

CHRISTMAS

Connections



*New York's
Leading Lady*
*Hall of Famers
Trailblazers
Different From
All The Rest*
*Meet The Women of
CHRISTMAS*



**Your Whole Health is
our Whole Point
wellpoint.com**





Table of Contents

Santa Stephen Arnold's Message	4
Editor In Claus	5
Chapter Meetings	6
Ann Votaw New York's Leading Lady	10
Mrs. Santa Claus	14
Why Your Christmas Party Needs A Mrs. Claus	16
Teralee Baines	20
Robin Ferra	23
Oretha Mobely	24
Anne Marie Taylor	26
Ellen Terpening	28
Karen Van Leeuwen	32
Penny Wright	34
Jen Kersey	36
Tosombra "Tai" Kimes	38
Heather Gabriel	42
Doris Mcmillan	44
Cat Ellen	46
Deanna Golden	49
The International Santa Claus Hall Of Fame	54
Gail Golden	56
Lynn "Lucky" Royse,	58
Mary Ida Doan	60
Eileen Bernhardt	64
Ronda Guile	66
Rachel King	68
Meet The Hoppers	72
Sherry Rozas	76
ISC2024 Memphis Speaker List	80
Doug Church	82
Must-See Memphis Music Attractions	84
Credits And Acknowledgements	86

WHO MAKES IT ALL POSSIBLE FOR SANTA?

And ISC2024 Memphis



Hardly a day goes by that I do not celebrate the wonderful life God has granted me, but without one of his trusted faithful, it would not be what it has been for me!

How fortunate that my life partner, and wife of nearly 53 years, entered my life and has always been prepared to keep me grounded and stable, helping calm any anxieties I might have. She stepped up to the challenge that faced me when I chose to enter the world of a professional Santa. As a new experience, I had little idea of the joy I would experience, or the pressure upon me to make every performance the best possible for each client. While I was anxious to spread and share the joy, the trial ahead was how to bear up with not only a grueling schedule, but hair, beard, suit, belt, boots, and accoutrements selection, costs, and care. All the way, she walked with me, helping make me into the Santa that I wanted to be.

Thanks to the content of this month's IBRBS Christmas Connections magazine, I celebrate all the women in the Christmas Community especially my wife. I know without her support I would have fallen too many times. I am forever grateful for her always being by my side prepared to grab my arm. I do not leave the house without my hat, glasses, gloves, books, and a proper demeanor, all that I need to make the best impression, since she checks off her Santa checklist. Since health challenges have prevented her from portraying Mrs Claus or another character, I count on her to help me select a suitable replacement that complements my Santa appearances. Thank you, my dearest Kate, for all you do and for always being there in both mind and spirit.

The ISC2024 Memphis is coming along well, and the committee is well prepared to host our

attendees in a terrific venue with a carefully vetted catering company and a most convenient host hotel, The Downtown Sheraton. With a terrific assortment of dynamic speakers to lead our extensive workshop program, and some of the best purveyors of Christmas apparel and accessories available, attendees will have wonderful choices to make.

On Thursday evening, you may be in the mood for a Triple-A league baseball game with the Memphis Redbirds, or a 2-hour cruise on the mighty Mississippi that will have Memphis BBQ buffet. Both events will provide you with a taste of Memphis and Southern hospitality. Friday evening after dinner, enjoy a long-delayed induction of the International Santa Claus Hall of Fame honorees from 2020-2023, and we will announce this year's participants in the Santa's Heart program and the Thomas Carmody Christmas Performers' School Scholarships awardees. On Saturday night, put on your Blue Suede shoes for St. Jude Children's Hospital by attending our Doug Church's Salute to the Stars benefit concert. Lastly, on Sunday, we will close out our International Santa Celebration with a parade on the world-famous Beale Street! If you have not registered for the party of the year, I encourage you to do so! Registration is available here.

Personally, thank you again for allowing me to continue to serve all members as an elected Director and member of the Board. I think that IBRBS is in for another tremendous year!

Santacereley

A handwritten signature in green ink that reads "Stephen P. Arnold". Below the signature, the name "Stephen P. Arnold" is printed in a smaller, black font.

IBRBS President/CEO



Editor In Claus

Genma Holmes, Ms. Santa

Thank you for your vote and support of my election to the Board of Directors. Congratulations to everyone who won. And, I thank those who have served.

March is here! Spring is in the air and daffodils are everywhere in my neighborhood! During this month, many will be turning up their clocks to enjoy an extra hour of daylight. If you love basketball, March Madness will have you checking your brackets while cheering on your favorite time. March signals it is time to come out from under our blankets and start moving. Every March, I eagerly join others on March 8th to celebrate International Women's Day. The month of March has also been recognized as Women's History Month where the accomplishments and exceptionalism of women are honored nationally and internationally.

As I was embarking on my journey as Editor In Claus, I knew if I was still in this role by the springtime, I wanted to recognize Mrs. Claus! I have written stories and essays about women for years. And I have created campaigns for Women In Radio, Women In the Military, Women Cancer Survivors and even women in the pest control industry but I have never put pen to paper to spotlight the incredible attributes that enshrine Mrs. Claus! I spent several weekends researching her. The more I flipped through stacks of magazines that belonged to my heavenly grandmother, read bookshelf filled with Christmas books, and spent hours combing through online newspapers, the more I was determined to feature Mrs. Claus and women in the Christmas Community, past and present.

Focused, I reached out to a few museum curators and historians who love Christmas for their guidance. I was given names of several collectors of Christmas memorabilia who I visited in their homes. I would leave breathless after seeing so many Mrs. Clauses! After realms of notes, I realized that Mrs. Claus is never mentioned during Women's History Month. With the many attributes of Mrs. Claus and the women who have embraced her legacy into their character, if there ever was a woman that should be recognized as trailblazer, it should be Mrs. Claus! And no one can tell the story of Mrs. Claus than the women who embody her year after year.

This is not an issue to dismiss the goodness of Santa Claus. Not at all. As a matter of fact, many share their love for being Mrs. Claus and their respect for the Santas they work with professionally. The Mrs. Clauses who work alongside their spouses have special bond with their husbands.



In highlighting the role of Mrs. Claus in this issue of Christmas Connections, you will read about women who are leaders in their communities, in their workplaces, and in the Christmas Community. They lead by example and serve with grace and humility. But this is such more than being Mrs. Claus or in my case, Ms. Santa. This issue shares stories from those who dress her, images from women who photograph her, and all the supporting women who work behind the scenes with Santa! There are profiles of women who portray Santa! And there is an elf as well!

As I was crossing the final "T" in this issue, I can not help but marvel at the stories I have read for weeks. Women for all backgrounds had one thing in common, they love the work they do! You will meet educators, nurses, business owners, homemakers, and every title in between. You read about women being open and honest about the ups and downs of life and women who are adventurous in spirit and in their actions. We hear sadness at loss but rejoice at the overcomers.

I hope this issue will inspire you. I hope you will share others. And, I hope you find support in this community.

CHAPTER MEETINGS



New England Santa Society



Garden State Santa



DelMarv Santas



The Colonia Santa Chapter



Santa Pack



Santa Family Reunion



Save the Date!

March 29 – April 1, 2025
Gatlinburg, TN

Registration Opens May 13, 2024!

SantaFamilyReunion.com



**WE ARE HIRING
THE PERFECT
SANTAS**



www.santasmembership.com



(702)-988-9494



santa@nationwidesantas.com



ANN VOTAW

New York's Leading Lady

Grandma inspired me to be Mrs. Claus. Graceful and fashionable, she was a deep lover of carols and Scripture.

When I visited her in Indiana in 2018, I wore my red and white Christmas attire because she liked glamor.

At her assisted living center, she introduced me: “This is my granddaughter, Mrs. Claus.”

I was new at portraying the North Pole queen in New York, where I live. Yet Grandma’s friends nodded reverently. Then everyone went back to coffee and puzzles. It was a fact, just like lunch and the afternoon movie.

Grandma died in 2021. That interaction continues to inform me. No one at that facility told me I was “too this or that” to be Mrs. Claus, a fictional character who celebrates Creation.

I know that if people imagine St. Nick’s wife, they do not envision me: a broad-shouldered woman standing at 5 ‘10”.

However, I caught the Kringle bug in my forties because I was a former dancer who missed performing. Each season, male actor friends donned the beard. I loved their stories so much that in 2017, my mind shouted: “Go!”

After volunteering for tree lighting, I was an instant convert. I was so blissful I did not notice I might be the only Mrs. Claus in Manhattan.

No matter.

I joined every insider group on Facebook. I attended Charles W. Howard Santa Claus School. I traveled to trade conventions. I was all in.

At one of the Christmas community gatherings, a respected Claus told me I looked too young to be Santa’s wife. His words could singe an HR director’s eyebrows. I held back tears. Apparently, I was making a fool of myself.

On Claus social media, I read about the loss of



“tradition” and knew I did not belong.

Fortunately, Santa friends encouraged me to continue on my quest. Now at 49, I spend less time garnering approval. Instead, I pray and trust my instincts.

It has taken me years to get regular gigs. If there is another Mrs. C in town, I have not met her.

I am on the right track. I know it. When I put on my holiday attire, I feel a jolt.

Like Barbie in the Greta Gerwig film, I adore all my outfits: a black and white-striped skirt, a scarlet blazer, and a crimson dress from Amazon. But my favorite is a green Edwardian suit, a collaboration between me and a designer in Medina, Ohio.

These pieces turn me into a superhero. By day, I am a receptionist. In December, I am magic.



Two years ago, the owner of a production company found me on Instagram. She called to ask if I might work in a department store. The format would be unusual. Rather than sitting on thrones, we would perform theatrical vignettes in front of designated photo spots.

The name of the store? Nordstrom in Midtown, Manhattan.

OMG!

“Mrs. Claus!” I often heard during a shift at the store. “This is a treat. I hardly get to see you.”

If customers said I looked good for my age, I responded with: “Thank you. So do you.”

Once this year, an inebriated man joked that I looked younger than my partner, an Old-World Santa. Wasn’t Santa a lucky guy? Wink! Wink! My partner, younger than me in real life, just smiled and asked the gentleman for an “elfie.” We managed the moment and moved on.

Children never compared my age to Santa’s, unless they were math whizzes who wanted me and S.C. to generate big numbers. Nor did they care if Santa had a disability or if he were Black or white. If I treat Christmas colleagues like family, the public accepts my reality.

I learned this lesson from the elves, many of whom were Broadway performers. On set, they never broke character.

Santas were equally professional, leading by example. On my last shift this season, I marveled at Santa Chris, who listened to each child. He was exhausted, but he tasted each word of “A Visit from St. Nicholas.” Instead of harping on my age, he focused on what was important.

This year, a woman’s clothing store, M.M. LaFleur, hired me to host a breakfast. They only wanted Mrs. Claus and appreciated suggestions. We had such an enjoyable time they asked me back.

Wow! I have a niche.

Social media is important for promotional reasons. However, certain banter harms self-esteem and discovery.

For example, what if Mrs. Claus appears to be 20 or 30? Does that ruin tradition by making Santa look like he has a trophy wife?

Allow me to answer:

1. Women determine their own look without apology, just as Santa does.
2. “Trophy wife” is a discriminatory statement. We owe it to young girls and ourselves to eliminate such damaging phrases.
3. None of this is important, especially to kids. Why not rely on professionalism and be a couple for just a few hours of a gig?
4. This obsession with Mrs. Claus’ age may not be about age. A perceived “break in tradition” can be threatening to people who do not want to share.
5. Finally, clinging to the past is not healthy. And guess what? We all do it when we need a hug.

Grandma was Mrs. Claus. She wore pearls to match sweaters that were soft as clouds. She set out toy villages and filled them with lights. She displayed a nativity scene that my father built out of stained

glass. She crafted beautiful ornaments. One year, she fashioned corn husk dolls. Another, she made bread dough bears in lederhosen.

As I tried to graduate from the kiddie table, she resisted. I wondered if rituals helped her cope with her chaotic childhood. Her traditions captured family history. They also coincided with trauma.

Raised during the Great Depression, she lost her father in a car accident that killed him, the other occupant, and the two people in the opposite vehicle. It was Thanksgiving Day.

During World War II, her only brother was in Normandy. Her mother, sister, niece, and sister-in-law ate rationed food. Every night in Huntington, Indiana, a gentleman would visit each house to make sure the blackout curtains were down. “We prayed all the time,” she told me.

Grandma grew up in a time of extreme sacrifice. Her Christmases were as much about survival as joy.

As her oldest grandchild, I say it is okay to give some traditions a rest. However, I inherited all of her white wigs. To honor her during the holidays, I wear her wigs with pride. Grandma nurtured four children and many grandkids. Her organizational skills were crucial to starting the family business. To this day, Votaw Electric is going strong in Fort Wayne, Indiana.

Yet, she was too self-effacing to hear what so many tried to tell her, that she was an artist.

I see Grandma when I look in the mirror. My job is to go further, to adorn myself with her spirit and to keep following that star.

Sisters, come with me.



CLAUS

MRS. SANTA

by Nat King Cole

“Mrs Santa Claus” was recorded by Nat King Cole. It was released on October 12, 1953, as a single together with “The Little Boy That Santa Claus Forgot”. The song has been re-published many times on various compilation albums which also feature Christmas songs performed by other artists.

The song was released in two versions: the original radio version and a live version containing a narration at the beginning.

