

A 501(c)
Dedicated
To The
Professional
Claus



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CHRISTMAS 2020: Will Santa Be There?



ASKING THE EXPERTS

SPOILER ALERT:
EVERYBODY Is Still Figuring This Out...

EDITORIAL THANKS GO TO:

- **St. Tim Connaghan**,
"National Santa" / "IUSC"
- **St. Ed Taylor**, Founder of
"The Santa Claus Conservatory"
- **St. Joe "Mystic" McGrievy**
"Real Santas of San Diego" /
"2020 Founders Awardee"
- **St. Robert "True" Seutter**,
Storyteller Extraordinaire /
"Performing For Christmas Folk"
- **Gina Bacon**, Founder
"Nationwide Santas"
- **St. Rick Rosenthal**, Founder
"Northern Lights Santa Academy"

JBC Publisher St. Ric Erwin

Not since the darkest hours of World War II or the depths of the Great Depression has such a question been asked by so many sane & sober adults.

And of course we realize it's not a top priority right now for many millions of Americans...

Still, almost every Claus has a story or twenty about the kid who asks nothing for himself, but wants Daddy to get a job. Or an abuela to get better, or a sibling to be safe overseas, or (insert personal favorite here).

This is because, to the young at heart, Santa is very image of Faith, Hope & Charity—and that's during the GOOD times! For most, **times aren't good.**



We ALL wanna help, but how?

All of us are wondering what Christmas 2020 will look like—but America's never faced such a "catastrophe trifecta" before, so there's little guidance right now for the majority of us...

Some will transition to mainly online visits— either with their legacy clients, on behalf of an app or agency, or by marketing themselves locally via the web.

Me? I find myself firmly in the "Sleigh Half Full" camp...yes, America faces unprecedented existential threats right now. But we are STILL America— UNITED, WE CAN'T LOSE!

3 promising vaccines entered mass testing recently and many remaining social restrictions may be lifting by Christmas.

If past is prologue, American families will do what it takes to end a bad year on a good note!

In this edition, the titans of the professional Santa World try to look ahead & predict just what Christmas 2020 might be like...

Christmas 2020 Is Gonna Be A Challenge For Santa: Perhaps The Greatest ANY Of Us Have Ever Faced... So, You Know What THAT Means:

WE HAVE NEVER BEEN NEEDED MORE!!

FORBS is fortunate indeed to be led & supported by the best and the brightest of the Real Bearded Santa World—we formed the first 501(c) Santa fraternity, established professional benefits, and pioneered Santa insurance! And in '09, GOT SANTA VACCINATED FIRST, AGAINST H1N1:

The collage includes several news articles and CDC pages. At the top left is a CDC page titled "Influenza (Flu)" with a sub-header "Pandemic Influenza". Below it is a CDC page titled "Vaccination of Tier 1" with a sub-header "Pandemic Basics". To the right is a news article from npr.com titled "Santa Claus lobby for A/H1N1 shots!" with a sub-header "Virus threatens Santa Claus; North Pole will not be returned". Below this is a news article from CCTV.com titled "Santa Wants Swine Flu Vaccine For Christmas". To the right of this is a news article from the Washington Post titled "Santa Demands The Swine Flu Vaccine". Below this is a news article from the Washington Post titled "Santa Requests Consideration for Priority H1N1 Vaccination". To the right of this is a news article from the Washington Post titled "Santa wants the swine flu vaccine." Below this is a news article from the Washington Post titled "Better not cough: Santas press for H1N1 flu shots". To the right of this is a news article from the Washington Post titled "The line is forming for a COVID-19 vaccine. Who will be at the front?".

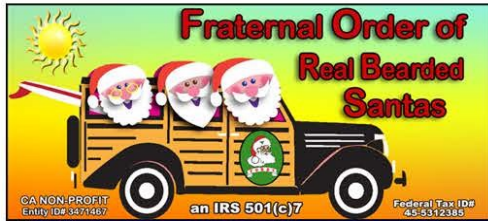
The CDC page titled "Influenza (Flu)" shows the "2009 H1N1 Pandemic Timeline". The timeline includes the following events:

- November 12: CDC released its first estimates of official estimates of 2009 H1N1 cases, hospitalization and deaths.
- Late October: Second wave of H1N1 flu activity peaked in the U.S.
- November 23: No school closures throughout United States; first time since 8/25/2009.
- November 16: FDA announced its approval of a fifth 2009 H1N1 vaccine.
- December: Results of trials conducted among adults were published in December, and the data indicated that the immune response among vaccinated adults was excellent.
- December 4: CDC published preliminary safety results for the 2009 H1N1 vaccines for the first months of reports received through the U.S. Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS).
- December 18: First 100 million doses of 2009 H1N1 vaccine were available for ordering.
- Late December: 2009 H1N1 vaccination had been opened up to anyone who wanted it.

