

# Nevada

P.O. Box 2907

Sparks, Nevada 89432

N.S.S.S. meets on the 2nd & 4th Saturday of each month at 10:00 am  
in the NNMC at 1855 Oddie Blvd. in Sparks

<http://home.earthlink.net/~renostamp/>



## N.S.S.S.



## POST BOY

December 12, 2009

**President: Stan Cronwall**  
849-7850  
Stlaine@aol.com

**Vice President: Jeanne Paquin**  
885-7768  
paquinj@sbcglobal.net

**Secretary: Howard Grenzebach**  
(775) 677-7143  
artfulputz@aol.com

**Treasurer: Paul Glass**  
425-8939  
pglass@charter.net

**Editor: Howard Grenzebach**  
(775) 677-7143  
artfulputz@aol.com

**Directors: Charles White**  
830-0622  
ypchuck@hotmail.com

**John Walter**  
851-7968  
john@walter-us.net

**Harvey Edwards**  
246-4769  
diveecho@ix.netcom.com

**Beekun, Sumayya**  
Junior Representative

**Mike Potter**  
359-9419  
mpotter-134@aol.com

**Jean Johnson**  
331-0816  
jeasjo@hotmail.com

Christmas season is with us at last and, for those of you who are not Christian, Kwanzaa, EID and Chanukah are here too. Guess that's why we feel the need to not only say "Merry Christmas" but "Happy Holidays" as well.

The **Christmas party** will be held on the second Saturday (the 12th) of December. The address is the Masonic Temple at 601 W. Peckham. A map is on page 3. Bring your side dish and enough utensils for you and your guests to use and one for the side dish. Yes, you may bring guests. Presents will be traded, and fought over, so bring one for each guest too, so they can join in the fun. There is a price limit of \$10.00 for the gifts. We don't expect you to spend a lot and, at ten bucks, you will have to put some thought into it. Just make it something that will be fun.

the Sparks Museum tree was put up and trimmed on Sunday, November 15th. **Dick Dreiling** opened the Museum for us even though the building is not open on Sundays. Thanks, Dick. **Jeanne Paquin** was there, along with **Barbara Stanfield, John Walter, Paul Glass, and Stan Cronwall.**

**Marla & John Wetterling** volunteered to handle the duties associated with the meet and greet of visitors/those interested in becoming new NSSF members, then follow up on the "care and

feeding" of our new members until the newbies are well integrated with the group.

There is another area that sorely needs our attention "Recruiting New Junior Members" and that will be a major subject of discussion at the next quarterly Board Meeting. Any volunteers for the job or ideas on how to set it up will be useful. Contact Stan or talk to him at the next meeting.

**PENPEX** will be held on Dec. 5-6 (closes at 2 on Sun) at the Community Activities Bldg, 1400 Roosevelt Ave., Redwood City, California <http://www.penpex.org/>

This Christmas card comes from "Brunnalla" a website that will allow you to make your own cards.



<http://www.brunnalla.ch/e/seasonsgreetings.htm>

## *Christmas in Egypt*

The Coptic Church is an Orthodox Church and in the Coptic Church Christmas is celebrated on the 7th of January. Advent is observed for forty days and during this period people are expected to fast, eating no meat, poultry or dairy products. Some people only do this during the last week of Advent.

On the Eve of Christmas everyone goes to church wearing a completely new outfit. The Christmas service ends at midnight with the ringing of church bells, then people go home to eat a special Christmas meal known as fata, which consists of bread, rice, garlic and boiled meat.

On Christmas morning people in Egypt visit friends and neighbors. They take with them kaik which is a type of shortbread, which they take with them to give to the people they visit and eaten with a drink known as shortbat. Christmas Day is a public holiday for Christians.



## *Christmas in Yugoslavia*

In Yugoslavia, children celebrate the second Sunday before Christmas as Mother's Day. The children creep in and tie her feet to a chair and shout, "Mother's Day, Mother's Day, what will you pay to get away?" She then gives them presents. Children play the same trick on their father the week after.

