The holidays are rapidly approaching, with Thanksgiving not more than two weeks away from now and the Christmas buzz following immediately after.

So while it is holiday time for most, it means only one thing. Shopping time. It is also shopping time for the world of major league baseball as well, because guess what? Teams have money and there are players out there looking to make it.

With that shopping season for teams, comes rumor season. Rumor season is fun because everything is a rumor, but the thing is, a rumor means nothing.

I guess that's the theme of this edition of the Offseason Rundown. Many rumors, but little of anything to get excited about. So get excited to not get excited. I'm sorry for crushing your hopes and dreams right off the bat.

[RUMORS SWIRLING]

I'm not going to get excited about certain things, because I get it. I'm a realist and until the unbelievable starts to become believable, I'm going to touch it.

So I'll lead off with the most unbelievable 'rumor' I have seen circulated and it use it to make a point.

Jerry Crasnick has **Shane Victorino**'s suitors as Boston, Texas, Cincinnati, and "others in the OF market" in addition to your Cleveland Indians. Yes according to Jerry Crasnick, Shane Victorino is on the Cleveland Indians' radar
.

Hold on a second...

Victorino made close to $10 million dollars last year, he's no doubt going to get that or more and a long term contract on the market. His suitors also include Boston and Texas and anyone who wants an outfielder. The market is very dry.

If anything, he's one of the better options out there for teams who have some money to spend.

So why would anyone in the wide world of sports think this is utterly possible. Shane Victorino to the Indians? Sure he is on the Indians roster, that's fine and dandy, but is this something you are going to get excited about?

Please...don't.

And even if the Indians were interested in Shane Victorino, man, I don't think that is something I'd get excited for. Look, I like Victorino as a player. He can play and has a unique skill-set. But for what the Indians need, and what it would take to get him, I'm not sure he would be the best

fit. He may get really overpaid at 32-years-old with a contract that could kill you for a few years. This team just got out from under several mountainous contracts, do they really want to go back?

No. They don't and that is why he's simply on the radar. That is why this is a rumor, because as nice as it sounds, all rumors sound nice. That's why they're rumors. That's why this rumor about **Kevin Youkilis** is just a rumor. And while it is the second time we have brought it up here, the only reason it has any legs is because Terry Francona is around. Sure that makes a little more sense and is a little more feasible than Victorino, but it still is really early to be saying anything.

In fact, the only reason this is really a rumor is because someone asked Chris Antonetti if the Indians were interested in Kevin Youkilis and Antonetti said something along the lines of how he's interested in people like him (skill-set wise).

You see how some of these get started? You see how the way someone words something turns into something that people can carry as a rumor. Sheesh...

So with that in mind, pay attention to this upcoming discussion.

The Indians have several attractive names on their squad that other teams would love to have. In addition, some of those players are approaching a point where the Indians or a team like them, would deal that type of player.

The Indians are perceived to be a team that doesn't plan on competing. In addition, they are said to have a farm system that is not very deep.

And that sets the basis for Jon Heyman to say that Shin-Soo Choo, Asdrubal Cabrera, Justin Masterson, and Chris Perez are all 'expected' to come up in trade talks.

So Chris Antontetti can say "He's not looking to move" anyone, but that doesn't matter. Especially when he says that they are also in a position to be open-minded. And that idea sets us up perfectly because Jordan Bastian is already talking about how the Indians depth at bullpen could lead to filling other spots on their team.

Of course it comes off the heels of using Esmil Rogers to get a utility man and with the prospect of **Chris Perez**'s rising salary facing the club as the next few months roll on. Bastian notes that Perez could make close to $7 million dollars, which would tie up a significant amount of money into a spot that only plays when the team is ahead by three runs or less.

And you also can't stop other teams from "having interest" as was reported by John Morosi of FOX Sports, who says the Red Sox like **Shin-Soo Choo** and **Justin Masterson**. You can't stop these teams from calling, which is what is going on in regards to those two, Perez, and Asdrubal Cabrera.