A red arrow points from the "December 18" event to the text at the bottom of the page:

**Armed ONLY with FORBS' letter
(sent to the CDC, FDA, HHS & NFID),
I received my vaccination on November 18th**

Over A Decade Later & FORBS **STILL** Has Your Back!



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Saturday, August 1, 2020

Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP)

National Institute of Medicine (NIM) / U.S. Centers For Disease Control (CDC)

Greetings & Felicitations from our nation's front-line Seasonal Workers.

I am St. Ric Erwin, and I am proud to serve as Chairman of the Board of Directors for the Fraternal Order of Real Bearded Santas (FORBS)— a 501(c)7 dedicated to the professional Claus and those who perform with him during the Holidays.

We are the Founders of the modern, Real-Bearded Santa World, and our annual Santa Reunion in January (now in its 27th year) is generally considered to be the Santa World's birthday party...

In 2009, our fraternity successfully petitioned the U.S. government to extend priority access for an H1N1 swine flu vaccination to professional Santas & other seasonal performers; this was based upon numerous factors, not least of which was our demographic's general inclusion on the list of "Most-At-Risk" individuals due to advanced age, as well as co-morbidity factors from underlying health issues.

Furthermore, health care officials all concurred that our high rate of interpersonal contact with young children (who are notorious vectors for disease dissemination) further highlighted our need for the vaccine.

2020 will be remembered by everyone in this country as the worst year in memory—if not our entire history; should a vaccine be approved by December, it is the overwhelming consensus of the entire Christmas Community—those Seasonal front-line workers who facilitate the Holidays for millions of Americans each year-- that IT BE MADE AVAILABLE TO SANTA IMMEDIATELY. Only then might we safely rescue just the tiniest bit of happiness for 2020: **during the Holidays!!**

In this epic Year of Living Dangerously, once front-line medical personnel are fully protected, PLEASE MAKE SANTA CLAUS & CHRISTMAS 2020 A NATIONAL HEALTH PRIORITY— especially when viewed from the perspective of our country's MENTAL health...

This year, Christmas will be even more important than it was a decade ago, during H1N1— because collectively, America has lost much, much more this time...

Thank you.

St. Ric Erwin, Chairman

FORBS Board of Directors

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WE ARE IN THIS TOGETHER!!

Another popular option gaining rapidly this year, seems to be the use of chromakey (“green screen”) photo sets. Photographers can take photos of guests sitting on a special set—and when the photo is printed, they will see themselves sitting in the back of Santa’s sleigh, flying through the sky—and Santa’s waving from the front seat!!

There are lots of variations: they could magically be in a living room with Santa outside in the snow, gazing at them lovingly through a frosty window pane; or the guests might be peeking through the window, into the room where Santa is putting gifts under the tree. In all of these, a picture frame is added to the photo electronically.

Other malls have built creative sets, ranging from simple sleighs the family can sit in, to elaborate comical sets with theatrical props: for example, at Paseo Colorado in Pasadena, Santa has crashed his sleigh, and all we see are his legs and boots sticking out of a snow mound—with the hind end of a reindeer sticking out of another!

Still other photo sets have not a real Santa, but a life-sized resin statue or photo cut-out of Santa—back in the 1950’s some retail store sets had Santa cut-outs, and they’re already being sold this year again, on the internet.

FINAL ADVICE FOR IN-PERSON SANTAS

Everyone (including Santas) should consult with their health care provider regarding ways to strengthen their own body’s regular defenses against the flu, colds and even pneumonia. Make sure that you follow any health guidelines regarding social distancing & interaction, are vaccinated against the flu, and seek early access to vaccination protection against COVID-19.

