing is kind of like chili and spaghetti, everybody has his own thing. And if you get somebody else's and you don't like it. But man, to me, that's the best.

David: That's it.

Andy: And the smoked turkey. I smoke a turkey every year. And I smoke it on that Kamado Joe. And I'm just telling you, smoked turkey, the boys and I love smoked turkey. And Polly loves smoked turkey. But we love the sandwiches.

David: Oh, afterwards. Yeah, absolutely. Ok, and my next question was gonna be what's your favorite Christmas food, is that, does all of that apply as well or is there something different that you attach to Christmas?

Andy: Really kind of the same thing. Now, we do a cranberry thing, that we have, and I gave it the name. And you know, everybody

David: Is the name cranberry thing. Please tell me you came up with that

Andy: No, it's not the cranberry thing. I came up with a much better name than cranberry thing. And it's probably something your grandmother made

too. You know, it's with jell-o, and pecans, and cranberries, and like orange rind and his kind of stuff. But we call ours, and I gave it the name, we call ours cranberry whomp.

David: Cranberry whomp.

Andy: Cranberry whomp. We named it that way when the boys were little. The boys really like the name, the cranberry whomp. Mom could we have some whomp please? Please pass the whomp?

David: Pass the whomp please. Ok.

Andy: That's W-H-O-M-P.

David: Is there an exclamation point at the end or just?

Andy: I think there should be.

David: Ok, let's do that. What about New Years? Is there a New Year's food or you have black-eyed pea pie?

Andy: My wife is, and she is always like pushing those nasty things on us.

David: I feel the same way.

Andy: But I'm like, I think I'll just have a lousy luck, thank you darling. I'll make my own lucky, you eat those nasty peas.

David: I'll take my chances with that.

Andy: And I like peas. I just don't like that, you know, it's the texture thing.

David: I'm not a big fan either. My wife Stephanie loves them, I'm not in on it. Ok, what about favorite holiday?

Andy: Wait, back up to New Years.

David: Ok.

Andy: For years and years, Todd and Brenda Rainsberger, from Gainesville, Florida, come and spend New Year's with us. I mean, we've done this for years. And we always have two things during that time. We have gumbo, seafood gumbo, and we have, ready for this? This is going to surprise you, oysters rockefeller.

David: That does surprise me.

Andy: And this is my dad's recipe and so, it's not, you know, you can get oysters rockefeller in a restaurant. And it's like nothing. I mean, I'm always disappointed. I don't even get them anymore.

David: Because you rather do it yourself.

Andy: Yeah, it's just, whatever my dad figured out years and years ago I've got that card written, you know, it's written in my mother's hand, I wish I had something in my dad's handwriting. But if it was in my dad's writing, we wouldn't know what it said anyway, so. But we do, every New Year's we have gumbo over that several days and we have oysters rockefeller that night.

David: And do you make the gumbo?

Andy: Oh yeah. I make the gumbo. And Todd brings lobsters.

David: Ok, I've never had your gumbo. I must have your gumbo.

Andy: You've never had my gumbo?

David: No. I've gotta have the gumbo now.

Andy: And I make the best gumbo. Now I don't want to get letters about this. And I know...

David: Because it's not up for discussion.

Andy: And I know in Orange Beach, Alabama, we pass docks, oyster bar and they have this thing up there, world's best gumbo, and my family always goes, no, no, right dad? Right dad? Yeah, you're right. They may have the second best gumbo baby.

David: Now I can testify that you do make the best hushpuppies I've ever had.

Andy: Yes I do. I must admit, yes I do.

David: I need to test the gumbo theory.

Andy: Get that gumbo thing done for you David.

David: Alright, let's move on. What's your favorite indoor holiday activity? Christmas, Thanksgiving, what's your favorite indoor holiday activity?

Andy: You know from the time the boys were really little, one of the things that we do, our tree, you know, kind of grows through the years because Polly gives the boys a Christmas ornament from her, every year. Each of them get one, a special one she buys. And we have built over the years, as we traveled, we get Christmas ornaments. So our Christmas tree is not one of these things that you look at and go, oh look it's flocked and everything is red. You know, it's a live tree. But it's kind of junkie, I guess. But it's beautiful to us. And so for years and years, the boys were little bitty guys, we would lay on the couch, the boys and I, and we would say, ok, I see the shrimp, find the shrimp for me. Where's the shrimp? Ok, where is the Santa Maria, where is Columbus's ship, The Santa Maria?

David: You're playing where's Waldo with your tree ornaments?

Andy: Yeah, yeah, basically.

David: That's fantastic. What about outdoor activities?

Andy: But we still do that by the way.

David: Ok, that's excellent. What's your favorite outdoor holiday activity?

Andy: Hmm.

David: Is there an annual throwing of the football Thanksgiving, is there anything outside of Christmas or?

Andy: You know, we do a lot outdoors, but I don't know. We go to uncle Bob's, you know, in Nashville, we go to house lake, a place in Clark county.

