Greetings to all IBRBS Members! I am happy to report that the IBRBS continues to grow and thrive. Since our establishment in 2008 by the 36 Founding Members we have now grown to over 1050 members, including Santas in Canada, Australia and Europe. Across the country and around the world, Santas are getting together more than ever and are taking advantage of the benefits an international association can offer.

The Board of Directors appreciates our members understanding and patience as we have navigated the often difficult legal waters that a young, growing nonprofit association must deal with. We are sorry for the confusion that was created by the name change of our association, but difficult times often call for difficult decisions. We can now all celebrate together the fact that our association turns Five Years old this August. We have not only survived, we are flourishing. I deeply appreciate the confidence you have shown in me by electing me to another 3-year term on the Board of Directors. I am thankful for the opportunity to serve as your President for the past year. It has been a challenge, an honor and a privilege. The validation of my performance as an Officer and a Board Member that you have shown me has been reflected by the support of the Board, which has returned me as President of our fine association for another year. For all of this I am profoundly grateful.

As we move into the 2013 Season, the Board has made a few changes that we hope you will find beneficial. Santa Gary Casey of Atlanta, Georgia has accepted the position of Chapter Relations Chairman. Santa Gary will be working towards providing certificates and improving communication among all of our active Chapters. A permanent part-time Administrative Assistant has been hired to maintain our data base, send out new member packets and assist the Board in its work. Santa Allen Keeney has been named our new Editor In Chief and as such will be in charge of our newsletters and member communications.

The Board of Directors and Officers of the IBRBS will continue to work diligently on your behalf, to promote fellowship and camaraderie, to foster the most positive image of Santa and to support you in every way possible. We hope that you continue to find membership in IBRBS rewarding, entertaining and educational. Remember, the Board of Directors is your elected voice in conducting the day-to-day IBRBS.

Please feel free to express your opinions and suggestions to the Board at any time. My e-mail is RFigley@IBRBSantas.org.
EDITOR’S COMMENTS:

Santa Allen Keeney

I was going to start with “Hi there. We are back.” That would not be accurate as we have never been gone. We did hit some speed bumps which slowed us down for a season. That is why we extended the dues for a year as we felt you deserved full value. One of the areas that has needed attention is communication. This newsletter will come out at least quarterly and more often when needed. There will be news about our regional chapters and their activities. There will be a place for vital statistics. We will have a seasonal check list for Santas. The most important thing will be YOU. Let us know what is happening in your area. Let us know what your concerns are. Our mission is to make all of us better Santas and an important part is two way communication. Let us hear from you. The next newsletter will be out in June.

Santa Allen Keeney  Newsletter Editor

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Dues: If you paid dues to the national organization of FORBS or IBRBS between January 2011 and December 2012 your dues will expire in the Fall of 2013. Anyone joining or renewing in January through December of 2013 your dues will expire in Fall of 2014. Every member will have the period of one Christmas season in your dues. Life members of the old FORBS will be considered life members of IBRBS.

Election results: In our recent election the three board seats (three year term) up for election were won by Paul Rains, Rob Figley, and Don White.

Your current board is: Jac Grimes, Rob Figley, Don White, Paul Raines, Bob Elkin, Ron Robertson, Chris Martens, Kevin Scott, Steve Eastis and Gary Kroft.

Let us all thank them for the work they have done in the past and look forward to working with them in the coming season. which will have its grand finale in the:

International Santa Celebration
Tampa Florida May 14-17, 2014

We are having a party in Tampa, Florida May 14–17, 2014
We are offering the most affordable Registration Fee ever! $138.00 per person!
Your choice of over 20 Interactive Workshops and Seminars!
Santa’s Showcase with 30 Vendor spots offered without any Booth or Table fees!
tampa.ibrbsantas.org

On the web:  http://www.ibrbsantas.org/
On Facebook:  http://www.facebook.com/groups/IBRBSantas/
Santas love to party. In the weeks after Christmas we assemble in groups large and small for luncheons, workshops and even cruises. We let our hair down and exchange stories and experiences of the season just completed. Members and chapters of IBRBS are active participants and organizers of these events. IBRBS also has a major convention every even number year with the intent of moving the convention around the country so that every Santa will eventually have an opportunity to attend without having to travel long distances. The 2012 gathering was in San Diego California and the 2014 gathering will be in Tampa Florida. Three of the major events of this season attended by IBRBS members were the traditional Southern California Luncheon in Buena Park, the annual Red Suit Roundtable in Atlanta and The Jim Yellig gathering in Santa Claus Indiana. There were also many other local gatherings around the country in which members of IBRBS sponsored and/or participated.