Finally, here are some ways to protect Santa & Mrs. Claus, children and families, and everyone we come in contact with during the holiday season:

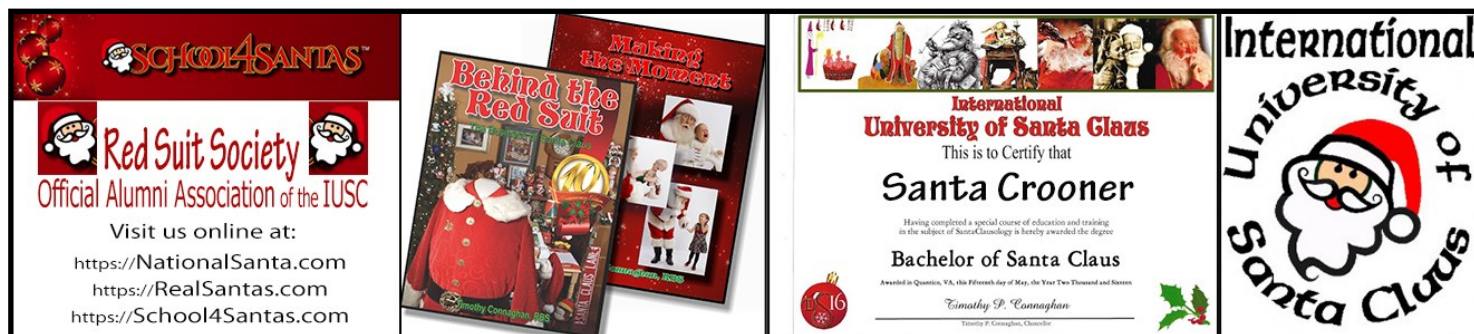
1. Take care of yourself BEFORE the season arrives! Think of it as “Santa Preventive Maintenance”: Eat well, exercise & get plenty of sleep.
2. Keep Santa’s work area clean & germ free. Have hand sanitizer for all guests, both children and adults; surfaces are wiped down periodically.
3. Everyone on the set must be trained to detect symptomatic guests, and protocols should be clearly posted for dealing with them (move them away from others, for starters). Use non-contact temperature checks for guests before entering the set (or even getting in line for the set).
4. Have plenty of alcohol-based sanitizer spray for soft surfaces and use it on your fur, velvet & gloves if you are coughed or sneezed upon—you can even use it on your beard, in an emergency!
5. Santa should have plenty of extra gloves—do change them often and sanitize them frequently.



10 years ago, Sears & Walmart promos featured life-sized cut-outs of myself

By following these simple suggestions & other advice from public health officials, hopefully we can all make it through the upcoming Holiday Season without sacrificing our health—nor that of our clients & colleagues.

This & other info on my webinars for the professional Claus may be found on my web sites, **NationalSanta.com** and **RealSantas.com**. Search “Webinars” for a page with information & links to view on Facebook or YouTube.



*{FORBS officially recognizes St. Tim Connaghan as **Founder Of The Modern Santa World**; he's **Alumni Ambassador for the Santa Claus Hall Of Fame** & all the best Santas in the world line up for his **International University of Santa Claus**}*

{Editor’s Note: FORBS has formally petitioned the CDC & NIM for Tier-1 vaccination access for Santas}

*"I believe we
Clauses can, in a
very real way,
'save' Christmas
this year."*



St. Ed Taylor

On April 9th this year, at 3:35 in the afternoon, my vision for the 2020 Santa season changed.

I was hosting the first Worldwide Santa Claus Summit. Hundreds of Santas from around the world were attending this 6-hour virtual summit... at 3:30 I introduced the 5 panelists for our "Videos & Video Chats – hardware, software & more" discussion... as the 4th panelist, Santa Brandon Fiscus shared his webcam, we all saw him sitting in his breathtaking North Pole home. The fireplace was flickering and occasionally crackling, snow was gently falling outside the huge windows, and there sat Santa Claus, Santa Brandon Fiscus.

In a mere moment my focus was redirected and since then my daily activities have changed.

Almost instantly, I dropped my plans for the next 3 months and started down a new path.

Immediately I started watching YouTube videos and learning all I could about "chroma-key" & how to use green screen technology. I learned about an incredibly robust, and FREE, "studio software" program. I purchased and learned how to set-up the lights and sound. My wife, who is a professional artist, designed a 'video background' of what was to become our North Pole home, this way we could get the look and the coloring that was best for this technology, and also avoid any copyright issues.

60 days later on June 4th, through the Santa Claus Conservatory, I offered a 6-week "How to Create & Market Extraordinary Virtual Visits" course to our 3,000+ members. More than 100 Santas from the US, Canada, UK and Australia enrolled. We shared experiences and coached one another on this new way of conducting Santa & Mrs. Claus visits.

The last of those live sessions was July 16th... and now Santas worldwide are watching these sessions on-demand.

The past 4 months have been whirlwind!