David: You're outside all the time.

Andy: We're outdoors all the time. I don't know that I have a special

David: Is it a tradition if you do it five days a week?

Andy: Probably not, probably not, it's like a habit.

David: Right, let's see. Do you own any tacky pieces of holiday themed clothing? Sweaters, shoes, socks?

Andy: Well, I mean, you're asking me if my stuff is tacky. No, I don't own any tacky clothes.

David: Intentionally tacky.

Andy: You know, that might be better question to ask Polly. Does Andy own any tacky, but you might have to have a part two and part three to the podcast if she got to start answering. Years ago, I bought, I got into buying some Tommy Bahama Christmas shirts. And there was like five or six years in a row there that I bought their Christmas shirts. They would come out with one every year. And now, I don't know, I have no idea what has happened but the shirts that come out now are not like they used to be. But I have five short sleeve Tommy Bahama shirts that are Christmas themed, and I wear them as much as I can during the holidays.

David: Just rotate them, rotate through.

Andy: Yeah. And I really like those shirts. And I have a couple of shirts from *A Christmas Story*. I have one with the kid with his tongue on the flag pole. Right, you know what I'm talking about?

David: Yes.

Andy: And I've got one with Ralphie and the big words, you'll shoot your eye out.

David: That's great. Ok, what about, what's your favorite tradition from when you were a kid, with your sister and your parents, during the holiday season? Your best memory of your favorite tradition.

Andy: You know, our Christmas Eve is very specific, I guess. We eat together, our Christmas is very specific. I mean, they follow the same pattern and the boys are really into it, you know, woopy onto anybody who tries to change anything. But you know, later in the day, on Christmas Eve, my dad started this years ago, and I don't know what was happening that he did this, but he would say, ok, time to go on last rounds. Knowing that the stores are gonna close, anything else we need, kind of go last rounds, get whatever else we need, because the stores are gonna close. They probably don't close like they did then, but we still do that, you know.

David: Ok, last rounds. That's good.

Andy: Last rounds. We'll go and get something, you know. And then we've got, we have dinner, we have Jesus's birthday party on Christmas Eve.

David: That's one of my favorites that you've talked about before. That's great.

Andy: And then I read the Christmas story from the Bible. You know, in Luke, there, Luke 2:3-13 or to 15. And I read that and then the boys will write a letter to Santa Claus. And they still do this every year. And they ask questions and it's a long letter. And they put out, you know, cookies for Santa Claus and carrots for the reindeer. And so, then the boys need to go to bed because Santa Claus doesn't come. So Polly goes and Polly will read to them, towards the night before Christmas. She's got the book that she, the real cool book that she reads. And the boys go to bed and we get up very, very early the next morning. And we always say, the thing we say first is, guys, Santa has been here. Same thing man. And then we come in and we see our stockings, and we open a couple of presents and then we eat breakfast. And breakfast is the same every year. We have sausage, and cheese, and eggs, and biscuits. And so, it's the same every year, we just love it.

David: That's great. Ok, back to the tree, what is the

Andy: Is this boring people out of their minds?

David: No, not at all. This is very interesting.

Andy: You're easily entertained. Go ahead.

David: What is the topper on your tree?

Andy: It's a ribbon. Yeah, it used to be a glass thing when I was growing up and that maybe why I don't have any of my parents decorations, I don't have

anything. It was a part of, Polly and I are very intentional about building that so that one day, the boys can say, I remember the Christmas that momma gave me that. But Polly has this really, very cool big and since we've been married, I think and we've been married 26 years, I think we've only had three different ribbons, a bow. But it's a bow.

David: Ok, got it. Alright, last two questions. What is the most favorite gift you have ever received?

Andy: The gift of love from. Oh I won't do that to you.

David: We will get emails on that one I'm sure.

Andy: The coolest gift? You know, honestly I really, really think and maybe it's why I like that movie *A Christmas Story* so much, because you know where, there at the end, where the dad, well, did you have a good Christmas? Well yeah, we did. Get everything you wanted? Well almost. Well that's life. Hey what's that over there in the corner? What, what? Santa must have left. You know what I'm talking about?

David: Yes, yes.

Andy: I think a part of the reason I like that movie is, that is the exact same thing my dad did to me. You know, I guess when I was Ralphie's age, and it was a BB gun. You know, and I didn't go shoot my eye out with it, like that little nerd did. We didn't go eat Christmas dinner at the Chinese restaurant. But the same thing, I mean, well, had a good Christmas? Well gosh. Thank you guys for everything. Oh, what, what's that right over there? I mean, my dad did the same thing. And that was probably, and my dad even threw in

this, get this. My dad even threw in, you know, when they woke us up, and we still do this to boys, Santa has been. Well before you go in there, you got to wake up. I mean, we're not just going to send you in there sleepy. You gotta wake up. So in the five or ten minutes that you're back in another room, kind of waking up, my dad kind of pulls me aside and he says, hey buddy, I know you're expecting them, the BB gun, you're hoping to get a BB gun. And it's just probably not a good idea this year. Just didn't want you to be disappointed in front of everybody. I said, oh ok. I mean, how awful. Just set me up.