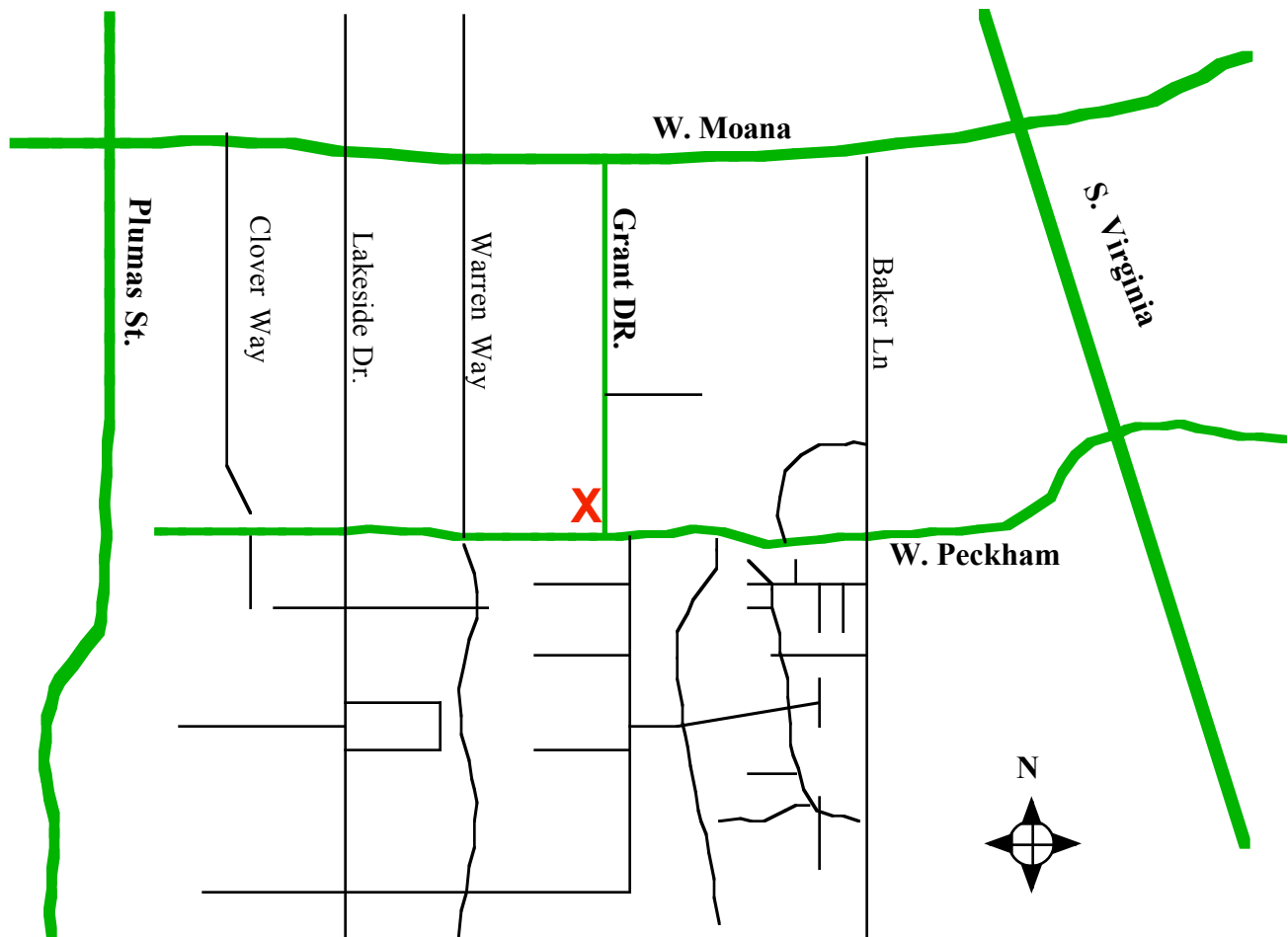
Those Yugoslavs who live in the country fear bad luck if their Christmas log burns out and so someone has to stand over the log all Christmas night to ensure it stays lit up.

A Christmas cake called chestnitsa, contains a gold or silver coin and is said that whomever gets it can expect lots of good luck.

The Yugoslavs eat roast pig as their Christmas dish and it must be carved a particular way, according to old customs.