Now several hundred Santas & Mrs. Clauses can produce AMAZING "Virtual Visits" and that number is growing every week. I'm VERY concerned that the Santa community is going to fall well short of the demand for these types of visits and that means children that want to visit with Santa Claus could be denied the opportunity this year.

Yes, this technology allows us to do some fantastic things, but it can also be overwhelming.

This is where it gets almost unbelievable, a serendipitous fall into my lap if you will...

On June 17th, out of nowhere (more accurately, out of a Google search), I get an email from a company I had never heard of called JingleRing.

Over the next few weeks, emails became phone calls, and before long I'm signing a Mutual Non-Disclosure Agreement because the more I learn about JingleRing, the more impressed I become.

Here's the beauty of JingleRing; it's 'turn-key.' They actually loan you a fully loaded Dell laptop computer. In addition to all of the necessary software, it even has a built-in 'tech portal' so the tech-support team can remotely troubleshoot any problems that may arise.

JingleRing does the marketing, the sales, the scheduling, delivers the video recording to the family, etc... Santa's only responsibility is to deliver magical visits with the children!

The JingleRing marketing partnerships are amazing. The product is most extraordinary; and the compensation plan for Santas is excellent; the team, the founders -- all of them are incredibly impressive.

I'm now officially part of the JingleRing team. I'm helping to spread the word about JingleRing to the worldwide network of Santas and Mrs. Clauses. I'm also providing training for all of the JingleRing Santas and I will be one of their Brand Ambassadors.

On Thursday, July 23rd, exactly 105 days since Santa Brandon showed me and the worldwide

(continued from Page 3)

network of Santas his use of a green screen, I was hosting a Zoom meeting introducing JingleRing.

As I write this, less than 48 hours after the “JingleRing Intro Session,” hundreds of Santas are signing up to be considered for the JingleRing Santa Team. Early projections are that JingleRing will hire 250 - 350 Santas this season & some Mrs. Clauses, as well.

Then, on July 22nd the **JustBeClaus!** editorial staff asked me to “...share your insights regarding the upcoming Holiday Season-- which portends to be among the most challenging in living memory. Please tell us about your own plans for this year, share any advice you can think of with our readership (mostly professional Clauses), and, most importantly, share premium & access information regarding your professional resource library for the professional Claus...”

While I haven’t shared any “insights,” I have shared exactly what I’ve been doing. I hope that from this you may garner some insights which you find useful. My advice would be to follow your heart.

I believe we Clauses can, in a very real way, ‘save’ Christmas this year.

While some Santas have already thrown in the towel, others seem stunned and overwhelmed. Some Santas are picking themselves up, reinventing themselves, spending a little money, experiencing a little frustration, and emerging out the other side ready to meet the challenges of Santa Season 2020. They’re ready, willing, and able to serve the families and the children in a Santa Season that, as the editors stated might just be “among the most challenging in living memory.”

While for many Santa ‘virtual visits’ may come in a distant second place behind in-person visits, these ‘virtual visits’ just may be the saving grace for Christmas 2020 & perhaps Christmas 2021 too.

Personally, I see ‘virtual visits’ almost as an obligation.

I expect that there will be more families— and far more children— who want to visit Santa virtually than there will be Santas available to accommodate this demand... that saddens me... and it kind of sickens me.

I can’t help but feel that Santa, and what Santa represents, has never been more important than it will be this Christmas season... I know this, because of all that I have learned in the last 100 days, and because of hundreds of other Santa doing the same.

I just think it’s incredibly fortunate that we still have time to learn what we need to know, to provide this incredibly important service this season... and I’m also very happy that we now have JingleRing to help Santas who don’t want to mess with all of the technology, the marketing, the scheduling, billing, etc.

So, as I said earlier, my advice is simply this, follow your heart. If you’re at all like me you love what Santa Claus represents, the inspiration he provides, and the smiles he brings.

Learn all you can about providing ‘virtual visits’ this year.

You can do that at The Santa Claus Conservatory dot com! A lot of useful information, including all 3 of our [Worldwide Santa Claus Summits](#), is available there for FREE to our members.

For members of our Copper & higher levels, we have a full 7-Session Course on “How to Conduct & Market An Extraordinary Virtual Visit”, and members of the Silver and higher levels even get this video background, the one my wife designed, free as a part of their membership.

One more thing, with JingleRing it looks very possible for mall/retail Santas to earn as much, and maybe even more than they’ve earned in prior years.

