

Red Suit Gazette

Unlock the World of Santa

The Brotherhood of the Direct Descendents of Santa

Volume 2, Issue 3 Aug./Sept. 2009



PHOTO BY BILL MCKEE

Three Browning children show off their just-completed halloween character makeup.

What do
you see
in the eyes
of a child?

part 2

by Lou Knezevich

Let us continue exploring the profound and telling topic, "What do you see in the eyes of a child?"

Fear. Some children are terrified while others are fearless.

One of our greatest challenges as Santa is the calming of a hysterical child and the quieting of overzealous parents. This is

not easy and I'm hopeful a few of my tips and suggestions may help you turn a frightened child into "Santa's friend."

I have children of my own, plus numerous grandchildren to observe, so I have learned a few lessons through 'life experiences.' That's a fancy way of saying it was trial and error method of learning. I don't profess

to be a child psychologist nor do I feel I'm an expert in handling children, but you should find some useful information to assist you in your Santa journeys.

When I first began portraying Santa I thought every child would immediately jump right up on my lap, put their head on

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Are you ready for Christmas?

By KRIS KRINGLE

It will soon be Halloween and if you haven't already started your Christmas preparation, you are already behind.

There are a lot of Santa's out there who just wing it. They think that looking the part is all there is to being Santa or that their years of experience will carry them through yet another season. If

so, you are not doing justice to the red suit. Now is the time to be preparing. Make sure your suit is up to par. Look it over with a careful eye. Check for soiled areas that the cleaners may have missed. Check for areas that need to be repaired or just touched up to ensure it doesn't come apart during the season.

Try the suit on and see how



you look with your new hair-stylist or bleach job, or even just see what you look like in your wardrobe. Have you gained or lost weight? How do the additions you made to your wardrobe look? Do you have current pictures of yourself?

Do you know what the new toys are and what the

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my shoulder, tell me their wishes and love me! After all isn't Santa omnipotent? Little did I know, or suspect then that on any given day one or more children would have nothing to do with me. In fact, depending where you portray Santa, between 1 to 10 children will cry and carry on when they get near you. This fact comes from a poll taken of Santas.

I had not imagined a child who was waiting to jump into my lap and eagerly tell me all their wishes would become hysterical as soon as I stretched out my arms towards them. What I know now is this; for whatever the reason there will be a child or two that no matter what you do they are going to have a meltdown. Three-year-olds are especially unpredictable and subject to mood swings of happiness or hysteria.

The howls and screams of a child in meltdown is going to hush your audience faster than the blink of Rudolph's nose. Any move on your part towards the child will make them scream louder and struggle more desperately to be away from you. Most parents are going to make matters worse by physically placing the child into your arms, or saying cruel and harmful things. No disrespect to parents reading this but telling your child; 'If you don't sit on Santa's lap he's not going to bring you any toys for Christmas!,' or 'You don't want to be on Santa's "Bad list!" is not going to calm a hysterical child. Never.

Parents can also be forceful as they shove a screaming child into your lap and expect you to magically wipe away the tears and bring out the best toothpaste smile a kid could have. Parents, forget it, it isn't going to happen! Santa, you need to take action to calm the situation as quickly as possible because a screaming child puts a damper on the entire group and focuses attention to the crying child. It may also affect other children who have their own fears and this outburst triggers them into becoming meltdown candidates.

I politely but firmly tell the parent(s) to move back and away from me to where the child is in their 'comfort zone.' This is a distance where the child starts to calm down and maybe start to feel safe.

You or a helper should tell the parents to have the child simply observe others visiting with Santa, which may serve to calm them down. Sometimes the child begins to see what fun it is and is able to overcome their fear and try again. This may work or



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Santa Lou Knezevich

it may not, because the child may be too traumatized to change their frame of mind for that day. There are opportunities to help children overcome their fears but you must be observant and patient.

I learned a most valuable lesson at a photo shoot quite by accident. I have used the principle successfully many times since then.

A large family group walked into the room for their photos with Santa. Only the three children were to have their pictures taken with me individually and as a group for the holiday greeting card pictures. Their ages were; a boy 7, a girl 5 and the baby sister of about 3 or so. All were dressed in their holiday finest and we were going to take some great pictures, except for the three year old. The three year old stood off to the side and was not going to see Santa no matter what was said to her. Both brother and sister tried their best to convince her but to no avail. The parents and grandparents begged, pleaded and tried to bribe her but it wasn't going to work.

When this family entered the room for the photos the father and grandfather both told me she wasn't going to take a picture and in fact she had already had a meltdown previously when seeing one of the more famous Santa's in town.

