



Weeble Words

The Newsletter of Santa-America June 2009

Dear John,

Welcome to the new Weeble Words. This is my first effort at creating the newsletter. I hope to fill future newsletters with lots of information about the activities of the members of this great organization. It is my **goal** to have a newsletter every other month. Please submit any suggestions or articles you would like to include. This is our method to communicate with all members, so your input is invaluable.



Thank you for your support of Santa-America. I hope you enjoy this publication. Please let me know your thoughts or comments at [Santa John](#).

Sincerely,

Santa John Scheuch

Santa John Scheuch
Executive Director

From Santa Ernest



It's almost mid-year 2009! I think, the Grinch stole the first 5 months of 2009!

Santa America is in a significant and critical stage in its growth and development as the USA's largest volunteer Santa service organization. Santa-America is clearly recognized.....by our peers....as THE national charity worthy of support at the "Celebrate Santa" convention at Gatlinburg by both the convention management team and the creators of the "Santa Oath." While maintaining focus on our core mission of bringing Love, Hope and Joy to children with special needs and their families; we also announced and began training in support of our national alliance with the Autism Society of America. Lee Grossman, President of ASA spoke to convention participants and our teams agreed in 2009 we will identify and pilot joint fund raisers and individual Santa visits in 15-20 cities nationwide. Based on this pilot effort, we will ramp support to 60+ locations in 2010.

Lee Grossman and Santa Ernest at
Gatlinburg 3/09



We have also begun a national initiative in 2009 to support active duty wounded military service men and women, their families and support staff in 5 "Wounded Warrior" battalions across the USA. We hope to increase this to 15 battalion locations in 2010. In addition, we will refine our support of veterans and

Santa Dave Davis



In December of 2008, I had a very heart warming and humbling Santa Claus experience. It involved delivering meals for Mobile Meals of Toledo.

Carolyn Fox is the local director for Mobile Meals and I had previously offered a Santa Claus visit for their annual fall fund raising auction. Toward December I contacted Carolyn and she said it might be fun to have Santa deliver meals. So on December 19th, I donned the red suit and headed to downtown Toledo, Ohio. There I was greeted by the friendliest staff as well as an enthusiastic group of meal makers. Dennis the driver also had on a Santa hat. We loaded a dozen meals and off we went.

The greetings I received from the mobile meals participants was fantastic. I had my picture taken many times and was always welcome. I got lots of hugs and tears and thank yous and Merry Christmas' from people who would not have any other visitors for the holiday. Among the people were a blind man who didn't believe I was Santa. My ho ho ho, nor my ringing bells convinced him, but when he stroked my beard, a smile broke out and he said "You are Santa-Merry Christmas". I also had a woman who was having a tough day and she actually greeted me at the door with a "Who the hell are you?" After I told her I was Santa and had come to bring her the meal and a Merry Christmas. She shot back: "Can you fix my water?" (a water main had broken and the building was impacted) No I said, but I can offer you a hug and a Merry

their families in VA hospitals. Over 30 Santas and Mrs. Claus attending "Celebrate Santa" volunteered to support our military programs initiative. Santa Dave Jordan has agreed to serve as director of this initiative (see Santa Dave's article in this addition of "Weeble Words").

As important, over 20 new Santa America volunteers have joined our service team in 2009. More are joining every week as we have opened a new parallel path to hospice for both new and existing membership.....volunteering for a hospital with a pediatric program. There are now two ways to join Santa America: as a HOSPICE or HOSPITAL volunteer. As new Santas join Santa America, Elf Nita (see her following article) is working hard to insure every Santa data base is complete and up to date. As we join in national alliances, our credibility is paramount. We must continue to be exactly what we say we are. I recall Bill Ruger's famous ad: "Ride hard, shoot straight and tell the truth!"

Our donor development and funding model is also evolving. Santa America will be much more closely tied to the local donations raised by each local Santa. Our goal is: 80% of all funds raised as a result of locally planned fund raisers will be credited to the local Santa for use in restocking gifts and other Santa America items and program supplies and expenses used to support children in your geography. Nationally, we will continue to develop national PR, foundation, association and corporate relationships such as the "Autism Society of America, Wounded Warriors in Transition, Breast Cancer Research, Jewelers for Children, Christmas Tree Growers Association, Santa's Gift, the SA Traveling Art Show and on and on." Within our evolving funding model, we will thoughtfully change our current pattern of raising almost 90% of our funding in the last few months of every year.....then hanging on for the first 9-10 months of the following year! (Please see Santa John's words in his following articles)

Overall, we are an ever stronger and more committed team of 300+ volunteers dedicated to bringing Love, Hope and Joy to children with special needs and their families. Wear your Santa America Weeble pin everyday with pride in our commitment 365 days a year.