*Who feeds the reindeer all their hay?
Who wraps the gifts and packs the sleigh?
Who’s helping Santa every day?
Mrs. Santa Claus*

*Who keeps his red suit looking nice?
Who does he turn to for advice?
Who gives the brownies all their spice?
Mrs. Santa Claus*

*She pitter-patters all around the workshop
The whole year long
Amid the happy clatter of the workshop
She sings a merry, merry Christmas song*

*Who reads the notes from girls and boys?
Turns in the order for their toys?
Fills every heart with wondrous joys?
Mrs. Santa Claus*

*She pitter-patters all around the workshop
The whole year long
Amid the happy clatter of the workshop
She sings a merry, merry Christmas song*

*Who reads the notes from girls and boys?
Turns in the order for their toys?
Fills every heart with wondrous joys?
Mrs. Santa Claus
Mrs. Santa Claus*



Aerial View of Downtown Memphis / Memphis Tourism

kenner©2011



Auto Zone Park / Memphis Tourism

WHY YOUR CHRISTMAS PARTY NEEDS A MRS. CLAUS

Most of the time, Santa Claus takes center stage when it comes to booking a holiday visitor for Christmas parties. But the saying goes that behind every good man is a good woman, and we couldn't agree more! Mrs. Claus can bring something unique to your festivities this year, and we have all the reasons why you need her at your party.

A Brief History of Mrs. Claus

According to MentalFloss.com, Mrs. Claus didn't make her first appearance until about 100 years after Santa Claus (based on Bishop of Myra St. Nicholas) transformed into the jolly old elf we know today. In a short story written in 1849 by missionary James Rees, Mrs. Claus is mentioned as accompanying Santa in disguise seeking shelter from their travels.

Over the years, she was mentioned more often in poems, stories, and songs—often portrayed as being a bit blunt and feisty with a take-charge attitude. Her persona has certainly softened a bit as time has gone on. Now Mrs. Claus is pictured as a cookie-baking, hot chocolate-making, sweet, supportive partner for the big man in red.

What is her main role?

The International Brotherhood of Real-Bearded Santas is a well-known association that offers education, tools, and community support to both professional Santa Clauses and Mrs. Clauses. According to their Mrs. Claus Pledge, her main focus is maintaining a partnership with Santa Claus that is dedicated to “bringing a loving, joyful, and happy holiday to all.”



Book Santa Schmatz and Mrs. Claus on GigSalad!

The pledge also proclaims that professional Mrs. Clauses must devote themselves “to bringing a loving loyalty to the Santa Claus Legend and will do all in my power to encourage the sentiment that it is truly better to give than to receive.”

In short, Mrs. Claus's role is to provide a counterpart to Santa to help enrich his visits with families and children. However, Mrs. Claus can do a lot on a solo visit to entertain and encourage the spirit of Christmas!



Book The Majestic Nubian Santa Claus and Mrs. Claus on GigSalad!

Christmas parties are warm and loving places to gather with friends and family, so Mrs. Claus can really thrive! There are lots of fun holiday themes and events that cater to her skills. Lady Kringles can be older, younger, of different races, and have different specialties. So, it's a safe bet that you can find a wonderful Mrs. Claus for your event.

Merry Tea Party

Forget holiday dinners—teatime is much more fun! Especially for ladies-only events like Red Hat Society gatherings, baby showers, bridal showers, and classy winter birthday parties. Church events and book clubs are also the perfect places to hold a festive tea party.

Mrs. Claus can discuss the history of The Clauses, take photos with guests, and act as a hostess for the tea party or brunch. She can also help pass out gifts, manage the thank-you list, and handle other friendly duties.

North Pole Bakery

Mrs. Claus is well-known for her role in keeping Santa stuffed with cookies all year long! This season, why not focus on the tastiest part of the holiday with a “bakery” theme? Set up a cookie decorating station (or all the ingredients to start from scratch) for your guests. Be sure to include lots of fun icing colors, sprinkles, and more.

For a fun party favor, have Mrs. Claus deliver personalized aprons to guests before getting wrist-deep in flour and sugar! Then the cookie-making lessons can begin, with everyone's favorite lady of Christmas at the head of the class.

This theme is great for family get-togethers, gal pal nights, or couples' activities that are a little out of the box!

Christmas Eve Tuck-In

The night before Christmas is possibly the most exciting time of the year for your kiddos and grands! While Santa Claus books up very quickly for popular dates, Mrs. Claus is an adorable alternative for bringing holiday joy into your home.

During a Christmas Eve tuck-in, Mrs. Claus will arrive soon before bedtime. She can get the little ones some cookies and milk while she reads a delightful holiday story to them. Then it's off to bed, where she spends a little time with each child listening to their final Christmas wishes before they fall asleep.

Mrs. Clauses are happy to visit homes, hospitals, and even hotels or vacation homes for this sweet and tender tradition.

Better Together

Santa and Mrs. Claus have always been great as a team. There are just some circumstances where it's better to have both! If there are lots of shy little ones at a party, Mrs. Claus is the perfect buffer to help them warm up to Santa. Some children and parents feel more comfortable with a female present at the events, and Lady Kringle is always happy to help.

Mrs. Claus can also assist with long lines or large crowds by working with Santa to shuffle kiddos from his lap to the next activity. And bonus, holiday photos are so much more adorable when you have a charming couple of Kringles in them!

While Santa Claus is always a huge hit at holiday parties, consider the unique and joyful presence that booking a Mrs. Claus can bring to your event! Your friends and family will surely have an unforgettable Christmas with a lovely lady like her.

GigSalad provides a full-service platform for booking gigs. Get leads, send quotes, and collect payments all in one place. Join for free today!



Twas The Night

THE ART AND HISTORY OF THE CLASSIC CHRISTMAS POEM

Written and compiled by Pamela McColl



Book Signing with Pamela McColl, Author of **TWAS THE NIGHT: THE ART AND HISTORY OF THE CLASSIC CHRISTMAS POEM** at ISC2024 in Memphis

TERALEE BAINES

Mrs. Claus Rides a Harley



I began my inception of Mrs. Claus 60 years ago at the age of seventeen. At the time, I was attending high school, helping to raise my two younger brothers, and working full time at a Chinese restaurant. I had already made sure that my little brothers' Christmas was ready but on Christmas Eve day, I was surprised to learn that one of my Chinese co workers had five children who did not have any gifts for Christmas. They had recently escaped from Communist China and were simply grateful to have food and shelter. With it being Christmas Eve, I got off work early and took my paycheck and purchased gifts for the entire family and delivered them along with a Christmas tree. I then went home and had a wonderful Christmas with my father and brothers. Every year since, I have found a family in need and provided Christmas gifts with all the trimmings. This is how

I raised my children and we have continued this tradition every Christmas Eve.

My seventeen-year-old Christmas beginnings not only influenced my family's Christmas traditions, but that seventeen-year-old's heart was my foundation throughout my professional life. For 20 years prior to retiring from healthcare as a nurse, I baked cookies every single day for the hospital staff and each year I baked over one hundred loaves of Amish bread for my coworkers at Christmastime. Again, I was unaware that I was preparing for my role as Mrs Claus. I also purchased and delivered small gifts to each patient hospitalized on Christmas Eve. The children received personal presents. This is how "my Santa—Stephen Price" first became Santa.

On December 3, 2017, I dressed for the first time as a “performing” Mrs. Claus for a deployment and early Christmas party in Raleigh, NC for the 1-130th ARB (and their families) going to Afghanistan as Operation Freedom’s Sentinel. The following year became a whirlwind of activities and learning by attending various Santa schools and gatherings at the encouragement of “my Santa.” I have always loved children and as I have entered my “golden years,” it brings me immense joy to see the children and adults’ faces light up when they see Santa and Mrs. Claus.



I sew and make 90% of my Mrs. Claus wardrobe and make many of Santa Stephens clothes and props he designs. I wear different Mrs. Claus clothing for various occasions from formal to “cookie baking in the kitchen to Chapel Hill suits, gowns, and dresses. I create my interactive stories and props using different books and ideas. My favorite Christian story for home visits is The First Christmas/Nativity and I have the most fun with secular stories using the “head turning” Elf on the Shelf. I perform at Country Clubs, Corporate Events, HOAs, Tree Lightings, and Charitable Events. I also visit hospitals, hospices, and homes for one-on-one visits as Mrs. Claus. My other duties as Mrs. Claus also entail contacting each client to work out the details of their event and following up with a personal thank you card. I also maintain all Santas clothing and groom his beard and hair prior to each event.



To continuing professional development, I have attended the following schools or gatherings in an effort to improve my persona of Mrs. Claus: Northern Lights, Atlanta; Charles Howard, MI; School for Santas-Tim Connaghan, Charlotte; Brothers Claus, GA; ProSanta School, NC; School of Santas, MO; Super Santa Sunday, VA; Storytelling Classes, Steve Gilliam, Chapel Hill, NC; Santa Family Reunion, TN; Santa Gathering, PA; North East Santa Gathering, MA; Santa Day Castle Noel, OH; Leon McBride’s Virginia Gathering, VA; LongLeaf Pines Santas, NC; and Friends of Santa, NC. I have attended several of the schools multiple times.

My quirky side of Mrs. Claus is that in 2018 at the young age of 71, I rode my “Red Sled” (Red Harley Davidson Street Glide) by myself from Monroe, NC to the North Pole Alaska and back logging approximately 12,000 miles!



ks
KIM SHOUSE
PHOTOGRAPHY



LUXURY PORTRAIT STUDIO

CLEMMONS, NC

WWW.KIMSHOUSEPHOTOGRAPHY.COM

ROBBIN FERBERA

MRS. CLAUS OF RHODE ISLAND



I was raised in beautiful Rhode Island where I attended local schools. I work full time as an oncologist pharmacy technician III at Dana-Farber Cancer Institute in Milford Massachusetts for 30 years. I started my journey in the Christmas community over 10 years ago.

Being Mrs. Claus is a calling for me and one of the greatest joys of my life. Mrs Claus is not a job, it is a belief and Mrs Claus is an interictal part of the Christmas Community not only here but throughout the world.

I have studied the role of Mrs. Claus intently and I have been mentored by many Santas and Mrs. Clauses throughout my tenure, I am a member of the Northeast Santa's and a member of IBRBS with over two thousand members. I volunteered to help coordinate and plan the ISC The International Santa Celebration in Atlanta Georgia. I was selected and honored to be named Mrs. Claus of the month by my peers in the Sisterhood.

As Mrs. Claus, I have a wide range

of attire that will fit any occasion. From workshop to casual clothing to Christmas in July events to traditional to elegant. My wardrobe is ever expanding to meet the needs of my clients to keep children mesmerized.

Now for the fun side of what I do as Mrs. Claus. My journey started 15 years ago when I went to work on the Polar Express as a hot chocolate chef. My job on the Polar Express lasted nine years.

Eight years ago, I evolved from a chocolate chef to Mrs. Claus. It is a joy to work with so many great venues both nonprofits and professionals throughout Rhode Island, Massachusetts, and New York.

I have worked with several Santas, and I have gained knowledge from each of them. I have learned how to be a Claus couple and how to be a better solo Mrs. Claus. I have enjoy interacting with the children on a one-to-one basis. I enjoy learning how to be a better Mrs. Claus by interacting with others who share the same passion I enjoy as Mrs. Claus.



MRS. GRANNY CLAUS

A Legacy Worth Following

Mention Santa Claus before a child and see his eyes glisten as he anticipates excitement. Mention Granny Claus and see those eyes go even more comprehensively with a sparkle that speaks for itself! Such is Oretha Mobley, famously known as Mrs. Granny Claus, as she continues her journey to spread laughter, entertainment, wisdom, and a hint of magic with her stories. Mrs. Granny Claus, a trademark identity that Oretha acquired for her passionate work with children. But how did it all start?

The journey to any destination is one of sheer determination and hard work. Oretha's is no different. As Santa magazine features Mrs. Granny Claus as a Leading Lady, she recalls her resilience journey.

Oretha believes her parents infused her love and passion for working for children and producing something magical. Born in a humble dwelling in Key West, Florida, she remembers her childhood days filled with colors, dreams, and stories that her parents weaved. As a child, she loved arts and crafts. Her parents must have discovered the light within her as they nurtured her

with fascinating stories that shaped her into a devoted wife, a loving mother, and the fun-filled granny that is every child's dream. Her granddaughters Rylee, Regan, and Ryann would vouch for that!

But little do people know Mrs. Granny Claus is a Santa grandma to not only children. Her odyssey has been one of philanthropy. One that of a community advocate and a mentor who never held back.

As a Women's Voice

The dynamic lady has hosted workshops and retreats advocating women's empowerment for twelve years! She touched many hearts on her way to inspire women to be the best version of themselves through her ministry, One Connect Women Empowerment Network. She still empowers others with her signature smile and a crimson Santa hat, encouraging selflessness and charitable causes.

An Administrative Coordinator of a Granny Oretha chuckles as she looks a decade back to what a different person she was and how she has successfully shifted gears over the years. There was a time stretched to thirty years when she shone as an accomplished administrative and management professional. With a bachelor's degree in business administration and numerous educational certifications her skillset expands to administration, management, legal activities, and operations coordinator. In 2012, she retired as Administrative Operations Coordinator at the DeKalb County District Attorney's Office. It was there when she found the grounding to root the burning desire within her. One that facilitated children in novel ways. She created a program, "Prime Time for Juvenile Crime," out of her deepest concerns about SB440 and the horrible risks associated with children being arrested and charged as adults.



The daring diva did something nobody would have thought of! She borrowed an orange jumpsuit from the jail. She visited high schools where she educated parents and students on the crimes associated with SB440 and their severity.

When Skill meets a heart of Gold

Her advocacy continued till retirement with a great sense of achievement towards the end as she witnessed the impact of SB440 on children's well-being. She became a certified Family Support Partner in 2015, just a year after her retirement. Her role in providing support for parents and caregivers to help meet a child's behavioral, emotional, and educational goals is commendable and reflects her high morals. It didn't stop there! Oretha's multidimensional contributions earned her a title as an alumnus of Partners & Policymaking for children with disabilities and founder of Kids First Community Resource Fair.

Resilience Continues

Only two years later, in 2017, she had another feather in her cap! This time, she represented as a Victim Advocate working with gang, murder, and sex crime cases at the Fulton County District Attorney's office.

In 2019 when, she was offered a position at the United States Attorney's Office, Northern District of Georgia, where she is merrily employed as a victim witness specialist. As of today, our Mrs. Granny Claus stands tall as an active member of various organizations, showcasing her dedication to continuous learning and personal growth.

Georgia's own Mrs. Granny Claus is Born!