Every household has a Christmas crib. According to old customs they go on an expedition to the forests to gather moss with which to line the crib. Also families would have an old-fashioned music box that plays Christmas carols.

# The Christmas Party



While this map isn't perfect it is pretty accurate as far as where the streets end. For instance, Clover Way comes up short of Peckham and Peckham doesn't go all the way to Plumas. North is the top of the map and south is the bottom.

The easiest route is Virginia to Peckham to Grant, park the car and have a good time at the party. You can also take Grant, Lakeside or Warren from Moana but not Clover. Baker also reaches all the way to Peckham. If you're on Plumas, go to Moana then Grant and turn right. The party is where the big red **X** is. Don't get lost in the streets south of Peckham.

Have fun at the party and drive safely.

<http://www.northpole.com/>



## *Santa Claus and Christmas at the North Pole*

Normally, I steal a picture from the site I am ready to present to you to illustrate the site. But this time I can't. There are some nice pictures here but they have it set up so I can't grab a picture like I usually do. Kudos to them for knowing how to do this.

The site seems to be oriented to the children so if there are some children in your life, this one is for them. It starts with a picture of the North Pole and a series of houses surrounding it. The houses are of a European type with snow on every rooftop. One has sign, another with a gingerbread man on top and another with Santa's hat. Each house will take you to a different link. Pass the cursor over it and Rudolf will tell you what's in it. So will I.

The biggest house is Santa's workshop. Here are stories about the toys being built by the elves. You can find them by clicking on the toys on the workbench or several links below it. When you go to the story, you have the options of reading the story yourself, having it read to you or downloading some pages to read and color the story. You can also go to Santa's Den to produce a story where you are the hero. You can also buy Christmas albums or books. Then take a quiz to see how you are doing on the Naughty or nice list.

Just for the fun of it you can click on one house that will take you to a "Disco Dancing Santa". You can change the music, how Santa dances and the music. There are also stories about the elves (Burt, Sally and Will) to read. If you like you can have a chat with an elf named Bonnie and Biff. On this page there are games to play too. You can build a snowman, play checkers, do a crossword puzzle and trim a tree with eight more games to play.

With all this there are still more games and puzzles, recipes for mom, find out how cold it is in the North Pole and write a letter to Santa. He will even write back!

This seems to be a very good site for children to play on. The downside is the commercial aspect of it but toys can't be played with if you don't buy them first. The hidden commercial site appears when you go to one of the buy sites to actually buy something. All the sites I went to were Amazon.com so I would assume this is the sponsor. Never-the-less, it's a great place to go for a pre-teen to have some fun. Or to heck the pre-teens, I had some fun there myself.

The Christmas quiz comes from TriviaPark.com and is noted as a "Novice" quiz. Pretty smart novices, if you ask me. Its a tough one but don't worry. If you take the quiz, remember, the answers are on the next page. If you turn it in, you'll get Auction bucks for it whether you get the answers or not. This one's just for fun.

1. Which of these names does NOT belong to one of Santa's reindeer?  
A) Comet      B) Prancer      C) Blitzen      D) Klaxon
2. At Christmas, it is traditional to exchange kisses beneath a sprig of which plant?  
A) Ivy      B) Yew      C) Holly      D) Mistletoe
3. In the Ukraine, what does it mean if you find a spider web in the house on Christmas morning?  
A) Good luck    B) Misfortune will strike    C) Your house needs cleaning!
4. In many households, part of the fun of eating Christmas pudding is finding a trinket that predicts your fortune for the coming year. For instance, finding a coin means you will become wealthy. What will you be if you find a button?  
A) Poor      B) Famous      C) A bachelor      D) Called away on a trip
5. If you were given some "frumenty" at a Medieval Christmas party, what would you probably do with it?  
A) Eat it    B) Burn it    C) Put it in your sweetheart's hair    D) Polish your boots
6. Many of us are quite familiar with the first verses of the traditional Christmas carols, but how well do you know the rest of the lyrics? For instance, what is the first line of the second verse of Angels from the Realms of Glory?  
A) "Christ by highest heav'n adored"    B) "Shepherds in the fields abiding"  
C) "Shepherds why this jubilee?"      D) "Don we now our gay apparel"
7. Which of the following names does NOT belong one of the Three Kings?  
A) Caspar    B) Balthazar    C) Teleost    D) Melchior
8. One of the adventures of Sherlock Holmes takes place during the Christmas season. Which of these does the tale hinge upon?  
A) A burglar disguised as Father Christmas    B) A blue diamond found in a goose  
C) A cat trapped in an organ pipe      D) A poisoned flask of Napoleon brandy
9. Which well-known author of fantasy fiction also created a book called The Father Christmas Letters?  
A) Lewis Carroll    B) J.R.R. Tolkien    C) E. Nesbit    D) C.S. Lewis
10. One of the most loved Christmas books is A Christmas Carol. Who wrote it?  
A) Mark Twain    B) Charles Dickens    C) Hans Christian Andersen