She was a beautiful little girl but now a sad sight as she sobbed away and tears glistened as they slowly rolled down her cheeks. I too was about to give up on any pictures, or even conversation when I noticed she had a band aid on one of her fingers. (Pay attention!)

I said to her, "I see you have a band aid

on your finger, tell me what happened?" She didn't reply right away so I said, "I'll bet it hurt a lot and you must have been very brave." She slowly raised her finger towards me and began the story of the band aid.

Her brother had closed a door in the house quickly and it had caught her finger. The brother had not intended to hurt her but her story by now was becoming quite dramatic. I listened intently and every once in awhile I asked her to come a little closer because "Santa can't hear what you said," or, "Santa's eyes aren't that good, could you stand a little closer to me?" She was now standing by the inside of my knee!

I said, "Let me see that finger a little closer" and opened my palm for her to place her hand in mine. As I looked at her finger I said, "Why don't you sit on my knee and we can talk about how brave you were." From there we talked about what she wanted for Christmas and shared some beautiful smiles for the camera. She stayed right on my lap as the other children came in for the Christmas card picture. Just before she left, Santa got the biggest hug and sweetest kiss on the cheek.

The parents and grandparents couldn't believe what I had done. The grandfather lingered after the others were gone and came to thank me again and again telling me they had all witnessed a magical experience. Plus he tried to tip me.

I have no aversion to tips, but I am compensated extremely well for this photo shoot, so I declined the offer. I declined the offer because in my heart my accomplishment was worth more than any financial reward.

As I have mentioned in previous articles, always treat each child as you would an adult. Have respect and genuine interests in what the child says. Be attentive and listen to each request even if you don't have a clue to what it is.

Finally, look into their eyes and see the magic which has been created ... after all you are Santa Claus!

And it is not about you, it is always about the children.

By Lou Knezevich

'Georgia's Premier Santa'

"Zivili"

Celebrate Life

Santa Lou

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Westward bound

On the road with Santa Al Horton

KRIS KRINGLE, AKA, SANTA AL HORTON, A REGULAR CONTRIBUTOR, RECENTLY DEPARTED ATLANTA, AND FINDS HIMSELF IN PAHRUMP, NV. HIS WORDS OF WISDOM AND STORIES TO DELIGHT THE EAR, WILL CONTINUE TO APPEAR ON THESE PAGES.



PHOTO BY BILL MCKEE

Santa Al Horton's pickup truck in the Holly & Shamrock Parade in Gatlinburg, Tenn., on March 17. Loretta Knezevich is seen waving from the passenger seat window.

The Big Move West

By Kris Kringle

The first two weeks of May were uneventful. I conspired with Santa Lou (Knezevich) to convince his Mrs. Claus (Loretta) to write an article for the Gazette about being Mrs. Claus. Loretta is an instructor for the Santa Claus Academy, where she offers guidance for Mrs. Claus. She is terrific at it and the portrayal comes naturally to her. I suggest you write to her and let her know that whatever she writes about Mrs. Claus would be appreciated. She has enough material to publish a book already. As it would be a benefit to all of us, we should encourage her to begin work on a book.

That was the beginning of May. The final two weeks in May began my change of abode and climate. I finished packing my trailer (which holds my entire life) and I headed West. The trip was uneventful as I didn't stop to see anyone or look at any sights along the way. I just wanted to get westward, establish a new residence and start the adventure of a new life.

To say the trip was uneventful is really not true. With my truck decorated as it is, I was constantly slowing down or pulling over so folks could get pictures. When I stopped to eat, I had lots of adults and of course some children come and talk to me. It's funny that when they see a man dressed in red, with a long white beard and hair, reindeer and a sleigh enveloping

the side of his truck, the first thing they ask is ... (You guessed it) ... "Do you play Santa Claus?"

I pulled a 'Bill Engval' on them sometimes and would reply; "Nope, I just like the way I look, here's your sign!"

For those who aren't familiar with Bill Engval, he is a country comedian who was appeared in Jeff Foxworthy's Blue Collar Comedy Tour. Bill likes taking the stupid questions and things people do and give them an IDIOT sign to wear. That way, when anyone approaches them and starts to ask directions, they suddenly stop upon seeing the sign and say; "Oh, never mind ..." and walk away. Sometimes you can see it is better to not waste your time.

I have the back of my pickup full of stuffed toys to hand out to the children I came upon. There were probably over 1,000 stuffed animals when I began my journey. At a stop where I was eating, I decided to get some toys out and give them to a family with three kids. Would you believe the Mom asked, do you give out toys to children?