Behind the mirthful trademark lies a tremendous journey, and behind this journey is the passion-driven story. It is an uncanny story of diligence, as Oretha never stopped working. Still, it changed her passion into something magical, making her what she is today—Mrs. Granny Claus! She remembers the day in Busy Bees Daycare Academy, back in 2022 when she narrated an amusing story to the children. This is where she noticed the magic as her wisdom transferred to little,



curious people most engagingly. Of course, she wanted to carry it further, and this idea led her to get professional training with the Northern Lights Santa Academy and the International School for Santas-Tim Connaghan. Thus sprouted her voyage to "Granny Goodness," securing her a membership with IBRBS.

What Sets Granny Goodness Apart?

This Santa of a granny might not have dazzling presents in her pouch, but she sure has magic in her style that sets her apart from the others. She uses animation, storytelling, and entertainment as her magic wand. Her role as a storyteller is backed by the fact that she has authored a story and coloring book named "Mrs. Granny Claus and the Christmas Cheer Cookie and Color, Sing and Bake with Mrs. Granny Claus," which resonates with her personality, making her even more lovable among the kids because sure, who doesn't like to sing, bake, and color!

Her presence in the room means nothing but bouts of laughter and joy. Just when you think this is it, our favourite granny has something up her crimson sleeves. Josie the puppet!

Josie made her debut at Panola State Park in Stockbridge, GA, on August 20, 2023, as Granny Goodness hosted the first Children's Sounds of Summer Concert. The occasion stood out with its vigorous live performances, featuring Clementine the Clown and all-time favorite face painting, storytelling, family Hula Hoop Challenge, tap dancing and food kiosks. The event hosted families from across Atlanta who were bound to have a memorable evening.

Oretha continues her phenomenal journey as Granny Claus with programs like Children's Par-Tea, Virtual Storytime, and Literary Pop-up. She owns a cozy venture, "Little Dolls with Big Dreams," where she uses her crocheting skills to weave custom designs.

So, be it the white winters at Christmas or the pleasant Summers of Atlanta, you will always find this Santa spreading joys and wisdom the granny way, which is second to none.

ANNE MARIE TAYLOR

Wheelin' with Mrs. Claus

I was born in Massachusetts to a big Scottish family. I am the eldest of eight biological siblings; my two other siblings were adopted by my parents later in life, totaling my immediate family to twelve in a very small house. My parents raised foster kids as well. It became my responsibility to rise to the occasion and care for my siblings and family. One of my sisters is intellectually disabled. This sister is my truest joy in life, and the reason I am the biggest advocate for all disabled people. This started my life of service to others.



I started my life of service when I wanted to make an impact in the healthcare field. I became a Registered Nurse and worked 40 years in the field. I was an Emergency Room Nurse. I loved it. It was fast paced and allowed me to apply all my skills and knowledge.

I moved to New Hampshire and started my family. I had three beautiful children. I adopted two sons. One son is from the United States, and the other son is from South Korea. Then I gave birth to my daughter. My daughter was my true miracle, she was born extremely prematurely. Two out of my three children have disabilities. Continuing my life of service now to the commitment to my children and their needs.

I am a lifelong scout; I achieved the highest award in Girl Scouts. I continued my service to others by being a Girl Scout, Boy Scout and Sea Scout leader in my community for my children's scout troops.

I continued to service my community now that my children are grown adults. I joined the NH GFWC and as well as volunteering my time with the non-profit Bridging the Horizon, which provides monthly events for adults with disabilities. My husband, daughter and I belong to the New England Santa Society. Multiple times throughout the year my husband, daughter and I started teaching the Scottish culture and Santa's place in Scotland by running the Clan Claus tent at a lot of the Scottish Highland games in New England. Which brings my Scottish culture and love of Santa and Mrs. Claus together.

My experiences growing up with my sister as well as, being a mother to two children with disabilities have allowed me to find my niche and a special place in my heart is with the disabled. I am open, loving and knowledgeable. When working events as Mrs. Claus I actively choose to volunteer or work with a lot of the disability organizations in my area to be their Mrs. Claus.

Yet I never expected the trajectory of my life would shift. I am used to being an advocate for others but never would have thought I would need to be the one advocating for myself or needing others to advocate for me. I became permanently disabled and now I am wheelchair bound. I am still trying to find my place and where I can thrive in what events I can do in the Santa/ Mrs. Claus world being disabled and in a wheelchair. But I have learned that my wheelchair, my service dog, my goals and my advocacy will not stop just because I am in a wheelchair. I'm just wheelin' along in this life waiting for the next adventures as Mrs. Claus.





ELLEN TERPENING

The Ministry of MRS. SANTAS

Ellen Terpening was born into a family of educators who instilled in her the love of education. From an early age, Ellen knew she would have a career in education. Ellen has a Ph.D. in Education Administration, a Master of Education, a Bachelor's, and an associate degree in Christian Education. It is evident Ellen loves learning and has over 30 years of teaching experience. In addition to being an educator, Ellen is also an enterprising entrepreneur.

She entered entrepreneurship as the proud former owner of Diamonds and Chrome Tearoom in Canterbury Village and in Fenton, MI. Her tearooms were the number one tearoom in Michigan for innumerable years. She loves tea parties as much as learning new things! This multi-talented maven even had her own radio show on WPON for several years.

Ellen has been married to Santa Tim Terpening for 23 years. In December 2000, when she married her Tim, they became one happy blended family. Ellen had four boys, Tim had one daughter, and they have two daughters together. Both Terpenings are pastors. Her husband ran the church, and she was the principal of the church's school. Ellen became Mrs. Claus purely by fate. She hired a Santa and Mrs. Claus who were no shows for her school's Christmas party. Ellen and Santa Tim were just married that October and her husband had portrayed Santa previously. It was suggested they take the 'no show' Claus's place, so the children were not disappointed. And the rest is history!

Ellen absolutely fell in love with portraying Mrs. Claus. Through the years, her Mrs. Claus character adapted and changed with Ellen's life. One of her dreams was to open a tearoom. She always loved learning about various kinds of tea parties and the variety of teas. In 2002, when her dream of opening Diamonds and Chrome Tearoom was a reality, she hosted and held so many afternoon and high teas that she started hosting themed tea parties for the Red Hat ladies. Her life changed dramatically when the Red Hat ladies discovered Ellen portrayed Mrs. Claus! They asked her to be Mrs. Claus for their themed tea parties. The word-of-mouth referrals made her tearoom number one in the state and number four in the country. As her tearoom business grew, her Mrs. Claus popularity soared!



Along with the theme tea parties, Ellen was asked to do murder mystery teas, birthday teas, bridal showers, princess teas, and holiday teas, just to name a few! And everyone asked her to come as Mrs. Claus. Ellen became so in demand that she retired from her full-time job as an educator to continue her dream career. She had such a wonderful run while living out her dreams. Her dream of owning a tearoom was interrupted when her son, an Iraq veteran, was diagnosed with a rare cancer after multiple deployments to Afghanistan and Iraq. During his deployments, he was exposed to the burn pits that contributed to his cancer diagnosis. In 2015, Ellen had to make the difficult decision to close her tearoom so she could focus on her son's health along with caring for aging parents.

Although her tearooms were closed, Ellen was still being asked to be Mrs. Claus and to host tea parties. Ellen's business evolved into Mrs. Claus traveling tea parties. By not

having the overhead of a building, Ellen had the freedom to work around her family needs. The next couple of years, Ellen's parties as Mrs. Claus expanded quickly! She offered her clients Fairy Tea Parties; Teddy Bear Picnics; Dolly & Me Tea Parties; Cookie Decorating; Gingerbread House Decorating; and etiquette and manners classes. She also added a variety of arts and crafts parties like crocheting, and macramé, too. Twenty-three years later, Ellen has created and performed for more than seventy distinct types of parties which 90 % of those parties requested her to come as Mrs. Claus!

Four years after his cancer diagnosis, Ellen's son entered heaven on April 9, 2019. Although he spent years in pain, he still helped others. His death left Ellen devastated and heartbroken. She struggled with her own life as she tried to navigate through her grief and discouragement.

It was Ellen's teenage daughter who helped her transform her grief into an entirely different ministry. Her daughter's "Acts of Kindness" ministry, collecting pop cans and cashing them in to help others in need, was growing and became an inspiration to form a new arm of her non-profit ministry, MRS. SANTAS. The idea began from a mother-daughter conversation on how they could make a larger impact serving others. After many talks, Ellen and her daughter decided to use the acronyms (Mrs. Santa's Angels National Team Association Support) because Mrs. Santa is the heart of Christmas and has the passion to help everyone! After researching, Ellen found no group helping like-minded women who portray holiday characters through fellowship, to teach, learn, promote social and emotional growth, while enriching each other's lives. Ellen believed MRS. SANTAS would help empower children in need in their communities by being a positive change while spreading love and joy by sharing the true meaning of Christmas every day of the year. Ellen discovered her new mission!

MRS. SANTAS was formed with a firm mission and a vision. This ministry as Mrs. Santa and in MRS. SANTAS has achieved goals and awards that Eleen never hoped or imagined: Outstanding Community



Service Award-Feed the Children (two years in a row); Outstanding Service & Assistance-Homeless Veterans Outreach Award-The American Legion; Outstanding Community Service for Homeless Veterans Award-Alternative Veteran Solutions; Outstanding Dedication in Making a Difference in Your Community Award-Detroit Pistons (two years in a row); and Outstanding Service Award-American Veterans and Families Association.

Ellen launched the education tier of MRS. SANTAS four years ago and has a Facebook private group called MRS. SANTAS that now has 900 Mrs. Clauses, Elves, Clown Elves, female Santas and Grinches! MRS. SANTAS is a unique learning and educational platform for women only who portray holiday characters. MRS. SANTAS provides ongoing professional development to perfect their craft as a holiday performer. MRS. SANTAS has monthly online professional development training, guest speakers on topics our 'Sisters in Red' can grow and learn from and fellowship with each other. MRS. SANTAS also has educational webinars and daily posts that help members to continue to grow in their gifts, talents, craft, and ministry. To join MRS. SANTAS, go to Facebook and type in MRS. SANTAS to become a member of the private group.



Experience LUXURY

Welcome to a tea party that transcends the ordinary— a truly sophisticated soirée awaits!

Elevate your event to an exquisite affair with our Sophisticated Soirée tea party experience. Allow guests to immerse themselves in an atmosphere of refinement and indulgence, where the finest teas mingle with delicate pastries and savory delights. Enjoy an afternoon of refined elegance, where each sip and bite is a celebration of sophistication and every moment steeped in luxury.



Tea Rose

Tea Rose desires to cultivate a luxury, modern, southern twist to the traditional tea experience by leaving a lasting impression of sophistication and grace.

OUR MOBILE TEATIME EXPERIENCES OFFERS

- Unique Experience
- Convenience
- Customization
- Professional Service
- Quality Ingredients
- Stress-free Planning

CALL TO SCHEDULE

Jasmine Williamson

Chief Leaf & Executive Experience Curator

615-797-8832

Email: info@tearosenashville.com

Website: www.tearosenashville.com

Socials @tearosenashville

"We believe in cultivating luxury experiences through tea to create memorable moments."

KAREN VAN LEEUWEN

Making Memories with Mrs. Claus



While I was always going along for the ride with Santa, I was not Mrs. Claus in the beginning. My journey began as Santa's wife back in 2003 but evolved into Mrs. Claus by the following year.

Santa and I quickly came to the realization that not all children are comfortable with the jolly ole man dressed in red. Some are more comfortable with the "mother figure" that Mrs. Claus seems to represent. Because of this, we work as a team, always together, side by side. If a child will not come near Santa, I ask if they will come sit with me? If still apprehensive to be near Santa, I will suggest that he go for a walk (out of sight). The child will usually come to sit with Mrs. Claus sometimes. They even get to sit in the jolly big man's chair! Once they are comfortable Santa will come from behind and "photo bomb" the picture. WIN-WIN! Santa is still in the picture with the kiddo.

My first official event as Mrs. Claus was at a day care. Oh, so precious! The excitement and look of awe is beyond words.

We have a family we have visited for 15 years. Over the years we have shared births, deaths, obtaining

drivers licenses, grandmother turning one hundred...so many milestones with this family beyond the holidays. Sometimes, Santa and Mrs. Claus become part of the family!

On a warm sunny day in the middle of summer, a few years into my journey as Mrs. Claus, something magical happened! I had picked up my lunch from the drive-thru window and was about to drive off, when I noticed a car stopped in the middle of the parking lot in front of me. As I slowly attempted to pass by, I noticed both the driver and back seat passenger were leaning out their windows. The little girl was waving excitedly, yelling, "Mrs. Claus, Mrs. Claus!" Her Mom proceeded to tell me the little girl noticed me behind them in line and she insisted her Mom pull over and wait for me. WOW, it was sizzling that day, and I was in regular clothes. Santa was nowhere in sight. Up to this event occurred, I was only recognized as Mrs. Claus when I was with Santa. This truly was amazing for me!

Another moment where the stars were in alignment for me and still early in my years as Mrs. Claus was on a grocery shopping trip. Again, I was alone without Santa present, and I saw a young mom pushing her son in the grocery cart. Apparently, he had been misbehaving. As I approached, she told him he had better behave, because I had a direct connection to Santa. The young boy asked how? His Mom said, "She is Mrs. Claus!" He quickly straightened up and promised his Mom he would be good while never taking his eyes off me. To help convince him that I knew Santa, I gave him one of our "kids cards". It only has a picture of Santa with "BELIEVE" boldly written.

I ran into his Mom several weeks later and she said he was good the rest of the shopping trip. The "BELIEVE" card has a place front and center on their refrigerator, even now. Since our encounter on the store isle, he has a younger sister, and the card is a reminder to do good all the time!