If I were the Indians, I wouldn't bother listening on Masterson. How could you after he had a down year? How could you consider trading him with his value currently what it is. Teams probably think they could get him for a below market value, so that's why they'll call, but that's why I'm not listening if I'm Cleveland.

Choo is another story, and one we certainly have more time to discuss as the next few weeks progress. And then there is **Asdrubal Cabrera**, who apparently is someone the St. Louis Cardinals are interested in.

As they should be. Why wouldn't they be? He's an All-Star shortstop that would help solidify them even more than they already are and they know he looks goo in a red hat. But as Calcaterra even says in his post, the Indians can consider dealing him, but that consideration will not last very long.

So we have a bunch of rumors about Indians players, players that are not on the Indians, and the Indians. We have words and phrases like: interested in, on their radar, fielding calls, believed to be, reported, blah, blah blah.

Dance around it. Read it, take it in, realize that it is either no likely or simply talk that is a little much at this juncture. But don't take it for gospel until the very end.

Rumor swirl, but the truth is that they are just that, rumors. So tread lightly this winter. Both because the roads are slippery and so is the internet.

[RANDOM RUNDOWN]

This is "kind of" in that rumor realm, but there has been a left-handed pitcher by the name of Hyun-Jim Ryu posted by a Korean team. That bid has been accepted and it checks in at over $25 million . It appears the Dodgers have won that bid and will get to negotiate with the youngster, but Jordan Bastian noted that it wasn't the Indians .

As if the Indians had that much money to spend just to talk to someone. Really? That's exactly what I'm talking about.

The Colorado Rockies hired Walt Weiss , who if you are older and can remember baseball from the late 80's (I wasn't born yet, sorry to make you feel old), won the 1988 Rookie of the Year award in the AL. The funny thing about Walt Weiss? While he has major league experience as a special assistant for some number of years, his greatest managerial experience is high school baseball.

I guess it's more than no managerial or coaching experience?

Of course this has little to do with the Cleveland Indians only to other point out that it is another job that has closed up and it looks rather unlikely, with the Miami Marlins hiring former Indian, Mike Redmond, that **Sandy Alomar Jr.** is going anywhere. Toronto remains the only open post and they appear to be set on hiring someone with actual managerial experience.

I still wonder though, what does a guy like Sandy have to do? Is it timing and the positions that were open this year with him not really getting a sniff? Or is it simply the fact that no one really likes him as THE best candidate? Of course if Terry Francona didn't come calling, the Indians would have hired him, but that's besides the point.

The Indians have started inviting some folk to spring training already . The first is within their own system as they've decided to invite
Hector Rondon
to Major League camp. Rondon was a free agent an re-signed with a minor league deal and has been pitching for Caracs in the Venezuelan League. He has pitched in 10 games, gone 8.1 innings giving up six earned runs, but he's at least pitching and getting his arm strength built back up.

They also invited infielder **Luis Hernandez** after signing him to a minor league contract. He was with Texas last year and spent most of the year in Triple-A. He's primarily a shortstop, so you can see the Indians are continuing to make sure they have shortstop options just in case. Hernandez has played in 122 games in his career and isn't really much with the bat. He's nothing more than a depth option.

I guess there is this new thing where each team gets a "defensive MVP"-type award and then the AL and NL get an overall winner, sort of like how they give out the Hank Aaron award, but still also give out the MVP. **Jason Kipnis** was the Indians recipient of the award, as he was named their Wilson Defensive Player of the Year
. Congrats Kips.

Grady Sizemore is planning on playing in 2013 as his agent has told this to Paul Hoynes . Does anyone give this guy a major league deal? He's pretty much at the mercy of teams and I can't really see the Indians giving him that. Sure they could give him an incentive-laden minor league contract, but anything more is insane. If they could do that, I wouldn't be opposed, but I'm more on the side of just letting that era die out and move on.

Coming soon a new Piece by Piece will be going up and it will be focusing on left field, which Grady Sizemore could possibly play into. So look for that.

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Nino can be found with glue and scissors and pictures of Vinnie Pestano and himself on The Tribe Daily, his own Indians blog. Hearts may or may not be invovled.

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