



# Connecticut Society of Santas

## Club News

[CtSocietyofSantas.org](http://CtSocietyofSantas.org)

Spring 2022

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## Christmas in the Ukraine

by Santa Tom Harrington

In the Ukraine, Christmas eve is on the 6th of January. The Christmas eve supper is called *Sviata Vecheria* or the *Holy Supper*. This feast honors ancestors by providing two tablecloths, one for ancestors and one for living members.

A Christmas bread called a *kolach* appears in the center of the table. Three rings of bread are put on top of each other and a candle is placed in the middle of the top bread ring.

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## CTSS wants you!



CTSS invites members like you to help with events, photo shoots and newsletter submissions.

Numerous events need many helping hands. This newsletter needs regular contributors for ongoing columns or special articles. These can be about events or general information useful to the membership.

Our photo shoots, which are usually in October or November, can use Santas, Mrs. Clauses and Elves to pose with clients.

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## President's Message



*Santa Bill Dexter*

Greetings to All,

It is my great pleasure to welcome you to our first, and long awaited, CTSS Newsletter Special. Thanks go out to *Santa Tom Harrington, Santa Dave Daniels* and *Santa Duck* who have worked diligently to create this unique, quarterly periodical.

CTSS, as most of you know, is a 501(c)(3) organization started over a decade ago. Throughout those years, our membership has continued to grow.

Likewise, our community outreach has grown. Those members who are new to spreading holiday cheer have benefited from the counsel offered by more experienced members. Food banks have received donations of cash, food and other necessities. The families of deployed active duty military have been supported. Terminally ill children have been visited by "SANTA" throughout the year. Foster children have received gifts they otherwise would not have. Assisted living centers, multiple hospice providers, charities and community centers have been graced by our members supporting the red suit.

As president of CTSS, I can not tell you how proud I am of the efforts our members have made to make the world a better place.

2022 is bringing you a website which is the envy of other organizations. A newsletter which will keep us all connected and up to date. Social events, as well as educational events are in the planning stages. CTSS has never had more to offer you.

We need you. We need your talents. Please make 2022 the year that you step up and bring even more to our membership. Let's continue to make the world a better place.

With respect, gratitude and high expectations,

*Santa Bill*

## CTSS wants to feature you!

Visitors to our CTSS website can read about what our members are up to throughout the year with our "Member Spotlight" segments. It's a great way to share what you have been doing in your community as a member of CTSS but we can not highlight your endeavors without you letting us know.

If you have done (or will be doing) an event as either Santa or as yourself please take a few minutes to write a short description of what you did, when and for whom. Please include all the pertinent facts like who was involved, what the event was for and what the outcome was. If you have, or can get, a photo or two from the event

that would be great to include as well. Think of this as PR for yourself.

You can write the article in either first or third person. Try for at least two or three paragraphs and from one to four high definition photos (minimum 1200 pixels on the long end). If it is for an organization that has a website consider including a link to their website or event page. I will do light editing before publishing on the website.

Please send your *Spotlight* article submissions to [Duck@UnitasPhotography.com](mailto:Duck@UnitasPhotography.com).

## Santa's Gifts *by Santa David Daniels*



One of the best gifts to give is giving back. By doing so, you help to create cherished holiday

memories as you put a smile on another's face, a sparkle in their eye, and joy in their heart.

It comes only once a year, but here at CTSS, the holiday is in the making all year long.

It's the magic of brother- and sisterhood, the givers of Christmas joy and laughter, and the magic that brings us all together. If you have a passion for everything Christmas, come join us! You can be Santa, Mrs. Claus, Elf, or even Grinch. Christmas giving has many forms and if you feel the calling to spread cheer and goodwill, we can help you get started.

As members of CTSS, Santa, Mrs. Claus,

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## Pot Luck Picnic *by Santa Duck Unitas*



Last month, on Saturday, March 26, *Santa Bill Dexter* hosted a wonderful pot luck picnic at his home. It was a great opportunity to mingle and chat with friends new and old.