Over the years, we have been truly fortunate to be invited to help make Christmas memories for children of all ages - from four days old to over one hundred years old. We visit day cares,

nursing homes and schools. We make appearances at libraries, churches, banks, car dealerships, corporate events, and private home visits. We appear in parades and photo shoots. We have been involved with a local radio station 96.3 Jack FM and the Marine Corps Toys-4-Tots Bikes or Bust event, helping to collect thousands of bicycles for children all over middle Tennessee. We work with our local Dickson County Sheriff's Office at their annual Toy Patrol to provide a new coat, hat, gloves, and toys for approximately two hundred less fortunate school children from every elementary school in the county. We have also made appearances at several local military events. Finally, one of the many highlights of our season is working with developmentally disabled children and adults.

Portraying Mrs. Claus is one of the most rewarding experiences of my life. I look forward to continuing my second career for years to come. If we can make one child (young or old) smile, we have accomplished our goal.

Merry Christmas to all!



PENNY WRIGHT

On My Own



Christmas is a special time of year for everyone. For seven years, my wonderful husband Glenn Wright and I were Santa Glenn and Mrs. Claus during the holidays. Those years together were filled with precious memories that will be with me forever. A computer builder by day, Glenn was well known for portraying Santa Claus. On March 14, 2023, Glenn took his last sleigh ride and was called home.

Santa Glenn's passing left a hole not in the hearts of his love ones but also in the Santa Claus community where he was deeply loved by his brothers and sisters in red. Prior to his death, we had discussed what to do with his treasured Santa items like his suits, boots, belts, buckles, books, and other gear. After seven years

as Santa, he had amassed a number of pieces. He shared his final wishes with me that I made sure was followed. At our local IBRBS chapter meeting, I gave his Christmas belongings to new Santas in attendance who were beginning their journey as Santa Claus. As a performing Santa and Mrs. Claus, we understood the financial investment and the years it takes to build a Santa Claus business.

It has been a challenging year without him, but I decided to keep Santa Glenn's legacy alive by continuing as Mrs. Claus. I am Mrs. Claus to special needs adults who are so precious to me. In December, I put on my red dress and walked into the building where every single angel inside gave me a hug and shared how excited

they were to see me again. In that moment, I knew I had made the right decision to remain a Mrs. Claus.

The love I received while serving my clients solo reminded me of visits when Santa Glenn and I were together that taught me a deeper purpose for portraying Mrs. Claus.

One fond memory was a visit to a local nursing home where we had permission to walk around each room and meet every resident. An elderly African American lady asked us to sing a song and Santa Glenn started singing 'Jingle Bells.' She stopped him midway and said, "NO, I want a song about Jesus!" After he was uttered speechless, I quietly started singing Silent Night. She in turn began to nod and sway to my voice. When I finished singing, she looked at me with a solemn expression said, "I think Santa needs some more Jesus!" I replied with a smile, "Don't we all?" She beamed and patted Santa Glenn's arm and said, "You are alright by me Santa."

I believe portraying Mrs. Claus is not only about home visits and event appearances. As Mrs. Claus I have ministered to others, and I have been supportive of Santa's appearances. I have been the eyes of our missions at photography sessions; attentive to how Santa's suits look; and making sure his hands are always visible. I also think, as a female, Mrs Claus can help children connect better with Santa. I am a photographer as well and it is helpful sometimes to allow Mrs. Claus to interact with the children so they understand that Santa only wants to get a photo with them that will be cherished for years to come by the family.

As Mrs. Claus, I do not hide my faith. Occasionally, I have asked if I could pray over a family or with a child who has asked Santa for things, he cannot bring them. On one occasion, a child asked if Santa could bring her brother back. As Santa's eyes became watery and he searched for the right words, I gently shared that Santa could not bring her brother back but through prayer, God will hear her words and her brother will always be by her side. When she asked me how to pray, I looked at her parents and asked them if I may pray with her. They said of course and we prayed together so she could feel her brother by her side. After she bowed her head and we prayed together, she asked, "Mrs. Claus how did you do that?" I said, "God did



that not me." She told me she felt her brother's presence and she felt better after learning to pray.

That was a very touching moment, Santa Glenn and I were in tears long after our day had ended. My portrayal of Mrs. Claus is a true blessing to me in so many ways. And I hope to bless others with my Mrs. Claus ministry until I am reunited with my husband again.

JEN KERSEY

The Singing Mrs. Claus LA

I have always loved working with children. I have always loved performing. I do TV, film, and commercials, for sure, but the stage is where my heart has always lived. “Bye Bye Birdie,” “Grease,” “Parade,” “Jekyll and Hyde,” three productions of “The Sound of Music,” more theme park shows than one can count. I have performed in operas, playing Cendrillon in Viardot’s “Cendrillon” (Cinderella), and Adele in “Die Fledermaus.”

In fact, it was my journey with my first opera, “Cendrillon,” in 2021, that brought me into the Christmas performing world. In 2020, I dipped my toes in the water just a bit when a national company was hiring zoom Christmas performers during Covid shutdowns. Sadly, I never received an opportunity to collaborate with the company, though I used the training they provided to perform other characters via zoom visits on my own, including many princesses and storybook characters, in addition to Mrs Claus. Honestly, once that season was over, I cast the experience to the side and forgot about it.

It was the following year, after I closed “Cendrillon” in the middle of December, that an unexpected chance happened for me. As I was strolling in a group that I rarely visit, I read a posting that said a company was desperate for someone to fill in for a Santa position at a major retail location. It was the week before Christmas! No Santas answered their call. I had nothing to lose by inquiring, so I did. And I was hired! Honestly, I had NO idea what to do. But I was chosen, and off I went. Since responding to that post, I have been invited back for the fourth year!



I am a solo Mrs. Claus and, while an unlikely candidate for such work for many reasons, I absolutely love what I do- bringing the holiday spirit to all. I love being able to do what I do with kids: singing, dancing, laughing, listening to my storytelling and more! This past season, I had the honor of working with nine different Santas. Yes, you read right, NINE! And let me tell you, I hit the jackpot with Santas! Every Santa that I worked with not only embodied the spirit of Christmas, but each Santa made sure I was right next to them the entire time; they all wanted me to shine right along with them. I was an equal within the visit. My SoCal Santas are absolutely amazing!

This coming year, I am excited to debut several new projects, including a Mrs. Claus stage show, a Santa and Mrs Claus Cabaret, my singing holiday performer character, and who knows what else! The sky's the limit with The Singing Mrs. Claus LA!



Realizing how wonderful this community is in my area is the icing on the cake. I have access to the best trained, most charming, well mannered, and most experienced Santas, here in Southern California. Did I mention how nice they are behind the scenes as well as in front of an audience? Nothing can compare to how much this community of professionals has welcomed me with open arms. Always learning and perfecting, I am excited to continue learning from not only these wonderful Santas, but also from my fellow Mrs. Claus and Elf performers. Heading into Season 5, I know the season is sure to be everything I could hope for, and more!

The Singing Mrs Claus LA

(aka Jennifer Kersey)

<http://www.thesingingmrsclausla.com>

<http://www.instagram.com/thesingingmrsclausla>



SPREADING JOY IN TOUGH TIMES

The True Tale of a Resilient Lady Christmas





Through the years, Christmas has meant everything to me. Christmastime has truly been the most wonderful time of the year all my life. Even as a child, it was my saving grace. After I mothered children of my own, it was the season that amplified my joy with jingles of laughter and gifts of hope wrapped in unconditional love and adornment.

This Christmas, however, I was so clouded and broken that for the first time in my life the thought of putting up a tree, baking cookies, and donning my beautiful Christmas gown felt crushing. Lately, between you and me, my journey in life has been rough! A divorce, an unanticipated empty nest along with debilitating and undiagnosed health concerns that left me alone in a hospital bed for days upon days depleted me inside and out. To add to my looming clouds, I have been on a rollercoaster ride that comes with life experiences as we mature, physically and mentally. I found myself embracing the idea that, just maybe, my sadness would envelope me for the rest of my life. My despair was like a heavy cloak.



This may not sound like a Christmas story, but I am being honest about my struggles to crawl my way out of the darkness that millions find themselves in every day but especially during the holidays. Poet Dr. Maya Angelou once said, “Be a Rainbow in Somebody Else’s Cloud. I’ve had so many rainbows in my clouds.”

Rainbows pierced my clouds through relationships who gently pushed me with kindness. Santa True, my mentor, would reach out to me sporadically to see how I was doing. Unbeknownst to him, his calls were like a hidden gem that I would stumble upon as I was finding my way out of the foggy.

“How can I help?” was his line every time he called. So simple, so pure, and something that my heart truly needed to hear. These four words reminded me that I mattered. Like true Christmas magic, they kept aflame the light within that burns brightest when sparking hope in another.



Santa True and a good friend of mine encouraged me to keep my promise to appear as Lady Christmas at a military spouse event. Their care and concern for me was the tape that helped bind my broken heart together as I transformed into Lady Christmas to usher in holiday cheer with brave smiles.

I will not lie to you; it was not easy. But it was beautiful. And, it was heartwarming, for both me and for all that I interacted with at the event. With the sprinkling of Christmas cheer, there was another event. And then another. Each was an opportunity for Lady Christmas to bring and receive joy. The desperately needed mending of my heart was found serving those who have their own trials and tribulations - unknown and unseen.

The service men and women lit up like the most bedazzled Christmas tree when they saw me, as I am sure folks often do for so many Christmas Performers. When I was asked where Santa was, I replied graciously, "I am sure he is out making his rounds, delivering gifts. And Mrs. Claus is home baking those sweet treats as she often loves to do."

My impactful encounters at Christmas reminded me that I have work to do. Still. Lady Christmas is the helper to every holiday character that everyone knows the most. It is time for Lady Christmas to come from behind the shadows to share her story. And, it is time for me to stand boldly in front of my story.

Tosombra "Tai" Kimes

INSPIRING LITTLE HEARTS

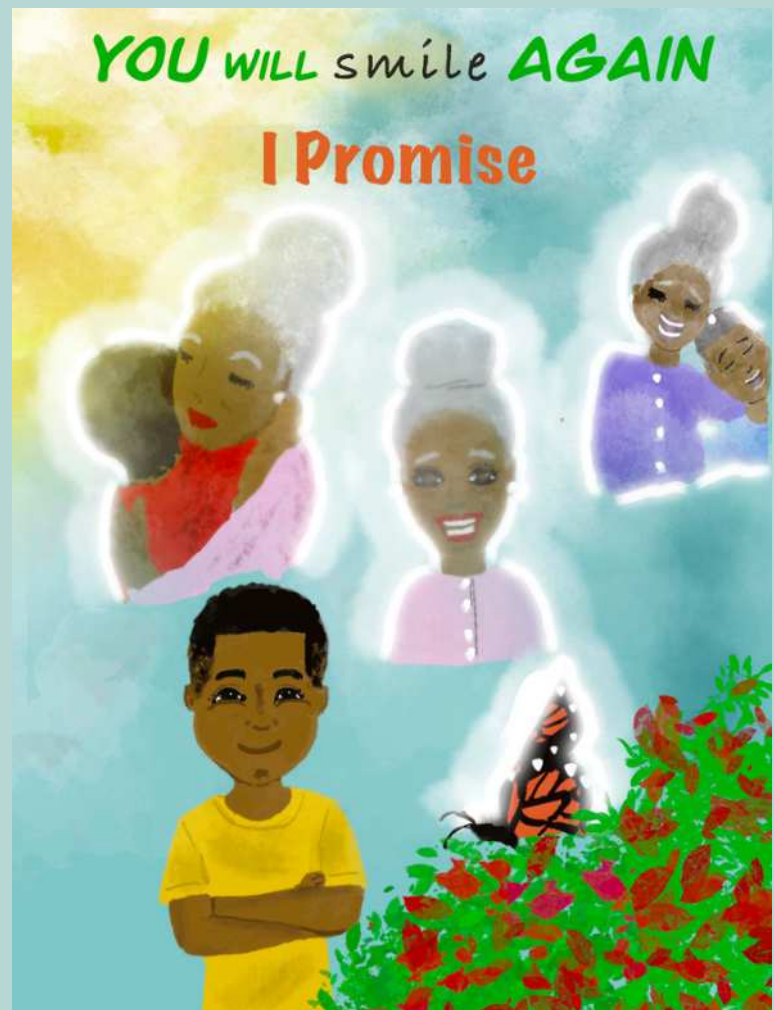
You Will Smile Again

**NICE
LIST
APPROVED**

Ever asked to bring back a family member for Christmas?

Want to still spread joy in their grief?

Add You Will Smile Again, I Promise to your Children's Library



Children endure life experiences like the death of a loved one. Though it pains us to see them hurt, our job is to help guide and validate their experiences in each stage of grief. This book helps to explain each stage of grief, ensuring one guarantee, You Will Smile Again, I Promise.

Author Demarje Adair

AVAILABLE ON AMAZON



HEATHER GABRIEL

The Singing Seamstress



Every superhero has an origin story, and even though I don't wear a cape (usually), folks are very curious about the origins of *The Singing Seamstress*.

I've been sewing since I was a young girl and performing since high school. The two did not come together in a meaningful way until I was past my opera phase.

My opera career consisted of mostly singing, dancing, and reacting to scenery. I played everything from a nun to a lady of the night to a peasant and everything in between. Because I am a tall woman—a presence with which to be reckoned, if you will—a lot of costumes didn't fit quite right. Even after the customer had her way with things, I would often come in behind her and fix things myself.

I got tired of being in the background, so I switched to musical theatre after five years in

opera and started getting juicy lead and supporting roles. Now that I was out in front, I didn't want to settle for just any old costume, so I started making them myself.

People started to take notice. Other actors began asking me to make their costumes as well. It went from two to four to half the cast and then full productions rather quickly. (Costuming a full production is a LOT of work, and it's a mostly thankless job, unfortunately.)

Somewhere in all of this, a fellow actor asked me to make him a Santa suit. Compared to my more recent creations, it's a very simple affair—washable but sturdily made. Nine years later, it's still in use and still looks like the day I delivered it to him.