SoCal Luncheon Jan 19 &20

Hosted this year by the SoCal chapter of IBRBS, the annual California gathering (our 19th) was attended by Santas and their guests from around the country. It was an opportunity to meet old friends and make new friends. There was a Taco party on Saturday afternoon followed by a bowling tournament that evening. Sunday we had a buffet meal where we celebrated the first birthday of our mascot Freddy. The food was great and a good time was had by all. Save Jan, 25, 26 2014 for the next luncheon, our 20th.

IBRBS president Rob Figley spoke to us about the events that had caused our name change from FORBS to IBRBS.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=GUojABaDTkM#
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uoi92NChR5g

This annual event has been the major event on the East Coast for many years. Among our IBRBS members there were Jac Grimes and Rob Figley. Many of the Santas present were old friends of our organization and are eager to help us strengthen our presence in Georgia and the South in general

Be sure to play the youtube of Rob and Jac speaking to the group. Those of you who have not attended this event previously should include it on your list of must attends

**Jim Yellig Santa Claus Workshop**

Santa Claus, Indiana March 23, 24 and 25.

The International Brotherhood of Real Bearded Santas was well represented at the Jim Yellig Santa Claus Workshop Many of our members were there as well as four of our board members: Bob Elkin, Don White, Paul Raines and Ron Robertson.

In Ron’s words: arriving at Santa Claus Lodge along with 100+ Santas from around the States and one couple whom we met at the BAKKEN Santa Congress, Copenhagen, Denmark in 2011. It was great to see them again and we were amazed that they had come so far to join in fellowship with American Santas. It truly demonstrates that Santa is an international calling and our association is on the right path proclaiming an “international” agenda and welcoming members from around the world.

The “Celebration Room” was filled with a good number of vendors selling everything from complete Santa outfits to T-shirts and small jewelry. Santas Paul Raines, Don White and I began meeting old friends and new from across the country and Santas had various questions about IBRBS, our insurance/background check programs and just “how to become Santa.” It was interesting, enjoyable and rewarding to connect with the Ohio Buckeye Santas, Florida Palm Tree Santas, Georgia Peachtree Santas, Texas Lone Star Santas and Indiana Hoosier Santas (hosts) as well as New Jersey, Illinois, Minnesota and Wisconsin Santas.

Saturday night we viewed the documentary “They Wore the Red Suit” and previews of “St Nicholas of Myra” and “The Knights of St Nicholas.” On Sunday we attended a non-denominational church service conducted by Fr. Joseph Marquis. We all were anointed with Manna from St. Nicholas’ tomb located in Bari, Italy.

Great News – we welcomed a total of 10 new members and renewed 9 memberships thru 2014.
Monday schedule included Santa Claus Hall of Fame 2012 Inductions, Santa Claus Oath Ceremony and Award Presentations to many who have contributed to the Santa community in general and through specific programs of charity and involvement. During these proceedings, Bob Elkin presented Phil Wenz with an Honorary IBRSB Charter Membership Certificate. After the presentations, Bob Elkin, Paul Raines and I were privileged to participate in the presentation of an Award of Appreciation and Recognition to Phillip Wenz for his numerous contributions to the entire Santa Community, including the writing of the Santa Claus Oath, the founding of the Santa Claus Oath Foundation and the Santa Claus Hall of Fame.

It is worthy of note that Phil Wenz, a designer bearded Santa, has made more appearances as Santa and brought joy to more children as Santa than any other living person. He is also the foremost living authority in the Santa world on the history and traditions of Santa Claus and St Nicolas of Myra. Truly, we can all learn from Phil that it's not the beard alone that makes the Santa but it is his heart and devotion that creates the magic.

Overall we rated the Jim Yellig Workshop a success – another gem among the many Santa gatherings we have attended over the last 10 years. We look forward to the 2014 IBRBS Santa Celebration in Tampa Bay!