Also, for Santas who are more accustomed to doing home & company parties, doing their own marketing, etc., there are now opportunities with video technology that simply have not been available in prior years. These opportunities include making ‘social media videos’ for small businesses in your community... and so much more.

All of this can help us spread the joy of the Christmas Spirit, it can pay well, and it can keep you and families safe this holiday season.

Learn more at <https://the-santa-claus-conservatory.com/>

{St. Ed Taylor is widely considered to be THE premier expert in the Santa World on digital training & development of practical multi-platform applications for the professional Claus. His “[Member Resource Library](#)” is best in the world}



Interview With St. Joe McGrievy

Today We Pick The Brain
Of THREE Of The Best
Entertainers In SoCal...

⇒ **How have the San Diego Santas fared during the coronavirus pandemic?**

The number of contacts we are seeing each month has dwindled. I do not hear of sick Santas, but many are quarantining themselves. I started having meetings on Zoom but many of our Santas are not tech-savvy. Also due to the virus, our annual Santa's Special Delivery fundraiser for had to be cancelled. Sadly this inevitably will result in fewer families being helped this Christmas.

⇒ **How has your chapter had to modify operations in order to accommodate public health officials?**

As I said, we are meeting by Zoom. No restaurants can accommodate us and many of the Santas wouldn't come to a meeting until there is a vaccine.

⇒ **You've been mentoring San Diego Santas for some time now, including offering free regularly-scheduled classes to newer Santas, I believe; how has that been affected?**

Yes, the classes have been free but this year I will either have to limit the number of Santas in a class and keep them spaced or do classes by Zoom. If I do classes in person, we will record them for the others that want to view them.



⇒ **Looking ahead to the Season, let us assume that we have either a reliable treatment, or a vaccine which is made available to Santas by December: do you think you will book yourself for in-person appearances this year?**

That is based on how I view the dangers. If a vaccine is shown to be effective, I will visit as normal. As you know, I am set up to do virtual visits if it is most prudent.

⇒ **If yes, have you discussed with any of your clients how those appearances may differ, this year?**

No, since I do not have any firm decisions as yet.

⇒ **If we DON'T have that treatment or vaccine by early December: are you preparing to transition your clients toward a "touch-free" encounter?**

Yes, including visits by Zoom.

⇒ **What else can you think of which might help the rest of us get a handle on dealing with the most unique Holiday Season EVER?**

Boy scout's motto. "Be Prepared". Be prepared for any contingency. I have spent a lot of time preparing with virtual visits, but it may turn out to be not necessary, but I am prepared if it is.

⇒ **Finally, if a Santa decides that he will err on the side of caution & NOT PERFORM at all this year: how proactive would you advise them to be in notifying legacy clients of their decision... should they tell them NOW— or wait to see who wants Santa at their party this year? Are you taking solid bookings right now, or in locking dates— dependent upon future developments...?**

If a Santa makes that decision, I think he should inform his clients so they can prepare for Christmas knowing that Santa will not be there. If they're long time clients, he might find out how the family's doing & make a virtual recording in lieu of in-person visit this year— the client could leave a bag of toys outside, and Santa could tell the kids to pause the video and go look outside the door! They'll find Santa's Bag full of presents, and a nice note about staying safe by wearing a mask when Mom says...



FORBS highest honor is the FOUNDERS AWARD— St. Joe "Mystic" McGrievy was so recognized at the 2020 Santa Reunion, which was hosted this past January at the beautiful DANA Resort by the group he himself started many years ago!

On behalf of hundreds of professional Santas who St. Joe Mystic helped be better through the years:

Thank You!

Christmas Comes Once A Year... NO MATTER WHAT

by St. Rick Rosenthal, Founder
Northern Lights Santa Academy
and owner of the Atlanta-based
National Santa Agency



What will Christmas look like this year, in the age of COVID-19?

While safety protocols have always been a priority for Christmas performers, this year we are faced with unprecedented health challenges. Below we share suggestions to help keep the true spirit of the season uninterrupted, by taking additional precautions designed to keep everyone safe.

Prescreening is key, and we recommend preparing a list of questions that you will expect to be asked of all visitors by your client. Discuss this with your client in advance of the event, and then follow up with a detailed email of the protocol you and your client have agreed upon.

At the event, guests should be screened as they enter the venue, but out of view of Santa in case guests must be turned away. The screening process should include temperature-checks, preferably using a no-touch thermometer, as well as a guest questionnaire to assess potential COVID-19 risk.

