

Letters

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.

Scouts say "thanks" for local generosity

To the Editor:

On behalf of the Boy, Cub and Girl Scouts of Vernonia, I would like to thank the generosity of our community.

We are truly blessed living in this small town that once again has shown it cares about the people in our community. Last year for Vernonia Cares we collected 1,082 pounds of food. This year we collected 1,863 pounds of food. It truly is amazing! Also it will benefit many

families in this season of giving.

Thanks to all who helped with the food drive and to all who made this possible.

Mark your calendars for next year; on the second Saturday of December we will be doing this again.

Lisa Brewer
Cub Scouts Pack 201
Vernonia

Scout food drive is truly appreciated

To the Editor:

During a very successful city-wide canned food drive, the Scouts (all ages and packs, including the girls) gathered nearly 2,000 pounds of food for Vernonia Cares. This is even more than last year's event! Yahoo!!

Sandy Welch,
Exec. Director
Vernonia Cares
Food Bank

Turkey Drive brought outstanding results

To the Editor:

Dear Citizens of Vernonia: This year's Turkey Drive for the Vernonia Cares Christmas boxes has been a resounding success. THANK YOU!

You have come forward with Turkeys, Hams and cash donations to make it all come together. Many of you came forward with a \$20.00 donation to sponsor an entire Christmas box for a family. In addition, over 4,000 Saver Shields have been donated at Vernonia Sentry Market! The dollar savings in meat products allows Vernonia Cares to stretch their funds into the New Year for clients. This time of year is difficult for all families, as the flexible budget item for everyone is the food category.

Vernonia Sentry and all personnel have been instrumental to the success this year by accepting and storing check stand donations, as well as facilitating the Saver Shield redemption and turkey order at a great savings. Well over 150 turkeys are currently stored in the new Sentry freezer. The ability to store that volume of meat has always been one of the biggest challenges of this effort. THANK YOU SENTRY!

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Between the Bookends

By Nancy Burch, Librarian
Vernonia Public Library



This has certainly been a most unusual prelude to the holidays, with the windstorm and the power outages. I'm writing this at home on my laptop computer, using a generator for the power source, and hoping it will meet the publication deadline. The

library has been closed a couple of extra days, which I hope hasn't inconvenienced too many people. I did come in for a while on each of those days but it was too cold to stay all day and I'm hoping that not too many patrons came searching for books, missed me, and have been desperate without reading materials.

Even without electricity the holiday season has arrived and I can't think of any better examples of what the season represents than what the Vernonia residents have been doing for the past few days. People throughout the community have been checking on their neighbors and giving help in the form of generators, food, housing, etc. WOEC employees have been working many extra hours to get the electricity functioning as soon as possible. The Senior Center has offered warmth to those with no source of heat in their homes. The fire department, aided by numerous volunteers, has functioned as a source of information to resources available for citizens in need. I'm sure there are more instances of this caring and sharing—neighbor helping neighbor—that were taking place, and isn't that what this season is all about? We should consider ourselves so lucky to live in a community such as this.

Every year people ask if the library has needs and if they can help with these needs. In response to that, the library is once again making books available for adoption. These books, obtained from the St. Helens Book Shop, are on a table just inside the door and may be purchased at 20% off their regular price, at which time they become part of the library's collection. Since the after school programs continually need supplies and snacks, the tree in the entryway contains special cutout ornaments with some of these items listed. Any of these items may also be purchased and donated to help with the after school programs.

Since there will be no after school programs during the holiday break from school, movie matinees will be shown on Monday, December 18 at 3:00 p.m. and on Friday, December 22 at 2:00 p.m. (These are the regular times when the after school programs would take place.) There will also be a family movie night on Tuesday, December 26 at 6:30, with the movie *Cars* being featured. Bedtime story time will start again in January on the second Tuesday at 6:00. These programs are all free and all are encouraged to attend.

It isn't too late to check out the many books, movies, and magazines featuring Christmas stories for children and adults. The newest of these include *A Christmas Guest* by Anne Perry, *Christmas Letters* by Debbie Macomber, *The Christmas Hat* (Juvenile) by A. J. Wood, *One Magic Christmas* (DVD), and *Santa Cruise* by Mary Higgins and Carol Higgins Clark.

The following poem is from this month's issue of *Reminisce* magazine:

Santa's Cake

I saved my cake for Santa Claus
One Christmas Eve at tea.
'Cause if riding makes one hungry,
How hungry he must be!
I put it on the chimney shelf
Where he'd be sure to go.
It surely makes a person proud
To be remembered so.

When everyone was fast asleep,
Everyone but me,
I tiptoed down the stairs,
Oh, just as still, to see
If he had been here yet—
Dear me! It made my feelings ache!
There sat a miserable little mouse
Eating Santa's cake!

—Author unknown

Here's hoping each and every one of you has a rewarding holiday season with family and friends.

Vernonia Public Library: 701 Weed Ave.

Hours: Mon., Wed., Fri. 10 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Tues., Thur. 1:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Sat. 10 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Preschool Story Time: Mondays, 10:30 a.m., when school is in session.

Phone: 503-429-1818