Hope you enjoyed doing it. Merry Christmas!

I told you it would be tough, even if you are a novice.

1. D. A klaxon is actually a powerful electric horn. Its name comes from a German word meaning "shriek".
2. D. In ancient Scandinavia, mistletoe was associated with peace and friendship. That may account for the custom of "kissing beneath the mistletoe".
3. A. There once lived a woman so poor, says a Ukrainian folk tale, that she could not afford Christmas decorations for her family. One Christmas morning, she awoke to find that spiders had trimmed her children's tree with their webs. When the morning sun shone on them, the webs turned to silver and gold. An artificial spider and web are often included in the decorations on Ukrainian Christmas trees.
4. C. A ring means you will get married; while a thimble predicts spinsterhood. The idea of hiding something in the pudding comes from the tradition in the Middle Ages of hiding a bean in a cake that was served on Twelfth Night. Whoever found the bean became "king" for the rest of the night.
5. A. Frumenty was a spiced porridge, enjoyed by both rich and poor. It was a forerunner of modern Christmas puddings. It is linked in legend to the Celtic god Dagda, who stirred a porridge made up of all the good things of the earth.
6. B. The other suggested lines come from (a) Hark, the Herald Angels Sing, (c) Angels We Have Heard On High and (d) Deck the Halls. The words to Angels from the Realms of Glory were written by Scottish journalist and poet James Montgomery (1771-1854). Montgomery was a supporter of parliamentary reform and a prolific writer. About 100 of his hymns are still in use.
7. C. The names of the wise men, with their places of origin, their stations in life, and even their number, come from legend and story, not from strictly religious tradition. One historical source gives them the Persian names Hormizdah, Yazdegerd and Perozadh. A teleost, on the other hand, is actually a fish. The word refers to any member of the large group that includes eel, salmon and plaice.
8. B. In "The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle" Holmes manages to recover the jewel but, in the spirit of the Christmas season, allows the repentant thief to go free - on the condition that he leave England for ever.
9. B. The Father Christmas Letters consists of letters written to the Tolkien children by Father Christmas. It was published in 1976. The illustrated letters describe adventures and events at the North Pole.
10. B. A Christmas Carol tells the story of one harrowing Christmas Eve in the life of a miser named Ebenezer Scrooge. The book was an instant hit, and Dickens wrote a new Christmas story each year from then on.

## St. Nicholas: The Story of Santa Claus

By: Anise Hollingshead

### The History

St. Nicholas was born in 271 AD and died around December 6, 342 or 343 AD near the Asia Minor (Turkey) town of Myra, where he later became Bishop. He performed many good deeds and was a friend to the poor and helpless, and upon his death, myths soon sprang up about him all around the Mediterranean Sea. He was reputed to be able to calm the raging seas, rescue desperate sailors, help the poor and downtrodden, and save children. He was soon named as the patron saint of sailors, and when Myra was overthrown, his bones were transported by sailors to Bari, a port in Italy, where a tomb was built over the grave and became the center of honor for St. Nicholas. From here the legend spread on around to the Atlantic Coast of Europe and the North Sea to become a European holiday tradition regardless of religion.