I have met a lot of interesting folks. Many told me about a Santa they knew, but went on to say that their Santas didn't look like him as much as I did. Of course I told them that copying me was a terrific form of flattery. Then I would hand everyone a sticker that says "I Met Santa Claus."

They were given to me by my friend Santa Lou. Now if I can get him to procure me a pair of antlers for my truck doors and red nose for my grill, I will be set..... Hint Hint!

No sooner had I written about wanting the antlers for my truck when I came across a pair. I purchased them (along with a plush red nose) and put them on my truck. I then decided to get personalized license plates. Mine say RUDOLPH. Wouldn't you know. When the antlers and nose get worn out I will have to get some new ones right away. Ok, ok, back to the trip.

Arriving in Nevada was a shock. Just two days earlier I left temperatures in the 80s with humidity in the 90s. Here the temperature is in the 90s with the humidity struggling to reach 2%. About a week after my arrival it did rain (for about 10 minutes) and everyone called that their occasional liquid sunshine. I love it here so far.

I have found myself a house. I am in a town about an hour or less northwest of Las Vegas. The houses here are currently incredibly cheap. I looked at a 4 bedroom, 2½ bath, with all appliances. The house has about 4,000 sq. ft. of living space on 1 acre of land. It was listed at \$275,000. After talking with a realtor, I found that if I offered \$98,000, I could probably buy it. It appears that many here would rather bail

See **MOVE WEST** pg 4

MOVE WEST cont. from pg. 3

out than take the bankruptcy route. That wasn't the only deal. There were at least 50 houses on the market like that one.

I looked into renting a small place until I was settled and then I would have time to look around for an even better deal. It appears that everyone is selling cheap and the future appears to be a buyer's market for a long time to come. I found a nice place listed for \$750 a month. It was a 3 bedroom, 2 bath on 1 acre fenced and gated property. After looking inside I told the gentleman showing the house that I wouldn't pay more than \$500 a month. He jumped at it. This place has its own well-water and solar panels. I told him I would talk with him the next day. When I returned the next day he had already rented it for \$650. Darn, missed that one.

Not to worry as I found another place just as nice and just as inexpensive. Now I have time to look around for the right place to purchase.

Two things must happen before I try to purchase a place. First I want to have at least a part-time job to keep myself occupied. (Lawn care out here is easy, drive a dirt rake around the gravel to pull up any weeds. That needs to be done about once every other month, beginning in April and ending in Oct.) The next thing I want to do is to look for agents to promote myself as Santa.

Right now the job market is tight. Even with a 12 percent unemployment rate in this area I am getting interviews. I walked out on a few because the first thing they told me was that the hair and beard would have to go. NO. A couple of others told me that I wouldn't be able to do the physical part of the job. I asked them how they determined that. I wasn't using a cane or crutches, I didn't shuffle my feet as I walked in, I wasn't doubled over like I was crippled, so what was it that caused them to decide I couldn't do the physical portion of the job. They just said I looked too old and closed the door on me.

Ok, I'm a senior, but darn, I am still agile and capable of doing many things. I could probably do them better than the younger folks because I would do things smarter. Age does come with some perks. I must



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Santa Al Horton

say that being a senior does nothing to help the job search efforts but is great for the wallet when it comes to food. I could talk forever about the meals to be had here.

I can get some meals for \$2.00 and an all-you-can-eat buffet for \$6.00. There are four that are very close to me, and another three that I would need to drive to. If I wanted to drive into Las Vegas, there are even more meals at great deals. I just saw a steak and egg meal advertised for \$1.99. I'm sure that 2 would fill me up. Two steak and egg breakfast for under \$4.00. Not bad.

I carry a resume and my cut cards (pictures) with me all the time. I have met some interesting folks and have made a few good contacts. I even have folks out looking for a job for me. Life is pretty cheery right now.

It is already been 2 weeks and no job yet. I really didn't expect one this soon with the unemployment rate as high as it is. I am still networking and still looking around. I have found several folks who are looking for me and I really appreciate them. I really don't want to go back working for the Government but if by the end of July I don't have a job, I will have to try them.

Life is grand. I am enjoying this new adventure and truly enjoying meeting all the folks I have met so far. I love waking up to the sunshine and sound of birds singing. I enjoy not having bugs around me all the time and I really enjoy being able to go

to sleep at night with the window cracked which allows a cool desert breeze to blow across the room as I sleep. I haven't slept this well in years.