He was so impressed that he got me in contact with the Lone Star Santas, the largest regional Santa group in the nation. I went to their annual shindig to hawk my wares and received quite a few suit orders. These folks were so impressed that they got me an invite to the largest Christmas performer group on Facebook (over 10k members). From there, I just posted pictures of the things I created. Between this and word of mouth, my Santa business grew by leaps and bounds.





Sometime after the Santa suit, another actor friend contacted me to help her BFF with his daughter's wedding gown. They had originally taken it to "a lady at church," and the gown needed a lot of work still. I had never worked on a wedding gown (unless you count the gown I found at Goodwill and modified to be my Halloween costume as the Bride of Frankenstein). Though nervous, I figured it couldn't be all that complicated.

Well, I was both right and wrong about the last bit. All the fundamental parts were there, but the only garment more constructed than a bridal gown is a man's blazer and some cosplay costumes. So, it was a steep learning curve—and I only had a week and a half to sort it out.

I managed to get everything in the right place, but, to this day, I still hate strapless mermaids. I also think I consumed a whole bottle of wine on my own to calm my nerves. After recovering, I realized that I could really make a go of this and decided to start

networking in the local bridal industry.

I have since won six industry awards for my bridal work and am in The Knot's Hall of Fame. It's super cool to be recognized for my work when I love it so much.



I am more than blessed to love my life's work. It has taken me a long time to get here, but the journey has certainly been illuminating. I eagerly look forward to all the new suits, all the new dresses, and all the new

friends I will be making in the future.

Until next time, may your bobbins be full and your seams straight!



DORIS MCMILLAN

Seamstress

Doris McMillan is Director of Admissions and Enrollment Management for New Hope Academy and owner of Seams by Doris, LLC. She currently sits on the Tennessee Historical Commission as a Governor Lee appointee. Mrs. McMillan has been credited with wardrobe outfitting for numerous celebrities and shows including the Oprah Winfrey Show, Naomi Judd, Sheryl Crow, Tim McGraw, Barry Manilow, Taylor Swift and Beyonce's Formation Tour. Doris was Naomi's seamstress for 23 years, but she knew Wynonna long before she met Naomi. Wynonna and Doris children attended schools together. Doris's advocacy work for women and children has earned her the title "Williamson County Trailblazer." She has been involved in mentoring for all ages, but particularly for young people. Helping people know their purpose is truly one of Mrs. McMillan's most brilliant strengths.

Establishing the African American Heritage Society's Black-Tie Affair is one of her largest community accomplishments. The event celebrated its twenty third year in 2024. McMillan has served on the board of Mercy Children's Clinic, African American Heritage Society, Franklin Tomorrow, Haiti Hospital Foundation, Inner City Coalition, 4H of Williamson County and the Williamson County Library, Franklin Transit Authority, City of Franklin Parks, National Federation of Colored Women, and many others.

Although she is known in entertainment circles around the world for countless fancy outfits worn by her famous stage performing clients, many may not know she saved Christmas for hundreds of boys and girls. One year, Ms. Santa of Nashville was scheduled to surprise deployed members of the military families with truckloads of gifts to go under their Christmas trees. The visit was top secret and only a few individuals knew Ms. Santa was coming to town. With the secrecy of the visit, Ms. Santa traveling suits were shipped to an unknown location. The unknown location was so secret, no one knew where to pick up her luggage! With only one suit in her possession, Ms. Santa frantically called Doris for help until her

bags were found. The bags were found weeks later, but in the meantime, Ms. Santa had sold out visits throughout the season.

Hearing the desperation in her voice, Doris responded with her trademark kindness and thoughtfulness. She met Ms. Santa after she arrived back in Nashville with only a few hours to spare before it was time to jet off to another Christmas appearance in another city. Doris drove from Franklin to Nashville to take Ms. Santa's measurements in a bathroom stall at the Nashville Public Library and hurriedly returned to Franklin to help avoid disappointing an audience filled with bright-eyed children.

With the swoosh of her sewing machine, she started sewing after cutting a pattern. She carefully hand stitched durable fluffy fur to magically transform a bag of remnant velvet fabric into wearable art. Doris made Ms. Santa a suit worthy of the flashing lights on the red carpet at the Country Music Awards that was also perfect for schools and family events. Even now, the suit truly is one of Ms. Santa's most cherished ensembles in her Christmas wardrobe. The classic suit was a perfect fit and an answer to Ms. Santa's prayers. The children at the next stop were absolutely mesmerized by the bright red fabric and the softness of the fur. Doris saved Christmas!

Every town or city has someone who is behind the scenes making others shine without ever saying a word about the work they do to serve others. Doris is one of those individuals. She gives back without asking for anything to return. Except a photo or two from time to time of children smiling with glee while telling Ms. Santa what they want for Christmas.

Not only did Doris help save the day for Ms. Santa but her generosity and dedication to her craft helped create cherished memories for thousands of children and their families. No words could ever convey Ms. Santa's deep gratitude for Doris's thoughtfulness and support but being included in this issue dedicated to women is a start!

CAT ELLEN

“Mrs. Santa True” And Half Of Christmas Performer Workshops

The moment someone finds out that my partner happens to be Santa Claus, they say, “So you must be Mrs. Claus!” And while it can be much easier to announce myself on a phone call that way, I’m not typically in a red dress trimmed with white fur.



In my partner's second year, I offered to help out with some of the paperwork because organization, publishing, and editing are in my professional skillset. This was when I found out just how hard he had to work, trying to be both in the limelight and run the back of the house.

Santa True (my partner of 14 years) lovingly calls me "Manny the Manager" for all the tasks I've taken on. Is a client giving him grief about our rate or his calendar availability? Time for "Manny" to take up the phone and lovingly charm them into something that works for everyone. And since I am the detailed one, I coordinate our shared calendar, format and edit the contracts, and ensure all the event details are ready when it's time to walk out the door.

I've spent decades as a technical writer and project manager, for such amazing partners as JPL NASA and Disney Studios, among others. This easily translates to juggling between high-end Hollywood types and local baseball team booster clubs, new photographers and returning country club gigs, Instagram messages and Facebook contacts. While Santa is out at the weekday appointments, I'm working both my full-time job, the Santa emails and gig leads, the land-line, and messages coming into my cell phone. On the weekends, I can relieve him of dodging traffic and finding parking in the Los Angeles area, while I chauffeur him to his Saturday and Sunday gigs. Often, I'm definitely his professional get-away driver.

I was raised in the theatre (both on and off stage), sang in a rock band for fourteen years, taught bellydance for almost a decade, and have been a poet, storyteller, and song-writer for a Middle Ages reenactment group. I've spent the past 25 years teaching textiles to crafters and hosting public demos of textiles history, so I'm no stranger to curriculum development or public speaking. When we first saw a need for performing skills to be taught in the Christmas community at large, we've been combining our experiences since day one.

At Christmas Performer Workshops (CPW), I lead the charge for our publishing, editing, and presentation of materials, as well as help hone our material into what can be delivered in a one-hour feature class or a two-day immersive workshop. I'm absolutely in my element teaching anyone a beginning or fundamental level skill—it's my favorite thing to do.

I've spent years strategizing on how to create healthy learning environments to encourage adult learners and heal from less-than-helpful teaching relationships in their past. That's made it a true joy for me to think about what it takes for any newcomer or veteran to have the tools they need to level up their own skills and strengths, as they advance their own work as Santa, Mrs. Claus, or Elves.

Lest anyone think I'm all paperwork and spreadsheets, let me assure you I'm also embedded in some of the wilder background development of my Santa's costume design, props, and projects. While we usually commission his costuming from professionals, if there's hand-sewing to be done, I'm there happily stitching after work on some of the more labor-intensive construction.

I also serve as the key moderator online for our ongoing continuing education for the CPW Alumni community. No one can learn everything in just a two-day workshop, and so we make certain to continue encouraging alumni to work to put their new skills into practice. For years I helped dancers drill their skills every week in class, and now I help support that same approach monthly (or more frequently) for our alumni. Seeing their success and new-found enthusiasm makes all the hard work and long hours worth it.

Will I ever take the stage in red trimmed with white fur? Possibly. But I'm also thrilled to support Santa True, CPW, and all our friends through my approach to organization, skill development, and community networking.

Christmas Performer Workshops

Christmas Performer Workshops (CPW) is about helping you bring your performing skills to the next level, to help you develop your own unique offerings, and save you time on your journey as an “A-List” Performer.

Often Imitated
Never Duplicated

**Are you ready to take your
Christmas journey to the next level?**

North Pole Radio
Mar 8-10
South Burlington, VT
**CPW Performing
Fundamentals**

Apr 25-28
ISC Memphis, TN
CPW Team of
Instructors at ISC

MAPS
Jun 6-7
Michigan (TBD)
**CPW Advanced
Performing: Storytelling
and Character Work**

**2024
Schedule**

Bluegrass Santas
Early Aug
Cincinnati, OH area
**CPW Advanced
Performing: Storytelling
and Character Work**

Hosting Workshops
CPW teams up with our Hosting Groups and shares profits, which then can be invested in more training, worthy causes, and more. Each workshop is tailored for your community. CPW Workshop Alumni can purchase a CPW Training Deck and can join the free, on-going training in the Alumni group.

Santas of the OC
Late Aug
La Habra, CA (SoCal)
**CPW Advanced
Performing: Storytelling
and Character Work**

Book for Your Group!
Contact CPW now to bring one of our three stacking workshops to your area.

Let's look at 2024 and 2025 and schedule the premier performance-based focused training, custom designed for you.

Contact CPW Today!

Santa True: Robert Seutter
818-762-9075
santa@santatrue.com

ChristmasPerformerWorkshops.com



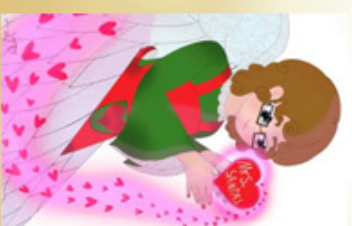
DEANNA GOLDEN

First ExOfficio and First Elected 2019



Santa Nana's
HOLIDAY UNIVERSITY
Be good, for goodness sake!

*Join us in Birch Run, MI
May 2-4, 2024*



*Deanna Golden
and Judi Broderick*

MRS. SANTAS hosts our Spring session.

We invite you to experience a different and unexpected point of view for holiday education, with fun and fellowship. Add a visit to the famous Bronner's in Frankenmuth on a **Bonus Day, May 5.**

ALL Christmas characters, and supporters are invited to come learn, share, encourage and connect.

Website: SantaNana.com

Facebook: facebook.com/groups/santanana

MRS. Santa's Angels National Team Association Support



AMANDA SPAULDING

2 0 2 1 - 2 0 2 2





KAM
BREITENBACK
2 0 2 2 - 2 0 2 3



GENMA HOLMES

2 0 2 4

IBRBS was formed in December 2012 with a plan to become the preeminent Santa Community in the World. It is now one of the leading organizations of professional Santas, Mrs Clauses, supporting spouses and associates. Our members are dedicated to the mission. Thousands of volunteer hours have been contributed each year to make IBRBS, a member-driven, responsive group based on the legends and history of Santa ... and Mrs. Claus!

This issue would like to acknowledge the trailblazing women who have ascended to IBRBS' Board of Directors.

The HEART of NASHVILLE

Conveniently located on the edge of buzzing Broadway, the Frist Art Museum stands as a local favorite and Nashville must-see. Explore ever-changing exhibitions, hands-on artmaking for all ages, stunning Art Deco architecture, and the Frist gift shop. Youth 18 and under are always FREE.

FristArtMuseum.org

Frist Art Museum

Downtown Nashville | 919 Broadway, Nashville, TN 37203

Supported in part by



The International Santa Claus HALL OF FAME INDUCTION

At ICS2024 Memphis



The International Santa Claus Hall of Fame is home of the celebration and study of famous Santa Claus and Mrs. Claus of the past and present. This is an ongoing project to preserve the historical documentation of the many men and women who have greatly contributed to the Legend of Santa Claus. The International Santa Claus Hall of Fame is dedicated to Nicholas of Myra, the fourth century bishop known for his great deeds of generosity. He is the basis for the Santa Claus Legend.



At the International Santa Celebration in Memphis, the International Santa Claus Hall of Fame will honor the 2020-2023 Classes inductees during a ceremony on Friday, April 26, 2024, at the Renaissance Convention Center. This special event has been prepared by Phillip L. Wenz an Inaugural 2010 International Santa Class Inductee and one of the leading authority and historian on the Santa Claus legend, history, and folklore. Wenz is one of the most experienced Santas in the world and is the creator of the Santa Claus Oath, which is widely accepted by nearly every Santa portrayer across the globe.

Helping with the ceremonial duties will be Robert Karrick, a 2013 Inductee of the Knights of St. Nicholas fraternity which dedicated to building community and to emulating the virtues of St. Nicholas of Myra. The Knights of St. Nicholas of Myra is awarded each year by The Santa Claus Oath Foundation.



Pat Fallon

Since the 2010 Inaugural Induction of the International Santa Claus Hall of Fame Class, there have been several women inducted into the prestigious organization that captures the legacy of Santas and Mrs. Clauses portrayal artists.

In Memphis, the following women will be honored:

From the class of 2020, Grace Howell, “Matthan’s Mrs. Santa Claus” and Idella Holzauzer “Lorain’s Woman Santa Claus” will be recognized posthumously.

Pat Fallon, “Philadelphia’s Mrs. Santa Claus”; Elien Bernahard, “Lancaster’s PA Best Santa” posthumously; and Nellie Miller, along with her husband Con as the “Alaska’s Christmas Couple” from the Class of 2021 also posthumously.

2023 Class Inductees include Gail Golden, “Macy’s Mrs. Claus” in the Macy’s Thanksgiving Parade from 2006-2022 and Lynn “Lucy” Rose CEO and founder of Santa Nata University, posthumously.



Grace Howell Manhattan’s Mrs. Santa Claus

GAIL GOLDEN

Class of 2023



Maybe I was fated to become Mrs. Claus because I was raised in a family that did not celebrate Christmas and this made me so sad. Christmas looked like such a wonderful holiday! I literally dreamt about Christmas trees. By the time I was a teenager, I had convinced my family to celebrate Winter Festival of Peace on Earth Goodwill to All on December 25. Winter Festival was fun, but there was still no Christmas tree.