CTSS friend and seamstress extraordinaire *Margo Stuart* was there to both deliver past orders and take new orders from members looking for that special wardrobe piece.

You can view more of these event photos on my website at <https://www.unitasphotography.com/Event-Photos/CTSS/CTSS-Picnic-March-2022/>

## Workshop Weekend 2021 *by Santa Duck Unitas*



Last year's *CTSS Workshop Weekend* hosted at *Lake Compounce* was seriously disrupted by the pandemic. Lots of plans were ruined and staff shortages at the venue made for an uncomfortable weekend. Through all that, our members came together to make the best of a less-than-perfect situation.

You can see the results of everyone's efforts in these, and other, photos on my website at <https://www.unitasphotography.com/Event-Photos/CTSS/Santa-Conn-2021-Photos/>



## Santa's Secret Sauces *by Santa Bill Dexter*



So many sauces, so little time. Let's investigate sauces based upon *chipotle peppers*.

A chipotle pepper is a smoke dried *jalapeno pepper*. This

process goes back to the time of the *Aztecs* in central *Mexico*. Because of the thick skin of a jalapeno pepper, smoke drying speeds the process of bringing the pepper to its optimum state for consumption. Jalapeno peppers which are air dried often rot on the inside while the outer covering is still too hard to eat.

Most people feel that jalapeno peppers are spicy hot. While they can be, most are not. When a ripe jalapeno is smoked, it brings a special smoky sweetness to the pepper.

Remember, a smoked jalapeno pepper becomes a chipotle pepper.

Chipotle peppers are used in many commercial "hot sauces". They bring a nice smokey twist to the base sauce. A well known Mexican sauce with chipotle peppers is called "*Adobo Sauce*". Pronounced "*AHH DOE BOE*", it is a sauce you will often find on dishes served in Mexican restaurants. Don't be afraid to give one of these preparations a try. You just might find a new favorite dish. I certainly hope so!

# Inside Santa's Workshop *by Santa Tom Harrington*

For this first installment of *Inside Santa's Workshop*, I interviewed *Santa Tom H.* These interviews, right now, will consist of 14 questions. If there are other suggestions for more questions, I can ask them in later interviews. Suggestions should be sent to: [SantaTomH@gmail.com](mailto:SantaTomH@gmail.com)

*What are some of your nicknames?* Santa Tom H and Storrs Santa

*What are your favorite Christmas songs and why?* "Stille Nacht", "Silent Night", "My Grown-up Christmas List", "Santa Claus is Coming to Town", and "Jingle Bells". I love the beauty of the music and the singing for the first two, the meaning of the song for the third, and the fun and gaiety of the last two.

*What are your favorite Christmas movies?* That is a tougher question because there are so many good ones. For a drama, my favorite would be the 1947 version of "Miracle on 34th

*Street*" starring *Edmund Gwenn*, *Maureen O'Hara*, and *Natalie Wood*. This movie emphasized the importance of Santa Claus to the world and exhibited the kindness that can be present in everybody. For a Rom-Com, my choice is "The Most Wonderful Time of the Year" starring *Henry Winkler* and *Brooke Burns*. The funny scenes and the good will that is present in this movie make it a great Christmas flick. There are so many other films that move the heart and spread the meaning of Christmas.

*What are your favorite Christmas words or phrases other than "Merry Christmas" and "Ho, ho, ho"?* Have you been a nice boy/girl?

*What was your favorite Christmas encounter?* One time on the *Essex Train*, a lady with 2 children was talking on her cell phone while Santa approached. It turned out that she had called her husband, stationed in *Afghanistan*, so that he could participate in the Christmas photo with her and the children.

*What was your most difficult encounter and how did you handle it?* A boy stunned me by asking for a skeleton. He already had his own internal skeleton, but he wanted a skeleton for Halloween!