I did take some time to visit Death Valley. I met a doctor who organizes the annual sea level to 14,000-foot race. It appears they start at 150 ft. below sea level in Death Valley and run all the way to the pass in Mount Whitney. It is about a 120 mile run. To heck with measly 24.6 mile marathons. This run is the best. I may get involved with the organization next year.

I visited a town at the bottom of Mount Whitney called Lone Pine. They have an annual film festival that celebrates all the movies and movie stars who made movies there. I saw scenes that were in a lot of movies. It was awesome. I think I may try to get involved with them, too.

I do hope I don't overdo myself. Right now I haven't promised anyone anything. I just asked if they would keep in contact with me and let me know what I might be able to do to help.

My philosophy is that only good will come out of happiness and only happiness will come from being good. If you aren't happy, nothing good will come. If you are happy and share this happiness, life will be happy around you and good things will come to you. The ancient ones who guide my spirit lived a life of happiness. If you find happiness in things you do, life will be easier to tolerate. I find that even more so in my senior years.

Keep the warm smiles burning and show the glitter of happiness in your eyes. Everyone will respond to you.

In my next article I plan to talk about agents I have found and what I did to secure Santa appearances for this upcoming season.

Al Santa Horton

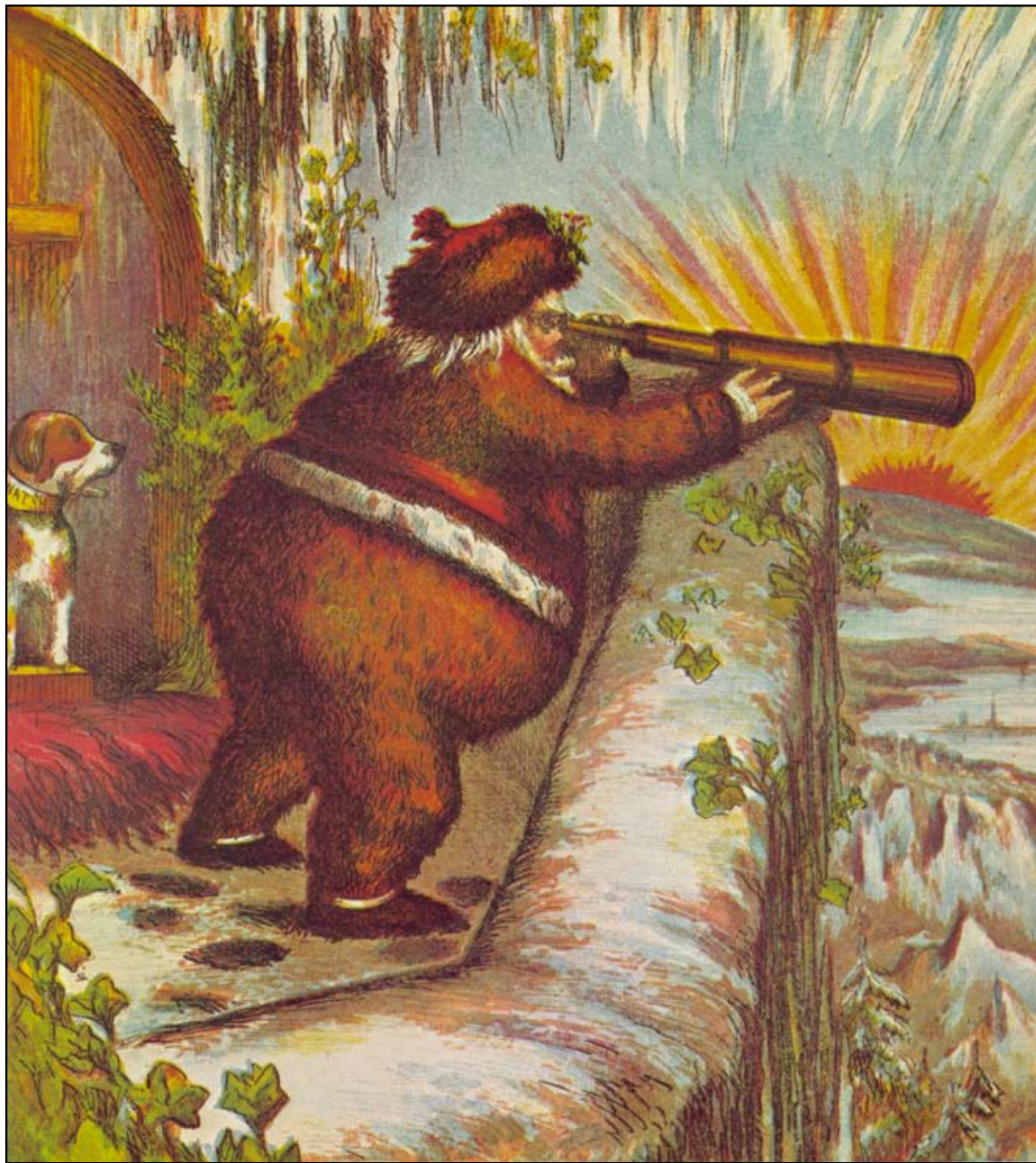
Kris Kringle

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VIEW FROM THE NORTH



THOMAS NAST

Christmas in July

A PERSPECTIVE FROM SOUTH OF THE EQUATOR



Rekindling the Magic of a Traditional White Christmas

by Bernadette Dimitrov

Everyone loves the traditional snow-themed Christmas. However for many countries December is summer time and the thought of cooking a hot meal is enough to give people heat stroke! So in various countries throughout the world “Christmas in July” is understandably gaining popularity. In recent times it is seen as an unofficial holiday marked by celebrations which include parties and dinners featuring the traditional heavy hot meals associated with the cooler weather Christmas feasting in the northern hemisphere on December 25.

Many countries such as Australia experience warm to hot weather on December 25 and July is their coldest month. In recent times in Australia this new custom of celebrating “Christmas in July” has been adopted and is gaining momentum throughout the land. Like many other countries that experience warm or hot weather in Decem-

ber, July offers an opportunity to capture the atmosphere of a traditional cold weather Christmas with logged fires, a hot roast and hot plum pudding. For many people who yearn to experience a traditional Christmas feast, “Christmas in July” is the only way they can experience it without having to spend lots of money to travel to another country in the northern hemisphere. Not many people want to leave family and friends behind in December for the experience of a “white Christmas” so “Christmas in July” is the perfect alternative!