After college, I moved to NYC and shared a tiny apartment with another aspiring young actress. When December came around and we got a Christmas tree, I was overly excited! Money was short and so we made our own ornaments. I still have them.



Over the years, the holiday has changed for me repeatedly, but now, I am happy to say, I celebrate Christmas (and Boxing Day) with my family, and we have an exciting time.

Over the years, I have played lots of magical roles including Glinda in *The Wizard of Oz*, a fairy in *Sleeping Beauty*, and Cinderella's Fairy Godmother in numerous productions. In fact, it was through one of my magical characters at Walt Disney World that I met the folks from Macy's and was asked to play Mrs. Claus in the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade which I did for 16 years. Macy's also cast me as Mrs. Claus in special events with the Rockettes, the New York City Ballet's *Nutcracker* dancers, and the Big Apple Circus. I was Mrs. Claus with the puppeteers from Avenue Q, and, as Mrs. Claus, I sang Christmas songs at Herald Square accompanied by Michael Feinstein. It has been quite a whirlwind!



photos. They were just walking through the Village to get to an attraction on the other side of the park. So, I started talking to this family about Hannukah and menorahs and latkes and we sang The Dreidel Song together. Afterwards, the parents stepped aside and consulted with each other for a minute. Then they came over to me and said, “We told you that we are not interested in photos here in the Santa Village, Mrs. Claus, but we like you a lot! Will you pose for a picture with us?” There is something for everyone in Santa’s world!

For me, the important things about the great honor of being Mrs. Claus are being friendly, open-hearted, inclusive, loving and kind. It is such a pleasure to be part of spreading the joy of the holiday season.



I have also been Mrs. Claus at Universal Studios Orlando in their Macy’s Parade and at SeaWorld Orlando. And, of course, I have been Mrs. Claus at libraries, stores, on zoom, and even in a springtime Dyngus Day Parade. Dyngus Day is the day after Easter, and it is a holiday tradition from Poland. This parade was not my cup of tea — part of the Dyngus Day tradition is squirting people with hoses. Luckily, Santa gave me an umbrella before the start of the parade!

Here is one of my favorite Mrs. Claus stories — I was Mrs. Claus in a Santa Village where I was asked to do fun streetmosphere and to let folks know that Santa was in his cottage, and they could go inside and take a photo with him. This was a pretty straightforward Mrs. Claus assignment. But, when I stopped one family to tell them where they could meet Santa, they told me that they were Jewish and so they were not interested in Santa Village



LYNN “LUCKY” ROYSE,

Class of 2023



Lynn “Lucky” Royse was an entertainer, an artist, a singer, a writer, and an activist for peace and equality. For many years she earned a living as a paralegal, and then a caregiver, but her proudest accomplishment was developing the character of “Santa Nana,” Santa’s Sister, spreading holiday joy, and promoting Peace on Earth, Goodwill to All.

She was a graduate of several Santa Schools and in turn became the CEO and Founder of “Santa Nana University,” teaching others how to be a spectacular Mrs. Claus or other Christmas character, and giving instruction on fashion, decorating and entertaining during the holidays. She was a proud member of IBRBS and Arizona Santas. Always vibrant, free-spirited, and full of life, she was an award-winning writer and talented artist.

One of her special gifts was bringing people together; her annual tree-trimming party to celebrate her birthday was a highly anticipated event for many friends and loved ones. She was also ordained to perform marriage ceremonies and joined several couples in matrimony during her life.

Lynn “Lucky” Royse passed peacefully and surrounded by her family on July 9, 2016.



SANTASCLAUSERG

MARY IDA DOAN

*First Woman Inducted into
International Santa Claus Hall of Fame*

Mary Ida Doan was the first woman inducted into the International Santa Claus Hall of Fame. Her husband, Nate Doan, was a member of the Inaugural International Santa Claus Hall of Fame Class in 2010. When it was announced in 2012 that Mary Ida was selected to be inducted into the Santa Claus Hall of Fame she said, “I’m very honored and very, very surprised. My late husband and I will be the first couple inducted.” At the ceremony held the following year, Mary Ida was by Jane Holloand, the granddaughter of Charles Howard.

Her induction bio stated, in part, “For over 50 years she has been bringing Mrs. Claus to life. With an unstoppable Christmas Spirit and a deep passion to help others she has made her mark as one of the leading Mrs. Clauses in the world.”

The Doans were famous for the Santa House, founded in 1991. Nate Doan, “The Original Santa of Bay City” and Mary Ida, known as “Michigan’s Mrs. Claus.

When a Santa called in sick in 1940 at the Christian Assembly Church on E. Vermont Street, Nate filled in and fell in love with the job. After their honeymoon, Nate was busy for a month working as Santa. This prompted Mary Ida to play Mrs. Claus so she could be with him.



Nate Doan made numerous visits as Santa Claus—everywhere from the Santa House, hospitals, stores, nursing homes and schools. He retired in 1989 after a nearly 50-year career.

The Doans graduated from Charles W. Howard Santa Claus School in Albion, NY, and were the first couple to do so together. In 1966, the Doans took over the Santa School, then moved the Santa School to Bay City in 1973. Here, they offered courses in October for would-be Santas in the US, Greenland, Switzerland, and Australia—the Doans would visit Australia, where the children named Mary Ida “Nana Claus” as they thought she was Santa’s grandmother. In 1990, the school was moved to Midland.

Outside of playing Santa, Nate worked as a warehouse supervisor for Bay City Public Schools for 45 years, served in the US Army during WWII, sang in the Christian Assembly Church for 61 years, and was a past state president of the Michigan Association of School Employees.

The home used was originally built in the 1920s, used with logs by the Sterling Lumbering Company used as an office on Fifth and Adams streets. In the 1950s, it was moved to Wenonah Park, where the Santa House was used between 1991-1997. In 1998, the DoubleTree Hotel was set for construction, and it needed to be moved again—this time, across the bridge to Veterans Memorial Park by the Bay County Community Center where it has been ever since. The move occurred in 1999.



It was moved across the bridge, down the service road, and then under the bridge to JFK Drive.

Each year, hundreds of children wait their turn to see Santa and sit in his lap and tell him what they want for Christmas. Children wait in long lines to see Santa and admire the various Christmas displays inside. A favorite room is the kitchen display, where elves can be seen baking Christmas cookies.

In 1982, the City of Bay City dedicated the Nate Doan Park in his name near his family home on the city's west side. Although Nate passed away in 1997, Mary Ida is still involved with the house along



with Nate's nieces Cindy Bower, Becky Truemmer and Pam Schweitzer who help decorate the home along with a host of volunteers each year.

Admission to meet Santa Claus is free, so you can bring the whole family along for a cheerful outing without breaking the bank. Donations are encouraged and photos cost \$5.



The Nate and Mary Ida Doan Santa House, Inc. is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization incorporated in Michigan in 1991. It was created in honor of their lives and to assure the "spirit of Santa House" endures for future generations.





Memphis Tourism



EILEEN BERNHARDT

Class of 2021

One of the most popular local Santas, Eileen Bernhardt had a career in the red suit that lasted 32 years -- from 1969 through 2000. Over that time, she estimated she held more than 100,000 local tots on her knee, listening to their Christmas wishes and jotting down information about each one on a giant yellow scroll that sometimes stretched several hundred feet in length.

Bernhardt first donned the Santa suit out of desperation -- her husband, Karl, was laid off from his work as a welder for the second Christmas in a row and she ventured into the Manpower temp agency looking for work. Manor Shopping Center needed a Santa on short notice, and after some reluctance, Bernhardt took the job. And ran with it. For decades.

Over the years, she was featured in the local papers many times, and in national magazines -- "Woman's Day" and "Family Circle" -- at least twice.

She even appeared on national TV in 1974, stumping the panel on "What's My Line?" with her unusual vocation.

In 1981, after 12 years as Manor Shopping Center's Santa Claus, Bernhardt received some bad news: The mall would not be hiring her for another season, citing financial reasons. The backlash from Bernhardt's fans was dramatic, as newspaper articles were followed by editorials and letters to the editor.

A bidding war of sorts erupted among local

merchants seeking her services - Bernhardt said she received 11 offers from retailers including the downtown Watt & Shand department store and several malls and shopping centers.

She signed up with Willow Valley Mall, located across Route 222 from the main Willow Valley restaurant and resort complex. She would stay at that location for the next 20 years, finally hanging up her red-and-white hat in 2001.

Throughout that time, Bernhardt displayed an intense dedication to portraying the character of Santa. She would shave her eyebrows, then meticulously apply individual white hairs to create Santa's brows. She would shampoo Santa's beard - which was crafted from wigs - every night. She would pour over toy catalogs and watch children's TV shows to learn what the kids might be asking for each year. She came up with the idea of her "list," to which she added each child's name and wishes, writing with an oversized feather pen. (Side note: That giant scroll of paper was actually a roll of teletype paper donated by a local radio station.)

She also displayed a dedication to helping children - instead of pocketing her Santa salary each year,

she would set it aside and use it to buy gifts for needy children who sat in her lap. She would casually get their addresses, and make a surprise Christmas Eve visit to their homes, presents in hand.

Bernhardt's dedication to detail, and to the children for whom she served as Santa Claus, resulted in her being named the best Santa Claus in Lancaster County by this (very scientific) survey, published in the *Intelligencer Journal* in 1982. Her portrayal of Santa Claus was the only one to receive a perfect 10 "Ho-ho-hos."

When Bernhardt retired from her Santa duties in 2001 - and again when she died in 2008 - local newspapers wrote extensive profiles of her. "The gifts she had for what she was doing cannot be imitated."

Eileen Bernhardt died on June 18, 2008, at the age of 80. She had portrayed Santa Claus for 32 years - more than half of her adult life.

Eileen Bernhardt was inducted into the International Santa Claus Hall of Fame in December 2021.



RONDA GUILLE

Different from All the Rest

My name is Ronda Guile and I perform as a Professional Female Santa Claus, known as Santa Argyle of Ramona. The 2024 Holiday Season will be my ninth-year portraying and performing as the Whimsical Jolly Soul, Santa.

I “fell into” this calling as a rescuer of sorts. My husband of 40 years, Duayne Guile, was going to be in the Santa role for an event. But when he exclaimed, I CAN’T do this!” I hurriedly replied, “Oh my goodness, give me the suit!” And the rest is history. As with all things surrounding the wonders of Christmastime, I transformed into Santa Claus, mentally and psychically, the moment I looked in the mirror. My heart jumped a beat as my spirit was rebirthed in a ‘Twinkle of an Eye’! I was Santa Claus.

A native of San Diego, I live in Ramona, California. Duayne, the catalyst to my becoming Santa Claus, is Santa Argyle’s designated sleigh driver who escorts me as Santa to events and visits. We are retired professionals, parents of two wonderful children and grandparents to three adorable grandchildren.



I have been “hiding my identity” since 2016 and booking visits with Santa Argyle as his secretary Ronda. Not once have I received any questions or comments regarding Santa being a lady. Not one. I take my portrayal of Santa Claus very seriously. From his looks, his voice, his walk, even how he sits, I am very protective of my character as Santa along with the spirit of joy and love that he possesses which I also embody. I am honored to be a Santa Claus along with my peers and mentors like Santa Mel, Melissa Lynn Rickard; Santa Stuart, Stuart Deacon, Jr; Santa Ed, Ed Taylor; and Santa True, Robert Seutter. These amazing Santa portrayal artists have extended such incredible encouragement, shared wisdom, and friendship that have been unmeasurable and truly valued.

Because of their friendships and mentoring, my devotion to my character deepens each season. I love the magic that children and adults bring to me sharing their wishes, their dreams with all the magic of the Christmas Spirit. I believe in spreading words of kindness, humbleness and being a “Good Deed Doer” all year long. These acts are true values embedded within their hearts, spirit, and mind.



Since donning the suit in that fateful moment, I have become rooted in all things Santa Claus to perfect my craft as a Santa Claus portrayal artist. I have memberships in several organizations to help me become a better performer and for professional development. I am a platinum member of the Worldwide Santa Claus Network, to keep updated with Santa education, opportunities, cultural shifts, marketing, AI, and more.

I am a member of the International Brotherhood of Real Bearded Santas, Inland Empire Chapter. I am also an Alum of Christmas Performers Workshop and I belong to its support group for designer bearded Santas & elves.

Transforming from Ronda to Santa Argle takes about one and half hours. From dressing in my custom red suit and applying my full beard, mustache, and wig, I am incredibly detailed about my Santa look. When I first began my journey as Santa Argle, I wore a synthetic beard and an Amazone suit until 2021. Post-covid, I decided to design my own suit. I used my



old suit as a pattern and redesigned it to be more like Santa suits seen on scenic Christmas Cards. In 2021, our first grandson at 15 months olds was diagnosed with autism. While becoming educated on what to expect and not to expect, I learned about the sensitivity of children on the autism spectrum experience with colors, sound, and texture. This had me wondering how can I refashion Santa Argyle's suit to be more "soothing" to children and adults alike?

I sought advice from a teacher who worked with our grandson. She suggested for me to "tone-down" the brightness of the white fur. Her suggestion led to me incorporating brownish-grey fur, with white fur. Because of my grandson, Santa Argle truly brings comfort and joy to children of every age. My beard is a custom design from real Yak hair. I round off my transformation with a hint of makeup to give my cheeks a rosy glow. With my windblown nose, curls in place, brooch on my hat, and brass jingle bells on my boots to hear every step, tah-dah, I am Santa Claus bringing the warmth of jolliness and the making of magical memories!

Ho, ho, ho!



RACHEL KING

Duo-Solo Performance



In a world joyfully sprinkled with holiday magic, my journey as Mrs. Claus has unfolded into a whimsical tale of love, art, and the magic of Christmas. For me, being Mrs. Claus isn't just a role; it's a permission slip to indulge in the one thing I adore most—loving people. There's an enchanting mystique in bestowing the greatest gift one can give: love. It dances in perfect harmony with my beautiful Santa, creating a heartwarming partnership that encapsulates the very spirit of our season. He is my everything.