### The Legend

Strictly speaking, the tradition of St. Nicholas is not synonymous with the role of Santa Claus in the U.S.. As practiced in many European countries, the celebration of St. Nicholas is separate from the Christmas holidays, and occurs during the 2 weeks prior to December 6th, which is St. Nicholas's day. Sometimes St. Nicholas Day is the main holiday for gift giving, and not Christmas.

In the Netherlands, legend has it that Sinterklaas (Dutch name for St. Nicholas) arrives in the Netherlands by way of steamboat from Spain 2 weeks before his traditional birthday, December 6th, along with his helper, Zwarte Piet (Black Pete), who will help disperse the gifts and candy to all the good children. Sinterklaas, along with the zwarte piets, will go abroad at night and stride about the countryside wearing his red mantle, his mitre, and his golden crosier and sporting a long, white beard. Referring to his book that lists all the good and bad children, Sinterklaas will deliver presents to all the good children, but watch out if you've been bad! The bad children may be taken back to Spain with him. The Low Countries (Belgium and Luxemburg) have basically the same traditions surrounding St. Nicholas, but not to the extent of the Netherlands. Children in Luxemburg call him Kleeschen, and his helper is Hoseker (Black Peter). Belgian children know him as Sint Niklaas.

In Germany, St. Nicholas is also known as Klaasbuur, Sunnercla, Burklaas, Bullerklaas, and Rauklas, and in eastern Germany, he is also known as Shaggy Goat, Ash Man and Rider and is more reflective of earlier pagan influences (Norse) that were blended in with the figure of St. Nicholas, when Christianity came to Germany.

*Continued on the next page*



After the reformation, St. Nicholas's attire began to change, maybe as a reflection of the change from the Roman church, and he started to wear a red suit with fur. His dark-skinned helper is most often known as Knecht Ruprecht. Although he still visits many homes on Dec 5th/6th and leaves candy and gifts in the children's shoes, more recently St. Nicholas has begun showing up on Christmas Eve in Germany and is called Father Christmas.

In France, he is now called Pere Noel (Father Christmas) and he travels in the company of Pere Fouettard. Pere Noel leaves presents for good children, while Pere Fouettard disciplines bad children with a spanking. Pere Noel only sometimes leaves presents on St. Nicholas day, more often now on Christmas. St. Nicholas day was celebrated formerly in Russia, but under Communism he was changed to Grandfather Frost and wore blue instead of red. In Sicily, he comes on Dec 13th and is called Santa Lucia.

### The Holiday Today

In anticipation of St. Nicholas's nightly visits, children in several European countries put their shoes in front of the fire place. They sing traditional songs and provide a carrot or hay for the horse. At night Black Pete puts gifts and candy in the shoes.

In the Netherlands, families celebrate St Nicholas's birthday the night before his feast day (December 6th). At one point during the evening, a loud knock will herald the arrival of Sinterklaas and at the same time candy may be thrown from upstairs; when the door is opened, a bag of gifts will be on the doorstep.

For families with older children and adults, different twists are added to the gift giving and may include gag gifts or the drawing of gift ideas or names, and most times are accompanied by poems with a "personal touch" that poke fun at the recipient in a gentle way (or not, depending on the families ;) ). Wrapping the presents up in odd packages and planting a trail of clues is also part of the general fun, and can sometimes be pretty tricky to get to, depending on the squeamishness of the recipients.





Jean Paquin and Dick Dreiling add decorations of postcards and stamp pins to the tree. Stan Cronwall and Barbara Stanfield reach high to put the topmost piece on. Is it a star? Barbaa gives the finishing touches to a sideboard and, at the bottom is the final product. A Christmas post office. John Walter took the photographs here and on the next page. Than you John and everyone else for taking the time and effort on this project at the Sparks Heritage Musuem.



The Auction Bucks Auction was held on the first meeting in November. There was the usual crowd and a few faces we hadn't seen for a while. Lets hope they appear at more meetings this year and earn a few more auction bucks. At this auction we had loads of books. Some were philatelic like catalogs and auction house publications. Others, murder mysteries and romance novels. Then, the bottles of interest, a wine caddy and a plethora of goodies too numerous to mention.



Stan Cronwall and Dick Simmonds did most of the auctioneering while Marla and John Wetterling did most of the buying. The rest of us managed to get in a few bids too.

