

The INDEPENDENT

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Opinion

Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus

(This timeless classic is from the Editorial Page of The New York Sun, written by Francis P. Church, September 21, 1897)

To the Editor:

I am 8 years old. Some of my little friends say there is no Santa Claus. Papa says, "If you see it in The Sun, it's so." Please tell me the truth, is there a Santa Claus?

Virginia O'Hanlon
New York

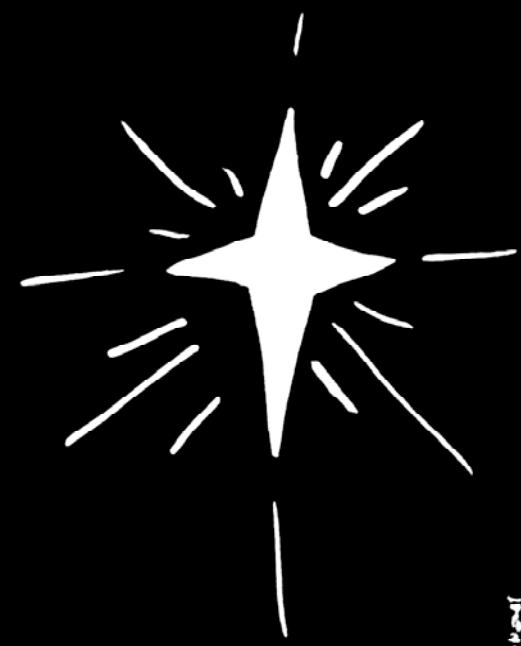
Virginia, your little friends are wrong. They have been affected by the skepticism of a skeptical age. They do not believe except they see. They think that nothing can be which is not comprehensible by their little minds. All minds, Virginia, whether they be men's or children's are little. In this great universe of ours man is a mere insect, an ant, in his intellect, as compared with the boundless world about him, as measured by the intelligence capable of grasping the whole of truth and knowledge.

Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus. He exists as certainly as love and generosity and devotion exist, and you know that they abound and give to your life its highest beauty and joy. Alas! how dreary would be the world if there were no Santa Claus! It would be as dreary as if there were no Virginias. There would be no child-like faith then, no poetry, no romance to make tolerable this existence. We should have no enjoyment except in sense and sight. The eternal light with which childhood fills the world would be extinguished.

Not believe in Santa Claus! You might as well not believe in fairies! You might get your papa to hire men to watch in all the chimneys on Christmas eve to catch Santa Claus, but even if you did not see Santa Claus coming down, what would that prove? Nobody sees Santa Claus, but that is no sign that there is no Santa Claus. The most real things in the world are those that neither children nor men can see. Did you ever see fairies dancing on the lawn? Of course not, but that's no proof that they are not there. Nobody can conceive or imagine all the wonders there are unseen and unseeable in the world.

You tear apart the baby's rattle and see what makes the noise inside, but there is a veil covering the unseen world which not the strongest man, nor even the united strength of all the strongest men that ever lived, could tear apart. Only faith, fancy, poetry, love, romance, can push aside that curtain and view and picture the supernal beauty and glory beyond. Is it all real? Ah, Virginia, in all the world there is nothing else real and abiding.

No Santa Claus! Thank God! he lives, and he lives forever. A thousand years from now, Virginia, nay, ten times ten thousand years from now, he will continue to make glad the heart of childhood.



DON'T DRINK AND DRIVE
THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

Photo by [unreadable]

Salem Scene

By Representative Brad Witt
Oregon District 31



Before sharing some of our post-session highlights, I want to take this opportunity to thank all of my House District 31 constituents for the honor and privilege of serving as your State Representative. I have honestly enjoyed every minute of it.

From my January swearing-in ceremony to the 6:30 a.m. gaveling of Sine Die (the end of session), serving as your State Representative is a thoroughly rewarding experience.

I have derived great satisfaction in representing you to the best of my ability. It is also incredibly rewarding to assist you wherever I can. And in so many occasions where I have asked many of you for assistance with legislation – helping to solve problems – your words of advice have been invaluable. While ours is only one district among sixty statewide, I must say that the people in House District 31 are simply the greatest!

Passage of House Bill 2278 –

That our court rooms are overcrowded is not news to most people. Overwhelmed judges and burgeoning case loads seem to be the norm across the country. Yet a recent judicial review cited Clatsop County as one of the areas in the greatest need for more judges. I knew this to be true when I stopped by the county courthouse on

Super Bowl Sunday and found the building humming like a Monday afternoon.

This session, I teamed up with Sen. Betsy Johnson and Rep. Debby Boone to begin building the case for an additional circuit court judge in Clatsop County. This began by soliciting support from the courts and members of the law enforcement community. I walked and talked my way through the Capitol hallways and met with over 30 fellow legislators to educate them about the high case loads our area was facing. By working with others, the case was made for a new circuit court justice in Clatsop County. I'm pleased to report that our efforts were rewarded with the passage of House Bill 2278 and the addition of four circuit court judges statewide – including one for Clatsop County!

At the Governor's bill signing ceremony, I commented "Clatsop County will now enjoy a justice system that works in the best interests of all our citizens."

Interim Committee Assignments –

I am very pleased to share my interim committee and task force assignments. Each of these committees allows me direct access to some of the issues I care most about – sustainable jobs and the environment, health care for the poor and impoverished and the care and treatment of our most treasured resource – senior citizens.

– House Interim Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources

– House Interim Task Force on Dept of Human Services Review

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