“Christmas in July” is also gaining popularity among retailers who often hold “Christmas in July” sales. If you do a Google search on the internet for “Christmas in July” you will see hundreds of retailers offering all kinds of merchandise and holiday festivities and gift ideas. Christmas movies are also popular during this time with reruns on television. A wonderful fun movie that you can purchase or hire is “Christmas in July (1940)” starring Dick Powell and Ellen Drew. There is even a television shop-

ping channel “QVC” that has a show named “Christmas in July.”

Although “Christmas in July” is held on varying dates during this month in different countries, there is no doubt that “Christmas in July” will continue to increase in popularity. Not only is it exciting to experience a traditional “white Christmas” for people residing outside the northern hemisphere, it is also a wonderful time where people are further reminded of the virtues associated with Christmas: giving, forgiveness, love and gratitude. Reflection mid-year offers a healing opportunity for people to start the process of transforming from the inside out by reviving and rekindling the spirit that belongs to Christmas!

For more on Bernadette Dimitrov and her role in the world of Santa Claus, please visit;

<http://www.hohohochristmas.com>

Santa Claus Academy

ATTENDANCE SURPASSES 80 FOR SANTAS, MRS. CLAUS

By Lou Knezevich
ATLANTA, Ga. —

Santa's from across Ga., Tenn., the Carolina's and from as far away as Mich., gathered for two days of educational seminars, classes and fellowship. The event was held at Jillian's Restaurant and Entertainment Center in Lawrenceville, Ga.

Saturday morning began with a special presentation given jointly by Santa Richard Farhat, a Santa-America representative (www.Santa-America.org), Cindy Pike, Executive Director of the Autism Society of America, Greater Georgia Chapter (www.asaga.com), and Erica Bradley, a speech language pathologist. They presented an in-depth overview and look into the world of Autistic children. They focused on techniques for facilitating Santa's visits with children afflicted with Autism. Printouts of the presentation were provided, along with other supporting materials. Audience participation was abundant and strongly encouraged. The entire seminar was an education for all in attendance.

Statistics show Autism now affects 1 of every 150 children. Autism is four times more prevalent in boys than girls and has continued to rise significantly as diagnosis and testing methods have improved.

Santa-America has teamed nationally with the Autism



Society of America to educate Santa about Autism and to compile Santa's experiences with autistic individuals.

Saturday afternoon got underway with separate classes for Mrs. Claus and Santa.