David: Ok, now do you continue to do that?

Andy: Oh yeah, of course, absolutely. I did it with, in fact Austin was the first one we did it with. And of course when my dad did it with me, you know, that movie didn't exist right. And so when I did it with Austin, when Austin got his BB gun, I guess he was like seven or eight, and don't send me letters about that either, ok. But when Austin got his BB gun and we were sitting on the couch and he said, oh, good Christmas, thank you guys for everything. Hey what, look, what's that over there? And Austin says, and we've got this on video. And he says, what? Over there like, behind the tree, over by the fireplace. I think that's for you Austin. It's for me? And man, if you watch that video, he does exactly what that little kid in the movie does. And then he starts, he goes, hey this is just like that movie.

David: That's fantastic. That might answer my final question. My final question was gonna be, what's the best gift you've ever given? Just one that you just, knocked it out of the park, totally surprise somebody, went above and beyond with what they were expecting. Maybe not above and beyond but

just totally different than what they were expecting? Anything stick out in your mind about that?

Andy: Hmm. You know Polly and I enjoy, I guess giving stuff to the boys and I think probably the best, the gifts that stick out to me, are the ones that we give to people that we don't even know, actually. One of the cool traditions that we have is from Thanksgiving to Christmas, we're always kind of, we do several things on purpose, I'll tell you that in a second. But we, we're always on the lookout for people behind us in line, at a store, that we can take care of their things. You know what I'm saying, if somebody looks like it would make a real difference if somebody paid for that bag of groceries, or somebody paid for, you know, they're getting two sweaters for somebody. And you can tell, you can just tell, they're not, they ain't got a ton of money or whatever. And so, to be able to take care of that and then get out of there before they have the opportunity. You know, we try to teach the boys, we do this for them, not for us. And we're doing this for them. Not so that somebody will thank us and say, oh you're so great or whatever. We're not doing this for us, we're doing it for them. And we're doing it because you know, God loves them. And we are blessed and so we wanna share that. And we want to bring joy into people's lives. So one of the other things that we do and we do it on purpose, is we'll take, you know, Polly and I will put maybe a couple of hundred dollars and the boys will put some of their money too. And we'll go some place like McDonald's or some place like that. And I'll ask, we'll go in as a family and I'll ask to speak to the manager. And the manager come up and they always think something's wrong. Yes sir, can I help you? Did we do something stupid? You can tell they're thinking that. And we'll say, this, if you will, take this and we'll hand it to him. Say, take this and this is for the

drive through. And we just want you to use this until it runs out, just start now. And whoever is coming through, just.

David: And whatever they order.

Andy: Yeah, whatever they order, just tell them somebody has already taken care of it for you. And wants you to have a great Christmas. And so Merry Christmas. And they're always like, they always seem kind of freaked out about it. But we say, you know, just go, do it. And so, we will go then and we'll go out in the parking lot and watch because it's always hilarious because you see the manager coming and telling the person at the window, and the window person, they're not understanding it.

David: They don't get it.

Andy: We're supposed to not take their money. Now what? You know, and then they're trying to explain to the people in the cars and so it's hilarious. And we see people looking around like, is there a camera on me. But it's just great. And so it's, you know, for an average of 10 or 15 dollars, what can you, I mean, what an amazing thing to change somebody's perspective during this season, that somebody doesn't even, you ain't gotta give somebody a 1000 dollars to change their view of humanity or to let them know somebody loves them or that they are important to all of us. So it's something we enjoy. And so I guess if you said, what's the coolest present, those are ongoing, but that's the one.

David: That's so great. Well Andy thanks for those details, those personal details. Those are fun for people to hear. I like hearing them from you. I'm, sure other people are enjoying listening to this as well. And real quick I just

want to mention that a new version of *Socks for Christmas* is now available exclusively at Books-A-Million stores, everywhere.

Andy: With two stories. Not just the Socks story, now they added the cool story about the snow.

David: Absolutely.

Andy: Man, I'm so excited about that.

David: And so we're excited about that. Go check that out, it's only available at Books-A-Million so make sure you go check that out. It is a beautiful book. I feel like, you're just knocking it out of the park.

Andy: And please don't do write me letters saying, well there's not a Books-A-Million near me. Hey we have this thing now called the internet, so there's Books-A-Million.com.

David: Correct. And they will get you taken care of and we will be sending out details about that book soon. I just wanna make sure everybody is aware of that book and our good friends at Books-A-Million, and everything that they do to continue to promote your work. It's fantastic. Andy, Merry Christmas.

Andy: Merry Christmas to you buddy.

David: Thank you so much and thanks for your time.

Andy: Thank you.

Would you like to run something by Andy? Contact us and your question might be featured on the show!

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