*What are the best things that people have requested for Christmas?* My favorite requests are for "I don't knows" and for an end to the pandemic. My elves do not know how to make "I don't knows" and I have no magic over the pandemic.

*What do you like most about CTSS?* The camaraderie and the joyous feeling that we have when we are together.

*If you could make one change to CTSS, what would it be?* Communication between members, as well as the board of directors and members. There is a need for all members to know that they are a necessary and integral part of CTSS.

*Who is your inspiration? Why?* All children between the ages of newborn and 110 years





old. Smiles on their faces and in their hearts are priceless.

*In your wildest dreams, what would you like to do as Santa, Mrs. Claus, or an elf? I want to ride in on a Zamboni, not a fire truck, not a float in the Macy's Thanksgiving Parade.*

*Do you use helpers? What type? How Many? How do they assist you? I will use any helpers that are willing to help. I have worked with Mrs. Clauses and elves and would also be willing to work with the right Grinch.*

*Do you have any Christmas skills that you are willing to talk about? If so, what are they? I mostly make up stories on the fly and use the ones that work out the best. I often pull Wooden nickels out of people's ears.*

*Do you have any other comments that you would like to share with the members of CTSS? I am hopeful that this newsletter will bring members closer together.*

## Share your knowledge *by Santa Duck Unitas*

Being a successful Christmas performer requires a variety of skills and talents. Often too many to learn all at once. That is why a great Santa, Mrs. Claus, Elf or Grinch will always be learning their craft.

To that end, it is the hope of CTSS to build a library of educational and reference resources available to all our members. If you have a special skill or talent, a unique knowledge of Christmas lore or

some personal or business experience worth sharing, consider adding it to our [Member Resources](#) section.

Currently we have two main areas; *Educational* resources where you can share information such as DIY props, Santa etiquette, a magic trick or two or other lessons that help improve our member's performances.

The second part involves links to *Goods and Services* that

support our industry. This includes tailors, prop makers and sellers, other educational resources and third party supporters of any kind you feel is worth knowing about. Of special interest are first hand accounts of these services as personal experience and reviews mean so much more than just a simple link.

If you would like to submit a tutorial for the educational section please make sure it is clearly written, easy to follow and, if appropriate, contains photos or illustrations that explains the process.

Links and reviews for products and services should answer the who, what, when, where and why so members can make better informed decisions.

Send your submissions to [Duck@UnitasPhotography.com](mailto:Duck@UnitasPhotography.com)

## Christmas in the Ukraine, cont'd

The meal consists of twelve courses. On the table is also a bowl of *kutia*. Kutia is made from boiled wheat with poppy seed and honey mixed together. It is called "God's Food."

A drink called *uzvar* is served and it is made of 12 different fruit juices. The father offers a prayer with the greeting "Khrystos Razhdaietsia."

The first course is the *kutia*, the main dish. That is followed by *borscht* with *vushka* (dumplings filled with mushrooms and onions. At the end, is the *uzvar*.

To learn more about there festivities, go to <https://ukrainianpeople.us/ukrainian-christmas-traditions/>

## Santa's Gifts, cont'd

Elves, and Grinches share their experiences so that we can learn from one another. The purpose of CTSS is to provide opportunities for members to promote the positive image of Christmas and to serve the community, providing unique resources for as many community service groups and organizations as possible. CTSS seeks to enhance the spirit and magic of Christmas by fostering fellowship among its members, community service groups, and organizations.

CTSS, through its annual events strives to provide resources, the exchange of experiences and ideas, and create an atmosphere of fellowship among its members.

Through these efforts, CTSS hopes to help members enhance their communities by promoting respect and dedication to the portrayal of Christmas characters.

To find out more about becoming a member of CTSS, visit our website at <https://www.ctsocietyofsantas.org/>

We hope to hear from you soon!



## CTSS Leadership Team



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