Loretta Knezevich is a highly-qualified instructor for the finer aspects and understanding Mrs. Claus. Loretta offered her keen insight into the world and diversity of She detailed

recognizing, understanding and appreciating the many facets of the Mrs. Claus persona. The ladies were also treated to making some Mrs. Claus aprons and a Mrs. Claus hand bag. Part of the group was new Mrs. Claus's who benefited from the experiences of the women around them.

The gentlemen attended class with Santa Lou as he discussed handling children and the basics of writing a letter from Santa,

among many other topics. All Santas followed their classroom instruction with writing a letter to a child and then presenting their composition to the class. There were many cleverly written letters and others that brought laughs to the audience. Judging by the variety of letters and the creativity shown, this was an extraordinary group of letter writers.

Sunday began with Santa Gary Casey explaining how he started SantaAtlanta, which has grown into a million dollar business providing Santas and other seasonal characters throughout the North Georgia region. He offered information for those interested in starting or expanding their Santa businesses.

The afternoon session was concluded by Santa David Childs who spoke about the impression Santas must create and the importance of meeting the expectations of your audience. David also discussed the costuming of the Santa and the importance of being well groomed.

Other topics covered included (but not limited to), 'What kind of Santa are you?', 'What do you see in the eyes of a child?', 'Don't leave home without ...' and light-hearted trivia and Holiday fun, to name a few.

The meals together throughout the weekend

See **ACADEMY** pg 8

ACADEMY cont. from pg. 8

and the fellowship and sharing of stories and ideas, only expanded and enhanced the learning experience for all involved.

All attendees received a diploma and spoke of the desire share in another Santa Academy as soon as possible.

By Lou Knezevich
‘Georgia’s Premier Santa’
“Zivili”
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CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Loretta and Santa Lou Knezevich.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Santa Glenn Heald.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Two of the excellent staff at Jillian’s pose with Santa Denzil Beeson.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Santa David Smith, foreground, and Santa Michael Smith.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Seated at a table at Jillian’s during a break are, left to right, Santa Ed Quinn, Santa Doug Sears, Santa Sid Maynard, Santa Michael Smith and his wife Paula and Santa Glenn Heald.

**CONTRIBUTED
PHOTOS BY PAULA
& SANTA MICHAEL**



For nine months, the nine-year-old Hurricane Katrina survivor did not speak. He and his mother rode out the killer storm in the attic of their home. His next-door neighbors were not so lucky and the young boy heard their screams as Katrina took the lives of his best friend and his friend's mother. When the mother and son moved to Mobile, they sought help for the boy's post traumatic stress. Week after week, month after month, the boy was silent during therapy sessions. A professional in the medical community called Santa-America for help. When Santa Ernest walked into the counselor's office, the young boy jumped up, flew across the room and hurled himself into Santa Ernest's embrace shouting, "Santa, I thought you were dead." The boy's mother and counselor wept as the boy told Santa Ernest about his nightmare experiences.



Santa-America Changes Families' Lives!

Founded in 2003 by Daphne resident, Ernest Berger, Santa-America is a national non-profit volunteer service organization that offers Santa visits to children and families in crisis...365 days a year! Santa nurtures children and their families by giving compassion during an emotionally stressful time of their life. Following the initial visit, the same Santa will continue to visit the family year after year, helping in their grief and bereavement. Santa's visits with children come from the medical community, hospice, and special needs educators. We build relationships with medical societies and alliances. As one of our initiatives, Santa America is conducting a clinical pilot study to reveal the value of Santa's love on chronically ill children.



Caring For Our Children

Santa-America is the leader in advancing the highest standards for its volunteers. We conduct rigorous national background checks and intensive training ... the same background check as a doctor or nurse.

Love, Hope & Joy
 Wrapped in a Warm Santa Hug
 for Special Children & Their Families
365 Days A Year!

How We Build Community



Santa-America volunteers unite generations and work together to build community through service to our children. The gifts

of Love, Hope & Joy transcend politics, culture, race and religion. These gifts are treasured universal values.

Gifts for Our Children

When we visit our special children, Santa-America gives gifts that symbolize Love, Hope and Joy. Our signature Santa Hugs™, sleigh bells, and our special book, *An Angel in the Sky*, continue to remind children and their families of their special visit with Santa.



For more information about Santa-America, visit Santa-America online at: www.Santa-America.org or contact our Executive Director, Santa John Scheuch, at SantaJohn@Santa-America.org Don't miss the newsletter, Weeble Words, which can be found at: <http://www.santa-america.org/newsletters.htm>

Photos courtesy of Elizabeth McGonagle Graham, Lasting Memories Photography.