Some questions for this pre-screening process might include:

- Have you, or someone you live or work with, tested positive for COVID-19?
- Are you, or anyone you live or work with, exhibiting symptoms of illness?
- Have you traveled out of the state or by airplane within the past 14 days?
- Have you been practicing social distancing?
- Do you wear a mask when you leave your home?
- Do you wash your hands when you return home?

Should a guest have a fever, exhibit symptoms of illness, or not meet the screening questions criteria, the guest should not be permitted to visit Santa. Santa should not be involved in turning a guest away. That should be the role of your client. It is still possible, after pre-screening, that a sick guest may slip through the cracks, so Santa should be prepared to “walk away” to handle an emergency at the North Pole if Santa feels a sick guest has approached him.

Your client should provide guests with hand sanitizer & ask guests to sanitize their hands immediately before visiting with Santa. We recommend that Santa not wear white gloves this season so he can likewise sanitize his own hands between guests. Additionally, all seating surfaces & other high-touch areas should be wiped down with disinfectant between guests or families.

*Santa should never
be involved in turning
a guest away.*

*That should be the
role of your client.*



For Santa photos, in lieu of a Santa chair, you can limit direct contact by using a couch for guests, with Santa positioned standing behind the couch. This way, guests and Santa aren't breathing into each other's faces; sadly, direct contact (such as hugs) must also be politely discouraged throughout the visit or event.

Finally, while face masks may seem strange for taking a picture with Santa, we see it as creating a memory of an unusual time in our lives. We do NOT feel that seeing Santa in a mask will take away the children's excitement. Although it will be a bit different, we believe children should be reassured that the magic of Christmas is alive and well, and that we can safely enjoy a memorable Santa visit— EVEN DURING CHALLENGING TIMES .

Visit them online at: <https://northernlightssantaacademy.com>



As performers, we are in a weird marathon, the goal of which is to avoid getting infected before a viable vaccine becomes available. Plus, during the season, we are still doing our best to bring Christmas Joy

by the safest means possible. Best case scenario? There could be a vaccine by the first quarter of 2021. As a community, we are mostly “At-Risk,” so we’ll probably be towards the front of the line.

Where does that leave us? Virtual visits and incredibly careful social distancing visits, if we are smart. As far as the COVID-19 virus is concerned, it’s a 1-2-3 punch.

First, if you catch it, you can accidentally spread it. Second, it can leave lasting damage to your body and finances. Third, it can be lethal, and we have already lost members of our community to it. However, the US has dealt with plagues, wars, and depressions before. We will get through this, and the season will be diminished. But please remember this key phrase: “It’s not about us.” We are going to err on the side of safety because we love our clients and each other.

Home visits and mall gigs will be even more challenging. For instance, what if someone working on a mall set shows signs of being sick? Will the employer get them immediately tested, with quick test results available? With Santa, is this a fever, or just the result of being a chubby guy, wearing 35 lbs. of fur and velvet on a very warm set? If the flag goes up, will you be sent “home” to quarantine for 14 days in a hotel? And will someone be provided to take care of you? Will you be getting paid during that quarantine? If one of your mall Elves, starts coughing, will they immediately shut down the line, shut down the set, and send home the waiting customers, and sterilize everything?

Consider the home visit. Now we will probably need a COVID waiver, releasing everyone from responsibility, along with our normal contract. You could be shedding the virus and be unaware. And we all know clients who have insisted that we show up regardless who is sick. What will be the impact if you get infected, and it turns out you may have infected others? Imagine calling all those clients you visited with that news and their reaction. Simply put, we really don’t want, “Plague Santa infects hundreds,” on your local news at 11.

Many of our colleagues are moving ahead with “Plan B”—creating Virtual Visits and Customized Pre-Recorded messages. They are setting up their own little studios, with some fantastic

A Christmas Season Full of Paradox

by St. Robert Seutter (a/k/a “St. True”)

OBS backgrounds (virtual scenery). However, many people in our community are not all that technical. Upgrading your home technology is not easy or cheap. Getting a blue screen, camera, microphone, setting up great lighting, and having the space for a video set up requires a budget and work. In my case, my new set-up is not virtual, rather I’ve built out tiny interactive set with props for “Santa’s Secret Study.” There are also companies booking Christmas Performers for online visits that can help folks find clients and get online.

However, just having the set and the technology does not complete your preparation for wowing the small screen. Consider focusing on your performance for the screen, good scripts to use for pre-recorded messages, and plenty of material to weave into your live performances. This is the best time to reach out to others for coaching, help, and info. Remember the fanciest background in the world is just sizzle for your presence. Your face tells the story.

