

THE PURPLE PAW

December 2011

SANTA CLAUS: The Definitive Interview Conducted by Carlotta Case with the "Big Guy"

NOTE: I was honored to share a few moments with the legendary North Pole philanthropist Santa Claus before his annual pre-Christmas visit at the Cortland Water Works. What follows are excerpts from our chat.

How old are you and how long have you been Santa?

It's the same answer. I have always been Santa Claus, Kris Kringle, Father Christmas, St. Nicholas, or many other names but always the representative of selfless giving.

Do you really have a wife?

Yes and Mrs. Claus is the best!

Where did you get the elves?

The elves can be traced back to the Cave-elf and are related to Pixies, Gnomes and Leprechauns. The toymakers fled Scandinavia during the Viking-era and have been with me and Mrs. Claus since.

What do reindeer eat and how do they fly?

My deer eat what most deer eat but they also have a fondness for carrots and most importantly, hearty, magic berries that are only grown at the North Pole. The berries provide the deer's ability to fly.

What is your favorite food?

I have a good appetite so I like all foods, including vegetables, but have a fondness for cookies, milk and peppermint

How do you eat all of the cookies and milk?

One at a time (HoHoHo!!!)

Where do you get your food?

We grow it in our greenhouses.

Have you ever gone on a diet?

Shhh! All this talk about food. Let's move on to another topic. I don't want to give Mrs. Claus any ideas.

Where do you get the resources to build toys and electronics?

We are unlike other manufacturers who only design and build toys and gadgets; we create and deliver dreams. You might say that we are the "Original Dream Team!" Our resources spring from the wide-eyed imaginings of little lads and lasses and the good intentions of Mom's and Dad's from around the World.

Is there a Wal-Mart up there?

We have developed our own chain-stores at the North Pole Mall. We have Rudolph's Bulb Shop, Tree-R-U's, Pole-One Gift Shop, Abercrombie & Elf and Old Sleigh clothing stores. The food court has Mrs. Claus' Old-Fashioned Chocolate Chip Cookies Shoppe, McClaus' Fast Food, and Starbucks. There seems to be a Starbucks on every corner.

Have you always loved kids?

Of course! I was a child myself once. (HoHoHo!!!) In fact, I still have the spirit, outlook, and attitude of a child.

Do you have any children?

Mrs. Claus and I have children all over the World.

How do you stay warm?

I have this special suit that protects me from the outside elements and a spirit that lights up my insides.

Do you get good cell phone coverage?

I don't know; we do not use cell phones. We communicate through the heart.

Do you have health insurance?

Mrs. Claus is my health insurance. Her chicken soup is my medicine.

Who is the ruler of the North Pole?

No need for a ruler. Each of us has a role to play and a job to do and we do it.

What creatures live up there?

Creatures? Didn't you read "The Night Before Christmas? (HoHoHo!!!) "Not a creature was stirring?" (HoHoHo!!!)

Sorry, I like a good laugh every few moments (Santa wiped a few joyful tears from his eyes).



Mrs. & Mr. Santa Claus



Are you part of any specific country?

We are citizens of the World. Where ever one finds children who dream, we fit in.

How do you know what kids want?

As I related earlier, we communicate through the heart. From there, we generate the famous . . . or infamous . . . "Nice" and "Naughty" lists and what children truly want for Christmas. Sometimes what a child *thinks they want is not always what they want*. What a child finds under the tree or in their stocking is *what they really wanted*.

Why don't you give presents to adults?

Many adults don't need presents, they have the best gift of all . . . they have children.

Do you get paid for doing television ads?

I do not do commercial endorsements. They are done by actors playing me. I wish George Clooney would play me and so does Mrs. Claus (HoHoHo!!!)

Are you magic?

Yes! And so are you and everyone who believes and dreams and gives.

New Year's Resolutions by Kali Oaks

New Year's resolutions are something that almost everyone has. They are a goal that someone makes for the whole year and that they want to accomplish by the end of the year. Since so many people have so many things they want to accomplish, I wanted to find out some that people had already. Not to my surprise people weren't even thinking about New Year's, much less their resolutions. The results I collected are the resolutions of some of my computer class.

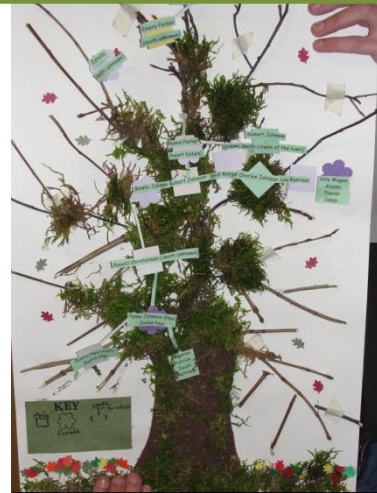
- Alex Sanford wants to pass the 3rd marking period with a higher grade.
- Meagan Pecka wants to be happy all year round.
- Kelsey Neville wants to lose weight by the 8th grade trip.
- Zach Walker's resolution is to have 100 in math all year.
- Emily Pecka's goal is to learn to play guitar and after that, learn to play all of her songs on it
- My New Year's resolution is to stop holding such long grudges.