Some further comments by Paul Raines:
Santa Claus, IN was a great trip for the IBRBS organization. Don White, Ron Robertson and I volunteered for IBRBS presentation at Santa Claus IN knowing that it was in no way a vacation. We also knew that we would meet some unhappy people and some very inquiring minds. We did and I think we resolved a lot of issues. I know we made some new friends and renewed some old friends. I want to thank everyone who took the time to stop by our table. WE ARE ALIVE and WELL. Issues of the past have been settled, we are in the process of finishing our legal status with the state of California and we have never had an issue with the IRS. Our beginning board back in 2008 made a few mistakes, as we all have done in our lives, and the current membership has paid for it. We have paid all of the past taxes, due to the SOS of California suspending our dealings in California. We move on. I am in the state of Arizona, our Chairman is in N. Carolina and our President is in Washington. We are a 501C7 (social non-profit group). We have over 1000 members and in Indiana we added 10 new members and renewed 9 others. We are preparing for a great time of fellowship in Tampa Bay. We are financially strong. I will share in email, our exact status, to anyone who cares to email me. God Bless each and everyone of you and thanks for being Santa. IBRBS Treasurer - J Paul Raines

Don White chilling out.
A few other Winter Spring get togethers:

**Santas Pac: Vancouver WA and Portland OR**

![Santas Pac: Vancouver WA and Portland OR](image1)

**Silver State Santas Las Vegas**

The monthly breakfast meeting of The Silver State Santas, Las Vegas, attendees included, Tom Hartsfield, one of the original 10 founders of the first National Santa group.

![Silver State Santas Las Vegas](image2)

**New England Santa Society - Quincy Market, Boston, MA**

![New England Santa Society - Quincy Market, Boston, MA](image3)

**In addition to our Parties, Vendors, Workshops & Social Gatherings**

- World Santa Claus Congress
- Disney World
- Bush Gardens
- Catch Land
- Universal Studios
- LEGOLAND
- Deep Sea Fishing

www.youtube.com

During our Santa Stroll, part of our first Annual Reunion, our Santas, Mrs. and Elves stopped for a little song in the rotunda of Historic Quincy Market.

Here's a video from our NESS Santa Stroll! Enjoy

Jonathan Meath with a small rack of ribs.

Some things to think about for 2014

Check this out.
The Palm Tree Santas

The Palm Tree Santas were one of the very first groups organized east of the Mississippi. We had our first luncheon meeting in September '06 following the Discover Santa event in Branson. The Palm Tree Santas have grown from a handful of local Tampa area Santas to a membership of close to 100 and a data base of 150 "Florida Sandie Clauses" throughout the State and beyond.

We quickly evolved from a "luncheon type" Tampa area organization to a State organization and hosted our first three day, two night "Spring Fling" in May, 2007, with a group of approximately 75 Santas, Mrs Clauses and Elves. Since many of our members had 3-5 hour drives, "weekend" events became our forte. In addition to "Spring Fling" in May, we schedule an event in January (Celebrate our Season) and in September (Event to Remember). For the last four years we have also created an awesome event for the community of Tarpon Springs, Christmas in July, with a parade, reindeer games, elf games, Reindeer 101 and Elf 101 workshops for the little believers.

In January 2010, an idea was born, The Palm Tree Santas Drill Team! We marched for the first time, (and won the Judges Trophy) at Celebrate Santa in 2010. We also performed a stage routine during the event and received a standing ovation. In the next few years we performed at numerous events, as we developed a repertoire of Patriotic presentations, we were invited to perform on Memorial Day, July 4th and Veterans Day. We have performed on four occasions at the Jim Yellig Workshops and Final Oath Ceremony in Santa Claus Indiana. We proudly serve as the Honor Guard for the Santa Claus Oath and the International Santa Claus Hall of Fame.

After five years, we made the decision to incorporate as a Not-for-Profit corporation. We welcome Santas and families visiting in Florida to any of our events, just get in touch for your invitation!

www.palmtreesantas.com

The Palm Tree Santas will be our hosts for the IBRBS International Santa Celebration May 14-17, 2014
The Arizona Chapter has 28 IBBRS members and over 100 Santas, Mrs., Elves, and helpers. Twenty of us took a trip to Sedona in March, stayed at timeshares, rode the Verde Valley Train, had dinner at a Cowboy Ranch Theatre, and all had a great time. We had 6 guests from California, Santa Tom Carmody from CO. and 15 of our own. Our next outing is Sunday, April 21 for an outdoor pizza cookout. We are anxiously looking forward to it, as well as a pool party in June. We are always looking for new Santas in Arizona.