Here in California, we still have the added whammy of dealing with AB5 state legislation. The law is still in effect. If you earn more than \$600 on a 1099 tax form, the company that hired you is at risk of fines from the CA EDD for not making you a payroll employee. The ABC rule in AB5 is nearly impossible to satisfy. Even if you have a personal LLC in place, many of our clients may not want to risk hiring us as independent contractors. This could significantly affect Mall Santas and anyone doing longer gigs, or corporate client appearances. Likewise, if you are put on payroll, there are far fewer deductions for your tax filing. And there are questions: Does a client who hires you as an employee keep the photo rights for your appearance? If you create new stories or songs, or content, an employer could try to claim those, while you are under their employ.

Learn about the details of AB5 and how to push back, regardless which political policies you support. We need every independent contractor and performer involved. Get active, get vocal, our livelihood as performers depends on it. How long will it be before independent contractors leave the state or move to underground markets? It’s already happening.

This year is rough: We will need to adapt, be careful, and very creative. I recommend cancelling all in-person appearances unless you are absolutely certain of everyone’s safety. No one wants to be put on a ventilator. Focus on virtual video visits. Create ways to interact with children and clients, like from a store window display or other sets that keeps children from running to give you a hug. And avoid spending time in close with crowds, in enclosed places.

The pandemic and our state laws have forced so much change upon our daily lives and our upcoming Christmas season. The more we work with one another, find innovations, and share our ideas, the better we can support ourselves and each other. Then we can do what we do best: Share a bit of magic and joy in a world that truly needs us. — True

“...If It's THIS Fun, It Can't Be HOMEWORK, Right?...”

If you are putting together your own research library, here are some excellent books for the expert Christmas Performer.

The Battle for Christmas, by Stephen Nissenbaum, ISBN 0-679-74038-4 – Probably one of the best books on understanding Christmas in America.

Santa Claus, Last of the Wild Men, by Phyllis Siefker, ISBN 978-0-7864-2958-5 – Good for an in-depth understanding the early roots of the Santa Tradition.

When Santa was a Shaman, by Tony van Renterghem, ISBN 1-56718-765-X – Kind of all over the place, but the pull-out timeline and drawings are cool.

Americas Favorite Holidays, Candid Histories, by Bruce David Forbes, ISBN 978-0-520-28472-2 – One of the best explanations of how we got to where we are today.

Merry Christmas, by Karal Ann Marling, ISBN 0-674-00679-8 – An odd book, which focuses entirely on the history of various common Christmas-related products. Not an easy read, but interesting.

Christmas Curiosities (a picture book) by John Grossman, ISBN 978-1-58479-699-2 – The pictures in this book really show you how varied our history is!

We were marching on Christmas Day, by Kevin Rawlings, ISBN 0-9612670-4-6 – Santa and the Civil war: An eye opening book about the evolution of both.



Inventing Christmas, how our Holiday came to be, by Jock Elliott, ISBN 0-8109-3493-0 – A little light on the research, but the photos and the many drawings are amazing.

Encyclopedia of Christmas & New Year's Celebrations, by Tanya Gulevich, ISBN 0-7808-0625-5 – This is a great, pick it up, read a bit, put it down book, and a good resource.

Saint Nicholas of Myra, Bari, and Manhattan, by Charles W. Jones. ISBN 0-226-40699-7 – What a slog of a book. But, if you want to know the

actual miracles associated with Nicholas and see some of the truly odd turns his legend took, it's worth tediously chewing through.

Thomas Nast's Christmas Drawings (a picture book), Intro by Thomas Nast St. Hill, ISBN 0-486-23660-9 – If you want to see one of the main influences on the Santa Legend, you need this book.

The Book of Christmas, (from the Enchanted World/Time Life book series) by Brendan Lehane ISBN 0-8094-5261-8 – It has taken me many years to get the whole series together and, as a storyteller, they are one of my most beloved possessions. The Book of Christmas is hard to find in good shape, but beautifully done. Lovely stories and illustrations.

*Nobody wants their party
to risk anybody's health
—not THIS year...”*

Gina Bacon

“This Year, Santa Is Up In The Air...”

We interviewed Gina Bacon by phone for this Special Edition of **JustBeClaus!**

She's the driving force behind the growth & continuing success of Las Vegas-based **Nationwide Santas**—providers of Santas & other holiday characters, to hundreds of malls, shopping centers, corporate & media events, as well as private family parties, neighborhood festivals & regional or local fundraisers.