With Love Hope and Joy!
Santa Ernest

From Santa John

WOW!! What an incredibly hectic three months it has been. I am honored to be asked to be the executive director of Santa-America. This is clearly the pre-eminent volunteer Santa organization in the world. I am not able to do this job alone. At home, I am ably assisted by the Santa-America program director, my wife Helen. Elf Nita does a wonderful job of keeping the Santa records in line. Santa Ernest supplies the needed guidance for the direction we are taking. Elf Jason keeps our great web-site up to date. And we are in the process of adding Santa Dave Jordan as the National Director of Military Programs. (see article below). We have Celebrated Santa, announced an Alliance with the Autism Society of America (see below), welcomed Sheila Booth-Alberstadt and her wonderful book "An Angel in the Sky", and have been active in soliciting funds for the support of Santa-America. Please see the intro video on the Santa-America website by clicking [here](#).



Fundraising is a critical need year round. 90% of our donations arrive in December - not a very efficient way to operate a charity. We need funds year round. Please see article in this newsletter.

Thank you again for allowing me to help our most precious children and families at their time of greatest stress.

Christmas, and remind you that Hope is born again. She smiled and loosened up. Within 10 minutes she was laughing with me and thanking me for making her day better. There is a slideshow online [Here](#).

Important Announcement!!!

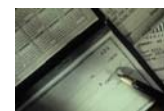
Santa-America announces a new route of entry into Santa-America. If you work with a hospital or pediatric organization and they administer a background check, a TB test, and HIIPA training, please submit your application along with the contact information for the agency you are working with, including the volunteer coordinator. Elf Nita will then process your application.

We look forward to welcoming you to Santa-America.

HELP PLEASE!!!

If you are member of a civic or charitable organization in your community, please contact Elf Nita to let her know. These organizations can be a wonderful source of funding for Santa-America. We will be updating the application to include this requested information.

Fund Raising and You



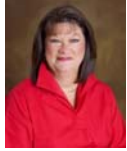
Santa-America operates entirely on donations. Some of these come from large foundations and companies. But most come from average folks in amounts of \$50 or less. How does this

If you have questions or comments, please write me at santaiohn@santa-america.org.

Love, Hope, and Joy wrapped in a hug 365 days a year,

Santa John

From Elf Nita ([contact me here](#))



Hello again, to all our Santa's, Mrs. Santa's and Elves. It's good to be back in circulation!!! Let me add my sincere congrats to Santa John Scheuch on becoming our new Executive Director and my heartfelt wishes to Cathy Barnette in her future endeavors. I look forward to working with John and certainly enjoyed my association with Cathy.

At the beginning of this New Year, it was decided that we need to take a look and make sure all who represent our wonderful organization are compliant with our mission's requirements to be called a Santa-America Santa. Meaning that each of you, has been Hospice/hospital trained, back ground checked and TB tested, by the hospice/hospital you have chosen to work with and that information has been forwarded to me. Remember, the things I need in your folders for you to be compliant are those three things and your completed application. If you are on our Santa Map and have not completed your folder, I will be emailing you to do so as soon as possible. If your email address or any contact numbers have changed, please get them to me, if they are wrong, I won't be able to get in contact with you. If you are already on our map and have not completed your folder and don't respond to any emails sent this month, we will have no recourse but to remove you from our Santa Map by June 30, 2009. If you haven't gotten to that point yet (not on the map yet), please call or email, and we'll work together to get you compliant as quickly as possible. As well as removing unresponsive Santa's from our map, we'll also be retiring incomplete folders of Santa's not on the map yet until we hear from you.

It is very important for the credibility of our organization, that we are who we say we are. That is, Santa-America is a registry of Santa's who are trained adult volunteers with a hospice/hospital organization in their own community, who visit terminally or chronically ill children, their parents and siblings, children of military families in crisis or any patient of a hospice or hospital who needs a warm, loving hug and a smile from jolly ole' Santa 365 days a year. A hospice/hospital volunteer has to be trained, back grounded and TB tested before being allowed to visit their patients. That's what we base our compliance requirements on and all who represent Santa-America must adhere to those guidelines. We must adhere to that to maintain our credibility in the medical community and the families that we serve.

We sure don't want to have to remove anyone from our map, so please, get your information to me or call/email with problems where I might be of help to you. I'm always here to contact a hospice to "enlighten" them about our philosophy and help smooth the process for you. This is really important to our organization, so please let me hear from you soon.

On a brighter note, wasn't Celebrate Santa amazing!!!! For me, one of the best things from that meeting was to meet face to face all of you that I speak with or email. It was wonderful to put faces to voices and get/give a hug to the amazing people who do the great work of Santa-America. For those of you who didn't make it this year - try for 2010. The Celebrate Santa "team" works hard all year to give us a great meeting, so do yourselves a favor and "be there".

With Love, Hope and Joy from,

apply to you?

We need your help, **locally** in soliciting funds from your local Rotary, Lions, Elks, or other service organization you may belong to. Offer to speak to the group about your work with special children and the mission of Santa-America. There are tools and presentations on the website for you to use. ([click here for those resources](#))

Other options include a raffle for a free Santa visit. You can get printable raffle tickets at an office supply store. Print these and sell at \$5 each, 6 for \$25. Winner of the drawing gets a home visit from Santa for up to 12 children. The donations would be tax deductible. ([click here for link to blanks](#))

Do you know of any businesses, including your place of employment, that make donations to charity? Do you have connections to any national company that makes charitable contributions?

