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## 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.

### Thanks for a great Baked Goods contest

To the Editor:

I would like to thank everyone who participated in last Saturday's (Dec. 4) first annual The Spirit of Christmas in Vernonia Baked Goods Competition...my wonderfully supportive and incredibly helpful husband Scott, my awesome mom Pat Phillips, my terrific friends DeAnna Pearl, Sharon Parrow, and Josette Mitchell; and all of the contestants:

Cake Category – 1st place, Brett Costley (Angel Food);

Cookie Category – 1st place, Rachel Langmaid (Iced Gingerbread); 2nd place, Penny Costley (Linzer Shapes); 3rd place, Susan Wagner (Apricot Cocoa Thumbprints), Abigail Nicks (Chocolate Chip), DeAnna Pearl (Walnut Spice), Marie Krahn (Monster Cookies);

Baked Goods Category – 1st place, Margy Prout (Walnut Party Pastry); 2nd place, Sarah Wagner (Baked Candy Canes); 3rd place, Flo Lennox (Variety Bread);

Candy Category – 1st place, Trish Smith (Variety Fudge);

Kids Corner – 1st place, Alleggra Poetter (Egg Nog Chocolate Cake).

Plus our fabulous judges Mayor Sally Harrison, Scott Laird and Robb Wilson (thanks for the ribbons, Robb!). And last, but certainly not least, Lee Anne Krause, Pampered Chef consultant, for donating over \$200 in prizes for our winning contestants.

Our competition got off to a bit of a rocky start, with just 2 competitors registered and I was close to cancelling the competition and then, as we got closer to the date, I got more phone calls, Facebook messages and people stopping

me on the street wanting to participate...finally, we had a true competition!

Planning for next year's competition will start early. If you'd like to compete, judge or help with the planning, please email me at [catherine.helmer@yahoo.com](mailto:catherine.helmer@yahoo.com). Thanks again!

**Catherine Helmer,  
 Coordinator  
 The Spirit of Christmas in  
 Vernonia  
 Baked Goods Competition**

### Junior Baseball says thanks for the help

To the Editor:

On behalf of the Vernonia Junior Baseball Organization we would like to thank everyone that helped in our effort to raise money for the Junior Baseball Organization at the annual Booster Christmas Bazaar. We want to especially thank all of the parents and grandparents that donated their time and money for our baseball table. Thank you for baking, making crafts, cutting and delivering firewood and manning the table at the bazaar. Thank you to all of the businesses that generously donated items and gift certificates for our raffle baskets. And thank you to everyone that stopped by our table to show their support by purchasing goodies and raffle tickets. We successfully earned over \$200.00 at the bazaar to go toward new uniforms for the boys! Thank you again, your support has been noticed and appreciated!

**Amy Cieloha  
 Vernonia Baseball Parent  
 and JBO Treasurer  
 Vernonia**

### Spirit of Christmas was amazing event

To the Editor:

I have to say that the Spirit of Christmas in Vernonia was a wonderful blessing to me. I watched an amazing community come together to volunteer their time, goods, money, and service to make this event happen. Although my list is surely not complete I would like start by thanking the group leaders; Pat Phillips, Nicole Larke, Kellie Crowdis, Sharon Bernal, Scott Helmer, Catherine Helmer, Sharon Parrow, Burt Tschache, and Lynda Cahill.

The activities they made happen were outstanding. I would also like to thank the storytellers; Sharron Parrow, Kellie Crowdis, Lorna Poetter, Cindy Smejkal, Scott Laird, Michelle Bero, and DeAnna Pearl, and the singers in the community choir, the Live Nativity participants Jaunita and Don Dennis, Amanda Wolfe, Katie and Brian Dennis, Brandon and Mackensie Dennis, Mary Ann Shaw, Zachary Larke, Ben Schulte, Adam Hahn, Ian Torres, Payton Wolfe, Sophie Wolfe, Emma Hahn, Meghan Lemay, Lauren Glass, and our special guests, the animals. To "The Vernonia Dickens Carolers"; Kellie Crowdis, Kellie Murray, David Spackman and Marty Van Dyken, your music warmed our hearts and we thank you.

A big thank you to Jeff and Sandy with "Mike's Christmas Tree farm" for the beautiful tree you donated. Casey Mitchell, Jay Nesmith, Mike Kay and tree crew for spending two hours in the cold making a tree stand and getting the tree up, thanks. Thanks so much Willow Burch and Jay Nesmith with "Vernonia Hardware and Supply" for donating all the lights to light up our Christmas tree.

The lights for our main street trees were made possible by the donations from our local Freewheelers Club, Vernonia Dental, Wauna Federal Credit Union, US Bank, Napa Auto Parts, Vernonia Health Mart Pharmacy, Jack Lindsley, Karen Hedley and Kim Hamel. I

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### Policy on Letters

The INDEPENDENT will not publish letters with personal attacks on private citizens. Preference will be given to brief letters, 300 words or less.

All letters must be signed and include a verifiable address or phone number.

### NOTICE

The INDEPENDENT publishes on the first and third Thursday of each month. Because December has five Thursdays, there will be three weeks before the next issue, on January 6, 2011.

The deadline for the Jan. 6 issue is Friday, Dec. 1, 2010.