“I guess we shouldn't be surprised,” Bacon said, regarding the unique challenges facing the Christmas Community as we try to prepare for the 2020 Holidays. “Since January, this has been a year unlike any other— but who could have guessed that seven months later, things wouldn't be under control by now?”

While **Nationwide Santas'** protocols prevent early public disclosure of details like client names & locations under discussion, she didn't bother trying to hide her relief while revealing that she had finally reached tentative agreement with a major national account earlier that same day— a nail-biting SIX MONTHS later than usual: and this year, they have more “IF” & “UNLESS” clauses than ever!

“Not surprisingly in a year this bad, EVERYBODY wants to be as proactive as possible in providing as much holiday cheer as prevailing conditions will allow... but nobody wants to their party to risk anybody's health— not THIS year...”

**Fraternal Order of Real Bearded Santas
(FORBS) "FOUNDERS of the SANTA WORLD"**

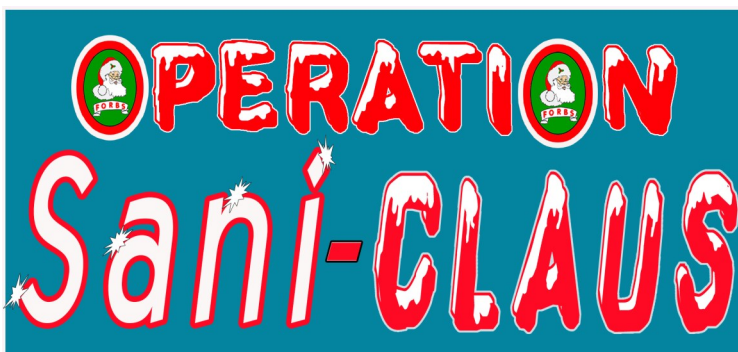
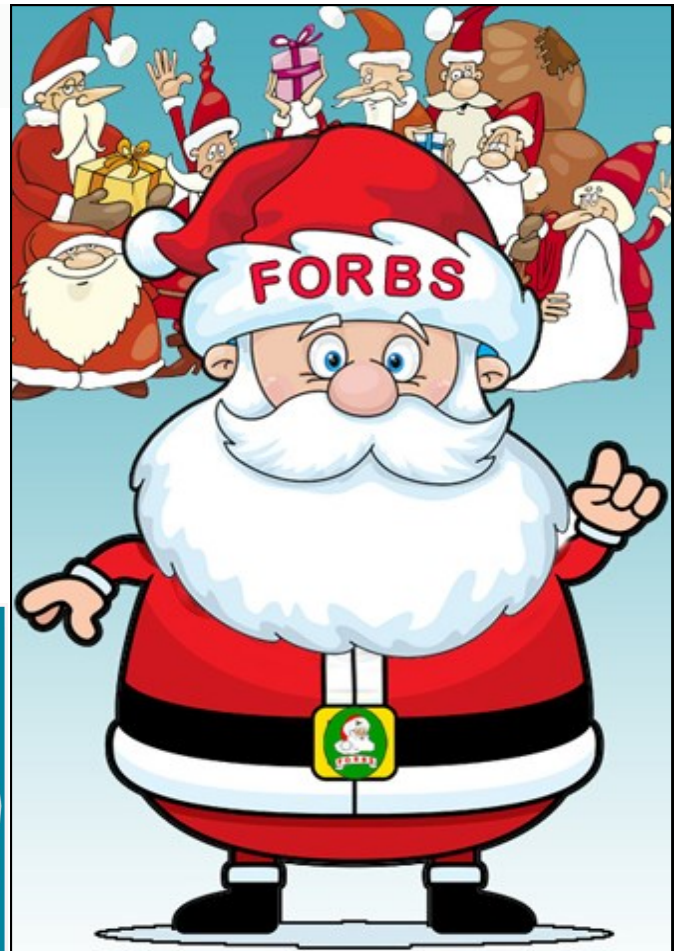
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2020: We're All In This Together!



Santa Reunion Info

For now, we are still on hold.

While we have deposits & contracts in place as usual for our customary three-day weekend, it is quite likely that such an event still might not be allowed by public health authorities in just a few short months from now...

WORSE STILL, the overwhelming majority of potential Reunion guests are in the "Most-At-Risk" category!

Still time for a miracle, of course—
if nothing else, we'll try our best to have the Sunday **Santa Luncheon**.