Santas take Oath at Peachtree gathering

by Lou Knezevich

The Golden Coral in Alpharetta, Georgia was the location for the Peachtree Santa meeting on Saturday, August 29th.

It was a full house as over 60 plus Santa's, Mrs. Claus and guests enjoying the fellowship, lively conversation along with some good food.

We were honored to have as our guests Santa Joe and Mary Moore from the Celebrate Santa Festival. Joe and Mary unveiled the new logos for the "Celebrate Santa Festival" and "Keep Christ in Christmas." These logos will shortly become available as pins, rings and other items. To see these items log onto the Celebrate Santa website. www.celebrate-santa.com.

The upcoming Celebrate Santa Festival is slated for Gatlinburg, Tennessee in March 2010 and is shaping up to be an outstanding event so if you missed it last year; don't let it pass you by now. Registrations are being accepted right now at the website.

Cindylu Thomas, Event Chair, for the Celebrate Santa Festival and hubby, Santa Charlie Thomas, were also on hand and it looks like everyone's in for a real entertainment treat at the Jingle Bell Ball and throughout the Festival. The upcoming Celebrate Santa Festival is going to be the Santa social event of



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO BY SANTA SID MAYNARD
Santa Bisell McWilliams, Paula Smith & Santa Michael.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO BY SANTA SID MAYNARD
Santa Joe and Mary Moore

the year and we know Cindylu has planned an awesome time for all.

Another highlight of the afternoon was the display of the Santa Oath and the opportunity for all to affirm their belief in the code of ethics contained in the document. All Santa's, Mrs. Claus and friends joined hands as the "Santa Oath" was administered by Santa Steve Bailey. Each participant received a certificate confirming their participation and signature on the oath.

The Peachtree Santa's are a group of North Georgia Santa's who meet every other month in the spirit of fellowship and the magic of Santa Claus. There are no dues or membership fees and the group is strictly for the exchange of Santa information and jovial fun.

For more information contact:

Santa Stephen and Santa Ted at santasteve@gmail.com.

By Lou Knezevich

'Georgia's Premier Santa'

"Zivili"

Celebrate Life

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For more photos from the Peachtree gathering
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Peachtree Santas



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Carolina Santa and Santa Richard Farhat.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Elf Steph and Gabriel.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Santa Michael Smith.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Santa C. W. Story & Glennis.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS BY SANTA SID MAYNARD

READY cont.
from pg. 1

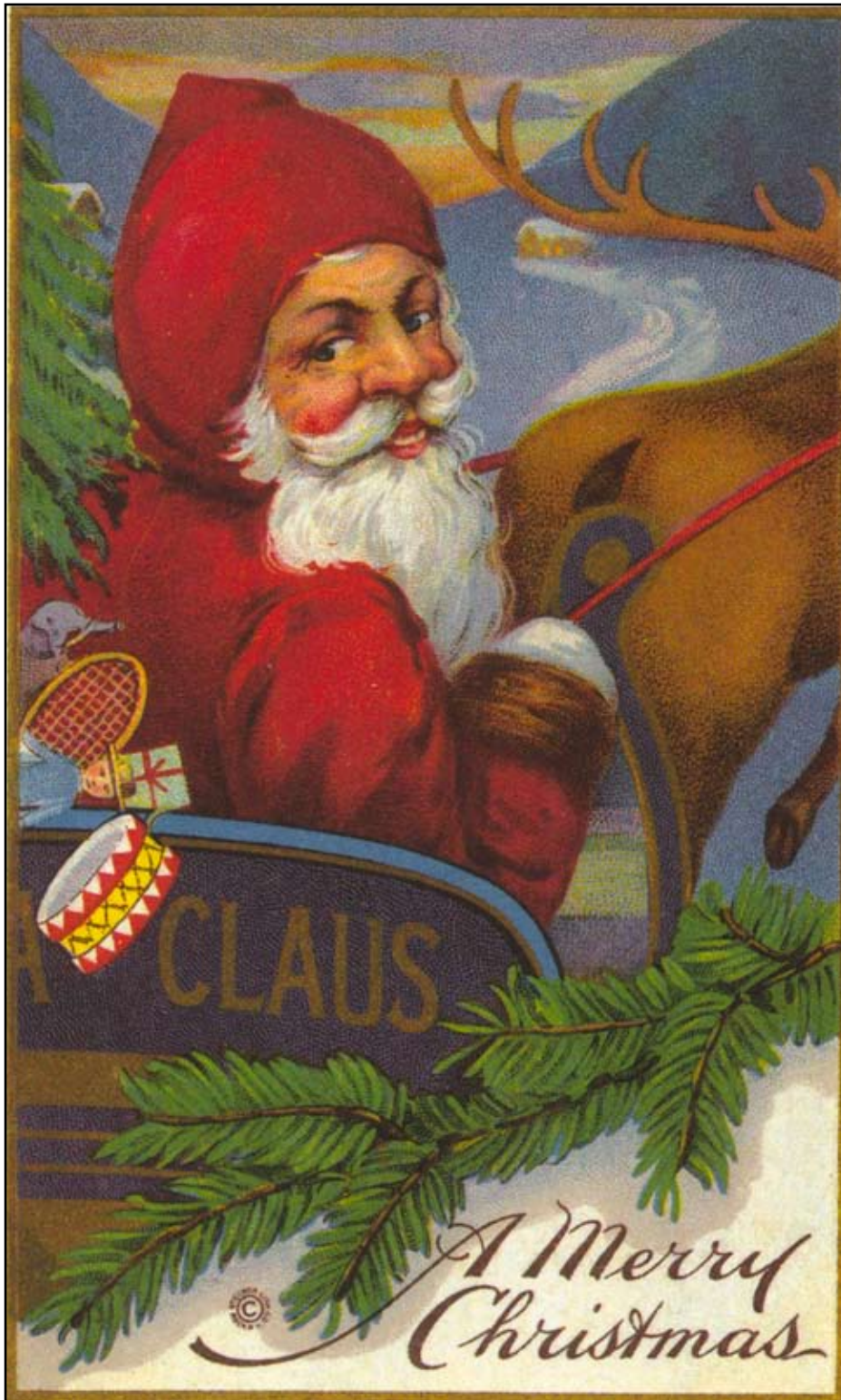
popular toys are? If you don't know the answer, you had better check it out. The kids will surely be asking about them. You will need to know what they do and the age limit for each. Do they need batteries or parental supervision?