8th grader Austin Nye Displays his family tree

Family Tree by Kelsey Neville

Mrs. Root's Team Three classes recently completed a family tree. Along with doing a family tree chart and a model, her students had to create a book. This book explains their lives from the day they were born to now in a minimum of ten pages. Students had to interview a family member or long time family friend to find out about what they were like when they were little. This project is done because Mrs. Root thinks it's a good idea to know your family's background. She also had students do this project because it increases family communication. Students had to develop an oral report and present this the project in front of their class, and to get through all the presentations it takes about 3 days.



Close-up Austin Nye's family tree

Fun Facts of December by Brian Barnes

Christmas Day is celebrated on December 25 in many places, including the United States.

The word Christmas is Old English, a contraction of Christ's Mass.

Christmas became a national holiday in America on June, 26, 1870.

In the Christian religion Christmas is the birthday of Jesus Christ.

Christmas trees have been sold commercially in the United States since about 1850.

The American version of **St. Nicholas**, or **Santa Claus**, originally came from the Dutch version called **Sint Nikolaas** or **Sinterklaas**.

The Dutch settlers in New Amsterdam (New York) brought this fun and lively tradition to America.

Hope you all have a wonderful Christmas Holiday, spend time with friends and family, and see next year.

Resources for Your Holiday Search

<http://www.lone-star.net/mall/main-areas/santafaq.htm>

<http://urbanext.illinois.edu/trees/facts.cfm>

<http://www.christmas-celebrations.com/trivia.htm>

<http://www.entourages.com/barbs/december.htm>

Classic Christmas Movies by Hannah Sidebottom

Do you like Christmas movies? I do! Some of the most classic Christmas movies aired in the 1970s. A few of the well known favorites are Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer, Charlie Brown Christmas, A Christmas Carol, and It's a Wonderful Life. All these movies are special and different in their own way. Rudolph was first made in 1972 and it's a classic, not only because it's old, but because it was made with puppets. Charlie Brown is a classic because of the mini Christmas tree and the famous music from Charlie Brown. One of the most popular Christmas movies now is Elf. Everyone loves the funny and humorous Buddy the Elf. I hope you all have a favorite Christmas movie that you and your family love to watch every Christmas!



History behind Hanukkah! by Natalie Moore

Many people celebrate Christmas but there are other holidays celebrate during this time of the year. People of the Jewish faith celebrate Hanukkah! What is the history behind Hanukkah? What makes it different from Christmas and its traditions?

Hanukkah is celebrated for eight days. It usually starts around or between November and December. It is usually around the start of December. Hanukkah is often called the "Festival of Lights". The holiday is celebrated by lighting the menorah, cooking traditional food, playing games, and exchanging gifts to one another. What is a menorah? A menorah is made of nine branched candles. The ninth candle called the "Shamash" (helper) lights the other eight candles. Each night after the sun goes down one of the eight candles is lit. This tradition goes on for nine nights until all the candles are glowing.

This is the interesting history behind Hanukkah. You would be surprised if you found out how many people celebrate this holiday instead of Christmas in the community. Take the time to learn more about this wonderful "festival of lights".



Team One's Bunny Family models seventh-grade designer Alsasce-Lorraine Sanders' holiday hat collection before a hop on the town.

CHRISTMAS By: Brian Barnes

Many people think Christmas is about the man in red, who brings presents during the night, but there are many other meanings to December 25th.

Around 2000 A.D. Mary and Joseph were traveling, Mary knowing that she was with child, which she agreed to when the angel visited her. When they came to Bethlehem to rest for the night, all of the inns were full, so they found shelter in a manger where they came to rest. Then the miracle happened, the son of god was here on earth, the one who was to save us was here. The child was born but to say no one yet knew. The angel who told the shepherds the son of god is among us. The thing everyone could see to find him, was the star over the city. Many People were joyous that he was among us but others were not, King Herold wanted to find the child so that he could kill him. He sent three wise men to find baby Jesus. When arriving and finding the child, they presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. After worshipping him they decided to take a different route so they didn't have to tell King Herold where the child was. During the night, an angel came to Joseph in a dream and said that they were to leave for Egypt until they were told to come back because of King Herold. They waited until the King died and then Mary, Joseph, and Jesus returned.

This is the Christian meaning of Christmas.



Christmas Jitters by Kali Oaks

As it nears Christmas time, kids in school start to get antsy. They start thinking about what their parents will get them for Christmas, and the joy of Christmas morning. I know that the teachers probably get very annoyed about this so I asked them what we all want to know; How do the kids act different, how do you deal with it, and how do you celebrate the holidays. Mrs. Drake (**Team 1 Home & Careers**) said:

- The kids act more excited near the holidays and they are chattier.
- She deals with it by telling them that it's not vacation and it is still time for work.
- Mrs. Drake celebrates the holidays by spending Christmas morning with her son and husband, then going to her mom's house.

Mr. Gambitta (**Team 4 Social Studies**):

- The kids start to act silly, goofy, and Mr. G's own interesting; words laughy and squirrely
- He doesn't really do anything about it because he is the exact same way, but if it gets too bad, he will tell them to calm down a little bit.
- He celebrates the holidays with his family. He says it is important to spend any holiday with members of your family because that is what the holidays are for.

Who's Room! By Cassidy Halpin

- *It has twelve computers!
- *Two teachers reside in it!
- *Both of these teachers have children!
- *Both these teachers are females!
- *There is hand colored drawings!
- *There is a shelf of Webster's dictionaries!
- *There is also one printer!

THE STAFF:

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