Contact Paul Raines for information
We will have an article here each issue on subjects of interest to the Santa community.

Santa Gordon Bailey has many years of experience with the various photo companies.

CPI, Sepia, Cherry Hill, Amuse Matt, All Seasons Promotions, Santa Plus, Picture People, Bass Pro Shop and a few more small studios. These and many others all do the same basic function. They hire Santa to sit in a chair and take pictures with families with the idea to sell those pictures for profit. They sell memories, little captures of time to put into a photo book or frame. How well you like your experience working with any of these companies will depend upon how well you negotiate your contract with the company.

Every one of these corporations will try to secure your services as low as they can for what you can offer. What many Santas do not realize is there is a third party involved in the negotiations and that is the location/mall itself. You need to be aware of this and frame your dealings with the photo company with that in mind. The way to do that is to make sure your particular needs and desires are written into the contract before you sign it. There is a little clause they like to put in every contract that goes like this, "You accept the breakroom facilities as provided by the mall.". You can be given a janitors closet /restroom to change in. I ask for a room in the Mall that has a lock on the door, chairs and table with access to a restroom and I have a key to the door.

Another problem that many Santas run into is the fact the hours of set operation are set by the mall and unless your hours on set are listed in your contract, you will be working at the whim of the mall management. You get a lunch break and a dinner break but that time is not compensated under most contracts. Another stipulation in every contract is you are not allowed to go anywhere in the mall unescorted including from the set to the break room and back again. If you do not bring your lunch/dinner with you, you have to rely on a set member to go to the food court and bring you something to eat/drink. That is a problem as most set crews are not interested in running to fetch Santa food. This is a factor in figuring your compensation in the contract. You have to be on site in plenty of time to get into gear and set up your equipment for the day, usually about an hour to 45 minutes before set opens. You generally have an hour lunch break and a 45 minute dinner break and then you have to tear down your gear and prepare it for the next day which I find takes me about 30 minutes including filling out the daily paperwork forms. So figure if your scheduled set times are from 9 am to 8 pm your actual time on site is from 8-8:15 am to 8:30 pm or just over a 12 hour day. Sundays are usually the "short" day with the set opening up an hour later and closing an hour earlier. Of course you usually get Thanksgiving day off as the malls are closed that day. If you know what the set hours of operation are to be and they are written into your contract, you will not be forced to work longer hours at the malls insistence without rewriting the contract usually with a higher compensation rate.

Finally one of the big points is to be Santa but you have absolutely NO say in how the set is operated at any time. There really can be only one boss on the set and you as Santa can not do that job. You may have years of experience working on set but many companies forbid you from communicating with the set crew or manager about how to solve problems as they occur during the day. Easy fixes for minor computer problems that happen each year,
(simple hard reboot to fix the communication between the printer and the computer) what works with children when taking pictures (Snap in the first 10 seconds of putting the child on Santa's knee) and even the simple communication of Santa's needs during the day is sometimes problematical. In most cases you have to place a call to the person that hired you to begin with and let that person deal with any problem or complaint. Your experience as Santa working in a mall situation depends upon your specific contract AND the set crew/manager. If you have a good crew, you will have a good season. If you have a bad crew, no matter how good a Santa you are, your set will have a bad season.

All companies will honor the contract you sign to the letter of it. If you do not have it in writing, don't expect it in practice. All of the people I have worked for have been honest in this. The expectation Santa has going in should be limited to what is written in your particular contract. What makes the compensation vary from Santa to Santa in mall set contracts is also dependent upon what YOU as Santa brings to the set in the way of experience, "look" and the mall's contribution to the contract as well. That "third party" can contribute to the Santa compensation by lowering their portion of the "take" or by kicking in some funds to hire a Santa that they feel is worth the extra money to draw in the people to their mall. That part of the negotiation is up to the person that is hiring you for the photo company. The longer you work for a particular company and do not receive complaints on your work from either set crews, mall management or customers, the better the photo company will take care of you in both Mall placement and compensation. Mall contracts generally forbid you to take any performance away from the mall within 50 miles of the mall your working in. It is part of the contract

This is what working in a mall entails. If you go in knowing what to realistically expect and truly enjoy seeing many, MANY children every season, then Mall work might be what you want to do.