My childhood journey into the world of Victorian enchantment began in the Mid-West, where I joined my mom and grandma in the Silver Dollar City traveling art shows. Through their meticulous craftsmanship of award-winning antique reproduction porcelain dolls, I learned that details matter, and perfection isn't just a goal; it's a thrilling pursuit.

The whirlwind of our road travels opened doors to amazing opportunities where I discovered

the essence of performance art. A beautiful scene invites people to step into the narrative, captivating costuming sets the tone, and believing in oneself is the secret sauce that others can't resist. The Victorian-era clothing I adorned back then has now become the muse for our Claus attire. I dive into the joy of designing and making my gowns, each a vision for a new performance, an art form that echoes from within, and a reflection of my true self. I hope they stand as inspiration to others, embracing a classy and timeless elegance that mirrors the enchantment of Christmas.

Santa and I often perform as soloists while on the same set. It's a dance we affectionately named the "Duo-Solo Performance," a synchronized spectacle of us embracing the magic of Christmas while operating in individual roles through a seamlessly synchronized program of stories, performance and character roleplay. As a complement to Santa's traditional role, I explore the wonder of the North Pole through stories, facts, props, and learning with the children. Our portraits depicting this



were masterfully created by our photographers, Jamie and Melissa of ftwoodphotography.com. Their exquisite Claus portraiture and immediate image delivery is available to the Claus community. Locate a photographer that fits your vision and your marketing intensions. It's career changing!

In season, we travel the Mid-West in an RV sharing our fully interactive, solo, dual, and Duo-Solo performances, offering full-scene sets, specialized stories, and custom props serving corporate events, communities, sports teams, parades, photographers, private gatherings, home visits, and more. Gigs vary widely from outrageous 16,000-person arenas to grand corporate events to parades for small towns beckoning for compassionate love. Endearingly, it's the memory invoking individual time with children that we treasure most. The most challenging event I've ever worked at is performing for my peers. It's nerve-racking! It means so much to me to serve with love and inspiration. It's a program that only the North Pole CEO can seemingly navigate with ease. Our pursuit for perfection is shared by a team willing to work to achieve that magical moment for every client. It's all made possible by my supportively loving Santa, a lifetime of professional jobs preparing me for this, the logistical wizardry of our elf, "S2", and the unwavering support of our family.

Our formal training and weekly development rituals, led by the talented Santa True and Cat Ellen of Christmas Performers Workshops (CPW), are the lifeblood of our seasonal program. This training evolves a basic character into a professional performer with historical foundations and performance schooling at mastery levels. They've propelled us from being untrained novices to seasoned performers, and we're eternally grateful for the future of Christmas magic they've paved for us.

My passion lies in transforming Mrs. Claus from a background character into a leading lady of the 21st Century with an active role along with Santa. I'm on a mission to make Mrs. Claus a household name in family traditions, filmmaking, and the very essence of what makes Christmas magical. Let's unite, fellow Mrs. Clauses, embrace the training programs, become the most fully interactive versions of ourselves, and weave the tradition of Mrs. Claus into the very fabric of Christmas joy. Together, let's make every Christmas a symphony of love, laughter, and timeless enchantment.

BRING YOUR A-GAME!

Tired of feeling hot while performing?
ThermApparel can change that!



Lightweight
Comfortable
Reusable



Fast Recharge
20-60 min.



Slim Fitting
Easy Transport



Safe Against
Skin



Works in
Humidity



1-3 Hours
Cooling Time

thermapparel[®]

thermapparel.com/santa

**SAVE 10% WITH CODE:
COOLMRSCLAUS**

HOP THE BLACK SANTA

A Heartwarming Tale of Hope, Resilience, and Inclusivity

In the realm of holiday festivities, traditions, and iconic figures, a new and heartwarming character has emerged – Santa Titus aka: Hop The Black Santa. This enchanting persona brings forth a unique narrative that not only celebrates the spirit of Christmas but also addresses sensitive topics like child loss and infertility, making him a beacon of hope and inclusivity for diverse families all around the world.





Hop The Black Santa was conceived by husband-and-wife duo Dr. Titus and Michelle Hopper with the help of Charlotte Maternity, Newborn and Child Photographer, Charmeka Bias, as a response to the growing need for representation in holiday characters, recognizing the diverse backgrounds and experiences of individuals worldwide. The inspiration for Hop The Black Santa; however, goes beyond mere representation; it delves into personal stories and experiences that are often overlooked during the holiday season. Santa Titus and Michelle drew inspiration from their personal struggles dealing with child loss and infertility, recognizing the pain and challenges that families face during what is meant to be a joyous time. For the Hoppers there was a time when seeing young kids pained them. They remember a time, not even 10 years ago, when being around young children, particularly babies, was extremely uncomfortable. Now, they bring them pure joy.

In a December 4th, 2023, Charlotte Observer article written by Theoden Janes, he chronicled that, “In 2010, Santa Titus added love to his resume after reconnecting with Michelle Jackson, who he’d met just once 15 years earlier, when he was at NC State

and she was a student at Shaw University in Raleigh, NC. She was still in the Triangle area, working as an assistant nurse manager at UNC Health Care in Chapel Hill. And as soon as they went on their first official date that October, he knew she was the one. They got married less than eight months later.” He also shared that they knew early on that they wanted children; however, what they didn’t know was how difficult — and how emotionally devastating — the pursuit of that goal could be. During the first five years of their marriage, they lost 5 children and then struggled to conceive. Through it all, they maintained their faith and continued to try. During a New Year’s Eve service in 2015 after giving an emotional and powerful testimonial to the congregation about her experiences with miscarriages, Michelle handed the microphone to Titus, who emphatically declared, “By this time next year, we’ll be changing stinky diapers.” Those words did not fall to the ground.

After a wonderful Isle of Palms, South Carolina vacation, to their surprise they found out that they were pregnant. Though considered high risk, they both decided to walk boldly by faith, trusting that the new transabdominal cerclage along with the grace of God would not fail them. While 8 months

pregnant, Titus received a random phone call from a friend one day at work who was familiar with their story. This friend shared that her daughter was pregnant and was in no position to keep the child and asked if they would consider adopting her. After an emergency family meeting the Hopper's agreed. Six weeks after the birth of their son, Josiah, they brought their daughter, Lauryn, home from the hospital. Though they were believing God for one child, God gave them DOUBLE!!!

In 2019, Charlotte Maternity, Newborn and Child Photographer, Charmeika Bias, hosted a "Rainbow Baby" Photoshoot and created a blog highlighting the male perspective of child loss and infertility. She invited the Hoppers to participate. Upon their arrival, she saw Titus' white beard and soon thereafter, contacted Michelle and asked if Titus would be willing to don a Santa suit and join her for Christmas mini sessions as she had dreamed of finding a Black Santa. Michelle told her "yes" and volunteered her husband's services. That experience was the genesis of Santa Titus: aka Hop The Black Santa!

Since 2019, Hop The Black Santa has become a symbol of empathy and understanding, as his story intertwines with the realities of those who have faced the heart-wrenching journey of child loss and infertility. By addressing these sensitive topics, the character brings solace to those who may feel isolated during the holiday season, fostering a sense of community and support.

Hop The Black Santa's narrative follows a poignant journey, mirroring the resilience of individuals and showcasing God's grace and mercy. Through this character, the Hoppers aim to shed light on the emotional



complexities of these experiences while offering a message of hope and healing. Their story serves as a reminder that the holiday season can be a time for reflection, understanding, and solidarity.

One of their primary goals for introducing Hop The Black Santa is to promote their vision to catalyze smiles and sow seeds of hope for all generations. Their mission is to add value, joy and holiday cheer to every client's holiday festivities. They desire to make families of all backgrounds and experiences feel seen, valued, appreciated, and loved!

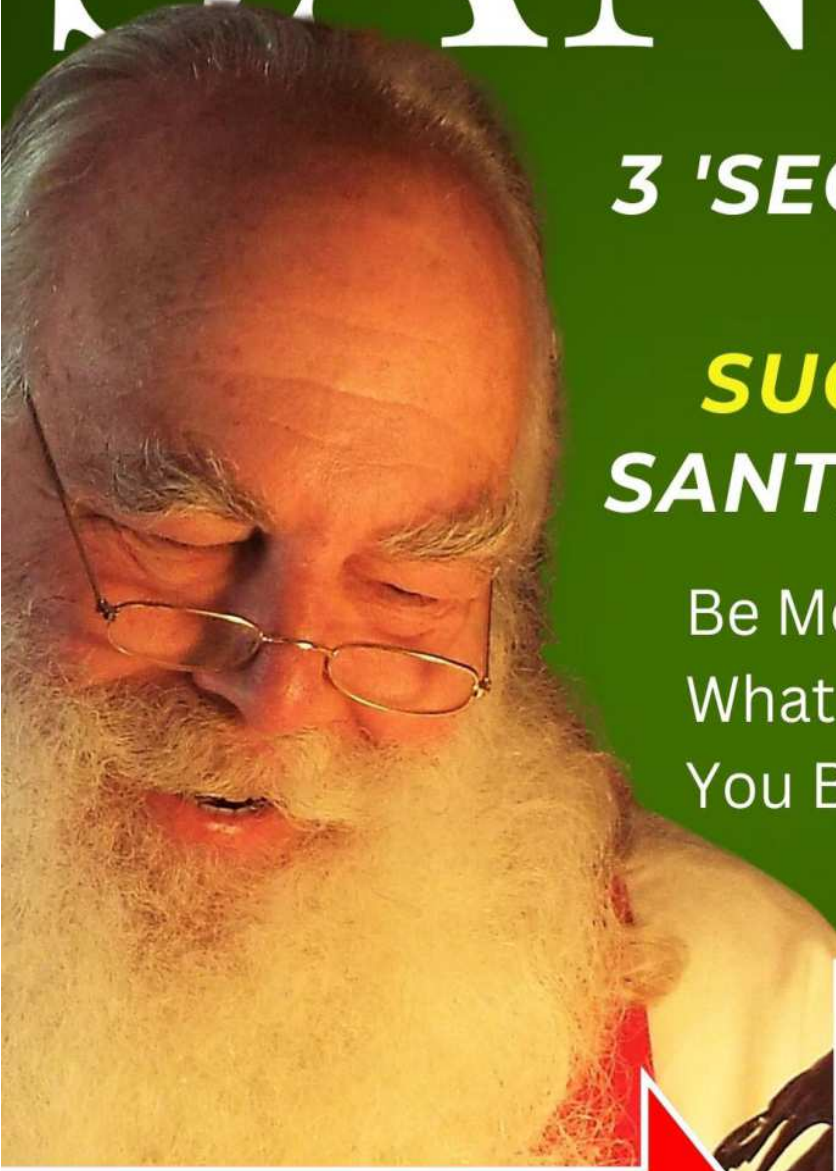
Hop The Black Santa has had a nationwide positive impact on families from the east coast to the west including North & South Carolina, Florida, Kentucky, Arizona, and California. Their organization, Team Hop The Black Santa, provides a source of comfort and understanding, acknowledging the pain that may accompany the holiday season. Families who may have felt overlooked or excluded now have a figure that resonates with their experiences, fostering a sense of belonging and shared strength.

Hop The Black Santa has become more than just a holiday character – he has become a catalyst for hope and community building. Through the shared experiences depicted in their story, families can connect with one another, finding support and understanding. Hop the Black Santa has become a symbol of joy, hope and unity, transcending cultural and societal boundaries.

Hop The Black Santa has emerged as a heartwarming addition to the pantheon of holiday performers, adding diversity and addressing sensitive topics with grace, empathy, and humility. His character not only promotes inclusivity and representation but also serves as a beacon of hope for families facing challenges during the holiday season. As we celebrate the magic of Christmas, let Hop The Black Santa remind us of the power of resilience, compassion, and the importance of coming together as a global community.

You can find Santa Titus at www.hoptheblacksanta.com, and on FB or IG via the handle @HopTheBlackSanta

SANTA



3 'SECRETS' TO A **SUPER SUCCESSFUL** SANTA BUSINESS

Be More Confident in
What You Say, Do & How
You Build Your Business

**Free
Webinar**





An Elf Story

SHEPHERY ROZAS

The year was 2005, and the Texas Renaissance Festival (TRF) was abuzz with anticipation. Themed weekends were the talk of the town, and I, initially slated to be a caroling English noble lady, found myself on the cusp of an unexpected adventure. As part of the group of actors representing the diverse themes each weekend, we were closing in on the grand finale – Celtic Christmas. The plan was to embody the yuletide spirit as a group of English nobles. However, fate had other plans for us, and complications with our costumes threw us into a whirlwind of last-minute decisions. That’s when the director revealed his revised plan – we were to become none other than Father Christmas and his merry elves.

From there, the race was on to assemble costumes that screamed Christmas and exuded elfin charm. I raided the costume bins and emerged with green and red stockings, created finger gloves from toe socks, a quirky Santa/jester hat, and fabric door hangers that, instead of adorning doors, now adorned my belt. Jingle bells became my constant companions as I liberally attached them to every conceivable inch of my outfit. As the ensemble came together, a festive energy filled the air.



The weekend arrived, and as we frolicked with the children, a delightful revelation struck me – the jingle bells created a symphony with every move, making it clear that my elf name would be Jingles. The joy on the kids’ faces was infectious, exceeding my wildest expectations. The Texas Renaissance Festival’s environmental theatre embraces high improvisation and that meant each day brought new and uproarious adventures.

I, along with countless festival patrons, was smitten with the character, leading me to craft a bespoke outfit for Jingles. With red and green velveteen as my canvas, I personally stitched together a Christmas jester’s motley, embellished with gold trim and an abundance of jingle bells. Jingles, now visually complete, danced through the festivities with even more merriment.