We also have HUGS and books for sale for your "leave behinds" when you visit children and families. HUGS are \$6 each, An Angel in the Sky books are \$10 each. Please stock up now.

How does fundraising benefit you? 80% of all funds attributable to you are credited to you. For example, If you raise or send in \$100, you get credit for \$80 to be spent on Santa-America items (HUGS, books, brochures, etc. for you to use in your community). The other 20% is used to support the organization overhead

Elf Nita

(newsletters, internet, website, etc.).

Celebrate Santa

For those of you who attended Celebrate Santa in Gatlinburg, no description is needed. For those who were unable to attend, no description can possibly deliver the impact it had on everyone.



During Celebrate Santa we announced an alliance with the Autism Society of America. Their President, Lee Grossman, and one of their advisory board members, Brenda Smith-Myles, were in attendance and made presentations to our members. We trained 60 Santas on special techniques to deal with children with autism.

We also presented a program on working with the military. From that, we are moving forward with Santa Dave Jordan leading our efforts with the military.

Elf Nita and Elf Elizabeth helped recruit new Santas into Santa-America. Our cadre of volunteer Santas continues to grow.

Santa-America was well represented and supported in many ways. Thanks to everyone, especially Joe and Mary Moore, for the donations and auction to benefit Santa-America, to Phil Wenz for the Santa Oath plaque support, to Dave Mattson and Dave Jordan who pitched in when we hit a wall, and to all who offered prayers and support during a difficult time for Santa Ernest and Santa John.

So please, help us with your financial support as well.

Santa Oath and Santa-America

The author of the Santa Claus Oath, Phil Wenz, and Santa-America would like to announce that Santa-America will be the official charity of the Santa Oath. We can't begin to express our thanks to Phil for this great honor. [Click Here for Oath details](#). We will be developing some new Oath items together to help raise funds for Santa-America. Stay tuned for more details.



Our Alliance Partner



Autism Society of America.
improving the lives of all affected by autism

[Visit](#)

[them here!](#)

Autism Alliance



In March we announced an alliance with the Autism Society of America. This alliance will allow us together to create a complete program of preparation, scheduling, staging, and training for Santas and the local autism chapters. For 2009, 20 local chapters will be identified and we will focus our efforts to do these programs according to a specific protocol. We will then "tweek" the program for 2010. We owe a big "Thank You" to Lee Grossman, President and CEO of the Autism Society on America, and his entire staff.

Santa Ernest, Elf Helen, and Santa John will be attending the ASA conference in Chicago, IL in July. This will allow us to meet with the chapters and begin the process of selection for 2009. If you have connections with the ASA chapter where you live, please let us know ([respond here](#)).

Please review the "deliverable" items posted on the website at www.Santa-America.org. Look in the Resources section. Click [here](#) to see the press release from ASA and Santa-America

Celebrate Santa Photos



Santa John, Elf Nita,
Santa Ernest



Santa-America
Motorcycle and sidecar

Wounded Warriors by Dave Jordan



Santa Ernest Berger and Santa Dave Jordan recently visited Ft. Gordon and the Eisenhower Army Medical Center in Augusta, GA to kick off the new Military Support Program for Santa-America. The active duty Wounded Warrior Transition Battalion as well as retired components, were enthusiastic in their acceptance of Santa-America's concept for assisting our wounded warriors and their families. See picture below of Santa Ernest, Santa Dave, and Laurie Ott at Ft. Gordon.



This program offers Santa's who are uncomfortable or unable to work with the Hospice aspect of our organization an alternative service program that is equally important in providing needed services. Please remember that "Freedom is Not Free". This program

offers us a very unique opportunity to show our appreciation for the sacrifices given as well as allowing us to demonstrate our motto of "Love, Hope and Joy" towards these special men and women and their families.

The next issue of Weeble Words will explain what our focus is for this program as well as many other interesting details.

For any Santa's located in the United States who are interested in participating in this program (or acquiring additional information) please contact:

Santa Dave Jordan
 ph: 803-327-9469
 cell: 803-493-0711
 email: santadave@santa-america.org

Donate Now

Santa-America survives based on donations. These donations are used to cover the cost of giveaways (HUGS, books, pins, etc.). Please consider purchasing your supplies for the upcoming season early. This will help us through the "desert" of slow donations in the summer months. Go to www.santa-america.org for details.

See our list of items available. We are adding more all the time.



Santa-Ernest with Santa Carl Burke and Mrs Claus, Anne Burke



Santa John presenting a HUG to Tom Monroe at the Holly and Shamrock Parade

Santa John and Elf Helen at Jewelers for Children Foundation Meeting

As I write this, the final article, we have just returned last night from the Jewelers for Children annual meeting. We had a chance to make a short presentation to the foundation that has contributed generously to Santa-America in the past, and that continues to help us deliver Love, Hope, and Joy to our children. As we have all experienced, the economy has caused many organizations to pull back to keep within their budget. JFC is no different, and while they are still supporting Santa-America, there level of support has shrunk a bit. We will have an opportunity to work with this great foundation to raise funds on a local and regional basis. I will fill in more

information as it
becomes available.

Santa John and Elf
Helen