Are you ready for the questions children are going to ask you? Are you prepared for the parents? What would you say to a child who complained you didn't bring them what they asked for last year? Would you say they were a bad child, would you tell them that Santa doesn't bring everyone what they want? What would you say to these children?

You need to prepare yourself now. You can't plan for every situation, but you can be better prepared. Ask yourself some difficult questions that children may pose to you. Not the easy ones like where do you live, and do you live there year round, or maybe they want to know what the reindeer eat. Have you ever thought about the questions of how you get into their house. What can you say to the children that won't make them paranoid or scare them. How do you get down the chimney; what if they don't have a chimney; how do all the gifts fit and how do you carry them all?

Parents can also pose some interesting and difficult questions. For instance, they may ask you about private parties in the presence of the child. They may even ask your price in front of the child. What do you do or say then? How about the parent who keeps talking for the child? What do you do?

This time of year is my busiest because I am out researching



toys and talking to lots of children. I even gather a few local children and have them help me research the toys; asking me lots of difficult questions. Each year this gives me additional insight and new information. I use whatever means I can to be prepared.

If you didn't start in July, you are at a disadvantage. I like having things planned out ahead of time. I make sure and mark out time on my calendar during the month of December for personal time. This allows me to gain my sanity back and have a short breather during the busy season.

I suggest you create your own personalized checklist. If you would like to share some of the things you have learned, this is a great venue. Hopefully this will get you started if you haven't already. I am always glad to share what I have learned and assist those who are looking to better themselves and want to present a better image. Like anything else in this world, the more you practice, the better you get. Remember,

you are not just representing yourself, you are representing all Santas everywhere and the image of Santa that are on the minds of everyone everywhere.

Kris Kringle
Santa Al Horton
santastime@gmail.com





The Christ Child



*“In putting on this suit
and entering the sleigh,
the wearer waives any
and all rights to previous
identity, real or implied,
and fully accepts the
duties and responsibilities
of Santa Claus until
such time that wearer
becomes unable to do so
either by accident or de-
sign.”*

The “Santa Clause”
from the movie *The Santa Clause*



Polar Express Style Bells & more

These sand cast, solid Brass bells can be found online at Cat’s Paw Web site. The bells pictured above are recent additions to Perry’s inventory. For our readers who are familiar with my story ‘The Bell on Christmas Eve,’ this is my source of the small acorn bells which are very special to me.

I have purchased numerous bells from Perry and I can recommend his service, honesty and products very highly, without hesitation.

Contact Perry at:

Cat’s Paw

<http://www.catspawdb.com/accessories.html>
donnajo@aye.net

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Masthead Artwork by Stephanie Suzanne Sentinella

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