It always surprises me how much Jingles is loved. Many years ago, one woman took a picture of me and her baby boy, and each year since then, they come out to specifically find Jingles and take another picture. She told me that the original picture of me with her son goes on her Christmas tree every year. It really warms my heart to know that my interactions cause happy memories and return visits.

Now, season after season, I adorn myself with bells, becoming Jingles T. Elf (or Jingles T. Jester), delighting both children and adults across the Houston area. The whimsical charm of the character brought forth the inner child in adults and sparked unbridled joy in the hearts of children, creating a harmonious cacophony of laughter and festive cheer that echoed through the festival grounds.



Rewinding a few decades, my journey into the world of performance began with an initial pursuit of a theater performance degree at the University of Texas at Arlington in the mid-'80s. Though the degree remained unfinished, I found a home in local community theaters, relishing comedic roles. Dance training from my formative years seamlessly blended with my theatrical pursuits, adding an extra layer of grace to my performances. In 1998, my destiny intertwined with the Texas Renaissance Festival when I successfully auditioned for the role of Elizabeth Johnson in a Feast Hall murder mystery. Little did I know that many years later, I would continue gracing the TRF stage – not as Elizabeth, but as Jingles the Jester during regular seasons and Jingles the Elf on the grand finale, Celtic Christmas Weekend.

IBRBS congratulates the recently elected Board of Directors; **Stephen P. Arnold, Randy G. Dodds, Genma S. Holmes, and Mark E. Nettleship**. The new and returning elected Directors will be officially seated on March 13, 2024, at the Board of Directors meeting. They are ready to serve our members!



**Congratulations to the New
IBRBS 2024 Board of Directors Members**



ISC2024 Memph

Rachel King- Mrs Claus Flying Solo

Mitch Allen- Ho Ho How to Market Your Santa Business,

Howie Bristow- The Essential Santa

Rachel/Ronnie King- Creating Photo Magic

Derek Dugan- What's Marketing have to Do with it? Part 1

Tim Connaghan- What the Future Holds for You

Pamela McColl- The Enduring Magic of the Classic; Twas the Night
Before Christmas,

Derek Dugan- What's Marketing have to do with it Part 2

Santa Carlucci/Jenny Lynn Claus- Improving Your Market Share: The
Carlucci Way

Robert Seutter- Future of the Claus-Verse

Alice Fassig- American Sign Language: Practical use for Santa and
Mrs Claus

Myk Price- the Art of projecting your voice,

Genma Holmes- Creating A Digital Look Book for Securing Six Figure
Contracts

Ron Wolek - Beard and Hair Care

Ronnie King- Understanding the Modern Day DBS (Designer Bearded
Santa)

Bryan Miller- Setting Up a Virtual Workshop

Julia Kracke- How to Stay Cool in your Costume: The Effect of Heat
on Your Portrayal

Ronnie King- Knowing your Clients' Wants and Needs and How to
Deliver Them

Joel Lagrone- More Than Music: 'Til the Season Comes Around Again;
Using Music In Your Visits

Meet the Board -Meet Your IBRBS Board And Ask Questions

Pamela McColl- Santa and His Pipe

his Speaker List

Mitch Allen- Creating and Delivering Great Home Visits

Tim Connaghan- Making the Moment

Robert Seutter-Storytelling the Secret Ingredient

Bill Quasa/Kevin Boylen- Working with Children with Special Needs

Natasha Spencer Cooley/ Myk Price- Miracle on Diversity Street

Brian Marchetti/Wendy Leonard-Fun and Games For Your Home and Corporate Events

Robert Seutter-The Art of Engagement: Bringing the Energy

Lori Dinwiddie- How to make your Mrs Claus Stand Out

Doug Wright- How to Create Magical Home Visits

Robert Karrick- The Christmas Classic that gave us Santa Claus,

Bill Himes/Jim Youker (North Carolina Friends of Santa)-How to Organize and Set Up Your Non-Profit

Shirley Werner- Reading to Children

Lori and James Dinwiddie- Santa and Mrs Claus working together as a team,

Meghan Holmes- the Power of Mrs Claus

Cherry Hill Programs- Being a Professional Santa

Genma Holmes- Developing your Christmas Brand,

Doug Eberhart- Developing your Christmas wardrobe

Lori/James Dinwiddie- everything that Santa and Mrs Claus need to know about Cookies,

Chuck Gill- Visit with Santa

Tim Connaghan- Surviving the Season

Robert Seutter- Storytelling: the Secret Ingredient,

Alice and Don Fassig- American Sign Language for Santa and Mrs Claus

DOUG CHURCH



Doug Church's Salute to the Stars, a musical journey back in time, paying tribute to three of the greatest singers of our time, Dolly Parton (as portrayed by Wendy T.), Kenny Rogers (Justin Sullivan) and Elvis Presley (Doug Church).

Doug began his career in the U.S. Air Force, brandishing a guitar and home-made costume, where he began winning talent contests held annually by the Air Force with his amazing rendition of the King of Rock of Rock and Roll. He won 11 First Place trophies in just 4 years of competitions in multiple categories such as Male Vocalist, Comedian and even Master of Ceremonies!

Shortly after leaving the service, he entered the Worldwide Elvis Impersonators contest at Bad Bob's Vapor's Supper Club in Memphis Tennessee, walking away with the First Place Crown as, "The World's Best Elvis Tribute Artist"

Subsequently, after a successful audition, he joined the famous Las Vegas tribute Show "Legends in Concert" and worked with them for 7 years as "The King", performing in such sundry locations as The Bahamas, Puerto Rico, Jamaica, The Virgin Islands, Aruba, Bangkok, Hong Kong, Moscow and many U.S. and Canadian locations! Afterward, he began touring the US and the world, with his own shows.

He has also performed in: Luxembourg, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland, England, Wales, Germany, Spain, Chile, all over the U.S. and Canada. He also has an impressive repertoire of 50+ character voices and has done extensive work in the voiceover business. He has awed his audiences for years, leaving them totally mesmerized and shaken, by one of those voices in particular—that of Elvis Presley.

He also performs with backing tracks or with full symphony/pops orchestras! He is known worldwide as "The LEGENDARY Voice" by not only his fans and other ETA's, but by those who knew Elvis personally, and is regarded as an Icon in the industry.

The Salute to the Stars Concert will be on Saturday, April 27, 2024, at the Renasant Convention Center North Hall. The Concert will start at 8pm. ISC Attendees can purchase tickets for only \$20 from the ISC website.

Public tickets are available for \$35 at <https://events.eventzilla.net/e/doug-churchs-salute-to-the-stars-2138606170>

IBRBS Santa's Heart recognizes members community service hours. Each year, members log their charitable hours as Santa or Mrs. Claus. Members' hours of giving back are tabulated along with their performing hours as a professional Christmas Character helps to identify key events or activities that had a major impact where members live and work.

Last year, over 300 IBRBS members participated with over 70,000 contributed, either pro-bono or at reduced rates, to local, regional, and national charitable organizations, groups, and families that needed our help.

Our annual charitable hours are submitted during January through March. Participating members receive pins to recognize their volunteer service. Members – just log into your IBRBS dashboard and use the RESOURCES link under membership to find the Santa's Heart Survey form.

Honorees will be announced at the ISC2024 Memphis event, April 25-28, 2024. Join us in celebrating our collective best year ever!



MUST-SEE MEMPHIS MUSIC ATTRACTIONS

Memphis is where some of the world's most famous music was made and is still home to talented musicians who are a little soul, a little rock 'n' roll – and so much more.

Birthplace of Rock 'n' Roll

No visit to the Birthplace of Rock 'n' Roll would be complete without a tour of Graceland, Elvis Presley's sprawling 14-acre estate. Marvel at the quirky wonders of the King's mansion and enjoy self-guided tours of special exhibitions. Then cross Elvis Presley Boulevard to the new Elvis Presley's Memphis entertainment complex, where you can check out the King's vintage collection of automobiles and airplanes, an all-new career museum and two restaurants named after Elvis' parents, Gladys and Vernon (either one is just right for lunch onsite).



Tour Sun Studio, where rock 'n' roll was born when pioneering music producer Sam Phillips took a risk by blending musical styles. Blues artists B.B. King and Howlin' Wolf recorded here in the early 1950s, setting the stage for rockers Elvis Presley, Jerry Lee Lewis and Johnny Cash. Still an active recording studio, Sun has attracted the likes of Bonnie Raitt, Ringo Starr and Tom Petty. This National Historic Landmark – which has appeared in a number of films, including “Great Balls of Fire” and “Walk the Line” – is an unforgettable experience for music lovers and history buffs alike.



Discover Memphis Soul

A must for fans of soul music, the 17,000-square-foot Stax Museum of American Soul Music, located a short drive from downtown in the neighborhood known as Soulsville USA, is the site of the original Stax Records. It houses more than 2,000 cultural artifacts celebrating the musical contributions of artists including Isaac Hayes, Otis Redding, Al Green and Aretha Franklin.

Beale Street and the Memphis Blues

A visit to Beale Street, the official Home of the Blues, is a rite of passage for any serious music fan. By day, tour the restored home-turned-museum of Father of the Blues W.C. Handy. When evening falls, catch world-class music acts at clubs such as B.B. King's Blues Club, Rum Boogie Café and Blues City Café. Then head to The Pig on Beale to indulge in some slow-smoked ribs or over to King's Palace Café for down-home Southern cuisine.

Whether you're a foodie, a music fan or a history buff, a romp on Beale is sure to satisfy all your cravings. Beale Street is also home to two museums focused on Memphis' incredible music history. Take an incredible musical journey through Memphis from the 1930s to today in the Memphis Rock 'n' Soul Museum. This Smithsonian Institution affiliate in the heart of downtown includes the stories of Sun, Stax, Hi and Ardent Records. An interactive digital audio tour includes more than 100 songs and guides you through seven galleries featuring more than 30 instruments, 40 costumes and a variety of other musical treasures. The Memphis Music Hall of Fame honors individuals and groups whose talents have honed the Memphis sound, from Sun Records' Million-Dollar Quartet to Memphis Soul icons Isaac Hayes and Al Green to Ardent Studios' Big Star. The hall even tips visitors off to who's making music in Memphis today, so you'll know whom to listen for when you're venue-hopping or record-shopping in the city.



On nearby South Main Street, the Blues Foundation's Blues Hall of Fame chronicles quintessential artists in this purely American roots genre, from the original Delta bluesmen to modern performers like Bonnie Raitt. Both the Memphis Music Hall of Fame and the Blues Foundation's Blues Hall of Fame are tightly curated and tech-forward, so you can count on brief but concentrated visits, packed with interactive A/V stations in addition to memorabilia.

CREDITS AND

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

2024-2025 IBRBS Board of Directors

- Stephen Arnold, President/CEO
- Howard Graham, Chairman
- Deanna Golden
- Don Fasig
- Fred Lueck
- Genma Holmes
- Howard Bristow
- Jim Kelly, Sr.
- Mark Nettleship
- Randy Dodds
- Tom Bailey
- Wade Moore
- Stephen B. Price

Board Consultants

- John Arnold, Webmaster
 - Kim Moore, Bookkeeper
-

Contributors

- Stephen Arnold
- Teralee Baines
- Bay County Historical Society
- Cat Ellen
- Robin Ferra
- Gail Golden
- Ronda Guile
- Genma Holmes
- Dr. Titus and Michelle Hopper
- International Santa Claus Hall of Fame
- Jen Kersey
- Tosombra “Tai” Kimes
- Rachel King
- Karen Van Leeuwen
- Oretha Mobley
- Megan Price/GigSalad
- Jed Reinhart/ LNP I LancasterOnline
- Anne Marie Taylor
- Dr. Ellen Terpening
- Ann Votow
- Williamson Herald
- Penny Wright

Photographers

- Tim Darwish (Cover)
- Ann Votaw
- Anne Marie Taylor
- Bay County Historical Society
- Charmekia Bias
- Facebook
- Ft. Wood Photography
- Gigsalad
- Kim Shouse Photography
- LPN I LancasterOnline
- Legendary Christmas Company
- Lydia Carlise
- MsDig Photography
- Reaj Roberts Photography
- Tina Cothorn Rimmer
- Tina Myatt

Special Thanks

- GSH Media and Consulting
- MH Agency
- Julia Kracke
- Stephen B. Price
- Memphis Travel



www.sewsanta.com

Hallmark Movie Premieres Line-Up March 2024



March 15

Crimes of Fashion: Killer Clutch

Time: 9 p.m. ET/8 p.m. C

Hallmark Movies & Mysteries

March 23

Shifting Gears

Time: 8 p.m. ET/7 p.m. C

March 30

An Easter Bloom

Time: 8 p.m. ET/7 p.m. C

Hallmark 2024 Movies

P	A	N	E	A	S	T	E	R	B	L	O	O	M
K	I	L	L	E	R	C	L	U	T	C	H	S	O
I	N	I	R	A	M	S	E	L	L	I	G	R	G
R	O	S	K	C	I	R	T	A	P	T	S	A	S
O	L	R	R	Y	I	H	K	E	U	T	M	E	E
O	D	C	M	T	I	A	N	I	C	O	Y	G	I
I	H	A	I	L	O	S	A	N	B	O	S	G	V
I	T	E	O	H	L	U	C	K	Y	F	T	N	O
O	I	I	R	M	P	B	D	L	O	G	E	I	M
S	H	O	L	L	I	N	G	S	W	O	R	T	H
B	R	O	O	K	E	D	O	R	S	A	Y	F	C
M	R	T	Y	L	E	R	H	Y	N	E	S	I	R
B	E	N	J	A	M	I	N	B	F	L	K	H	A
S	P	R	I	N	G	M	S	E	E	I	M	S	M

STPATRICKS
SHIFTING GEARS
TYLER HYNES
BENJAMIN
AN EASTER BLOOM
HOLLINGSWORTH
BROOKE DORSAY
MYSTERY
GOLD
MARCH MOVIES
SPRING
KILLER CLUTCH
GILLES MARINI
LUCKY





Peabody Ducks/Memphis Tourism



The Memphis-Arkansas Bridge/Memphis Tourism



www.IBRBS.org