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Editor’s Note

Is there a subject you would like to see covered or a subject you would like to write about? Let us know. Your contributions and suggestions are always welcome.

Santa Allen Keeney  Newsletter Editor

WHERE IS FREDDY? We have seen some photos of our mascot in strange places. How many do you recognize?
Santa’s check list:

1. Is your Santa suit clean and in moth proof storage?

2. Are you keeping up your beard and Hair?

3. Are you planning on attending a Santa school? This is especially important if you are a new Santa. We old and experienced Santas can also learn a few new tricks.

4. Make sure you have plenty of business cards. You look like Santa and when asked, hand them a card. It brightens their day and may get you a gig.

5. It is not too early to start planning your advertising or confirm your gigs if you work as a regular for a photo company.

Ho, Ho, Ho!

Vital Statistics:
births, weddings, divorces, deaths or any announcements the membership may wish to be notified about.

With the next issue we will start this column. You must let Gary know so we can include it in the next news letter.

SANTA SCHOOLS

There are several Santa Schools available here are two with sterling reputations. There are other fine schools as well.

One that travels is www.school4santas.com Tim Connaghan has been doing this for many years. He does a first class presentation.

Check his schedule. He may be coming to a city near you

Another fine school is the Denver based Professional Santa School

Their session this year runs August 30 - Sept 3rd. which is a beautiful time to visit Denver. Be sure to check out their Web page.

Ordinary Santas become great Santas through a combination of experience and education. Attend a Santa School and support your local and National Santa associations.
IBRBS INTERNATIONAL SANTA CELEBRATION

We are having a party in Tampa, Florida May 14–17, 2014

We are offering the most affordable Registration Fee ever!

$138.00 per person!

Your choice of over 20 Interactive Workshops and Seminars!

Santa's Showcase with 30 Vendor spots offered without any Booth or Table fees!

Meals Included*:
- Enjoy the President’s Santa Brotherhood Breakfast
- Feast on Scrumptious Lunches – Friday and Saturday
- Santa Celebration Banquet, Saturday Night;
  - Live Music for Dining & Dancing,
  - Enjoy a special show by The Santa Claus Drill Team.
- * Wait till you see the menus, where you choose your personal cuisine.

Choose your Fun adventure on FUN DAY, Thursday!
- Busch Gardens
- Deep Sea Fishing
- Museum Tours, Lunch & Shopping Excursions
- Major League Baseball
- National Hockey League
- Arena Football
- Pirate Ship Cruise
- Swim with the Mermaids
- World Class Golf
- Or you may choose from several other Fun Day adventures.

Claus Group Dining Delight Nights Thursday and Friday Night
- Enjoy an exquisite dining experience aboard a luxury Yacht while you cruise Tampa Bay and dance under the stars.
- Or enjoy Flamenco Dancers and a very special dinner at the world-famous Columbia Restaurant in historic Ybor City.
- Or you may enjoy the Unique Culinary Experience of Bern’s Steakhouse and the internationally famous Desert Room!
- Or, CK’s Revolving Rooftop Restaurant, Ocean Prime, The Capital Grille, Mitchells Seafood Market, Ruth Chris Steakhouse, these are in the Westshore area within the Hotels Free shuttle service!
Our Host Hotel is the luxurious
Double Tree Inn and Suites, a true Four Star Hotel
- Free shuttle service to and from the airport
- Free shuttles to shopping/lunch excursions
- Free wi-fi in every room
- Free parking

The Double Tree has slashed their room rates for us from $149 per night to an incredible $85 for this Four Star Luxurious Hotel!

Guaranteed lodging rates and reservations available
June 1st, 2013

Yes! Lock in my EARLY BIRD Guaranteed Registration with my $38 Deposit! ($76 per couple)

Last Name________________ First Names________________
Address________________________City______________Zip________
Email__________________________Phone___________Cell________
Credit Card____ #________________________Exp Date_______
Or Check #__________ Total: $____________

Please mail to:

International Brotherhood of Real Bearded Santas
Paul Raines, Treasurer
P.O. Box 255
Cypress, Ca  90630-0255

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Date Received________ Other Notes
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