

Old World Santas



Table of Contents

Santa and His Girls.....	3	Kris Kringle • German.....	30
New England Santa	4	Sinter Klaas	31
Norwegian Julenisse.....	5	Midnight Visitor	32
Celebrate the Joy of Giving	6	Kris Kringle	33
Santa's Spotted Grey	7	Dedt Moroz • Father Ice	34
Cookie Break	8	Grandfather Frost	35
Story Time Santa	9	The Gingerbread Santa	36
Yee Haaaaa!	10	Buckskin Santa	37
Swedish Tompte.....	11	German St. Nicholas.....	38
The Sonoma Valley Santa	12	Norway Santa.....	39
Virginia's Santa Claus.....	13	Santa's Sack Full of Toys	40
Bedtime Story Santa.....	14	Czech Svaty Nikalus.....	41
The Cookie Santa.....	15	St. Nicholas in Paisley Coat	42
The Palace Santa.....	16	Chef Claus	43
Brocade Coat Santa	17	Civil War Santa	44
Santa's Journey	18	Victorian Santa Claus.....	45
Belsnickle with Baskets	19	Starlight Santa	46
Naughty or Nice.....	20	Weinachtsmann (Christmas Man)..	47
Old Man with Toys.....	21	St. Nicholas and the Christkind ..	48
Father Christmas	22	Unnamed Santa	49
Jolly Old St. Nick	23	Musical Santa.....	50
Julemand Sign Board.....	24	Santa with Basket of Apples	51
Patchwork Santa	25	Olde Santa Claus	52
A Child's Delight	26	St. Nicholas.....	53
Faces of Santa	27	The Windy Santa	54
Aussie Santa and Boomer.....	28	The All American Santa	55
Starlight Santa on Skates	29	Saving the Old World Santas.....	56



Santa and His Girls

*A doll for you
And your sister, too,
To bring you joy
The whole year through.*

Originally Adopted by
Southwest Association of Buffalo Soldiers

Legacy Sponsor:
City of Sierra Vista Employees



New England Santa

You better watch out!

Originally Adopted by
Donna Bryan, Barbara Arthur & Bobbie Moore

Legacy Sponsor:
Jamie Rutgers
Jamie Rutgers Interior Design



Norwegian Julenisse

Dear Children!

In Norway I am known as Julenisse. In England I am known as Father Christmas, and in America as Santa Claus. Winter in Norway lasts from October to April as a third of Norway lies above the Arctic Circle. Thousands of Reindeer live here.

Merry Christmas, or as we say in Norway...

God-Jul!

Julenisse

Originally Adopted by
Pat and Susan Bell

Legacy Sponsor:
Jeanne Robichaud and Gayl Murphy,
in memory of their mom, Jane Gonseth



Celebrate the Joy of Giving

Originally Adopted by
San Pedro Kiwanis/Just Kids, Inc.

Legacy Sponsor:
Debra Nystrom, Long Realty



Santa's Spotted Grey

*Up until the last minute,
Santa's hard at work!*

Originally Adopted by
Mele Enterprises, LLC

Legacy Sponsor:
Ellen Hector



Cookie Break

Originally Adopted by
City of Sierra Vista employees, in memory of James Hodgson

Legacy Sponsor:
Wes & Donna Hewitt, in memory of James Hodgson



Story Time Santa

Martin Luther is said to have begun the tradition of the Christmas tree. Lighting the evergreen tree with glowing candles, he told his children the true meaning of the Christ Child, the light of the world, whose birth has so gloriously brightened the sky on that first Christmas Eve.

Originally Adopted by
Mayor Tom and Nancy Hessler

Legacy Sponsor:
Girl Scouts of Southern Arizona, Cochise County



Yee Haaaaa!

*After a job well done,
Santa will have a lot of fun!*

Originally Adopted by
Gas City

Legacy Sponsor:
Arizona Ambulance, in memory of Paramedic David Fleury



Swedish Tompte

Not every country has a Santa Claus as we know him. In Sweden, legend has it that little men who live in the forest, Tompte, help create some of the magic. In Sweden, ornaments are made of wheat.

Originally Adopted by
Ted & Sunny Fichtl

Legacy Sponsor:
Tile Masterworks, Inc.

Steve and Jill Brown, in honor of Barbara Rydberg Brown,
great grandniece of Swedish Poet Laureate Viktor Rydberg,
author of the poem "Tomten."



The Sonoma Valley Santa

To your Holiday Health!

Originally Adopted by
Aristo Care Home Health Agency, Linda Hoge-Pattison

Legacy Sponsor:
AAA Fort Storage



Virginia's Santa Claus

On September 21, 1897, 8-year-old Virginia O'Hanlon wrote a letter to the editor of the New York Sun, Francis Church. It read:

Dear Editor:

I am 8 years old. Some of my little friends say there is no Santa Claus. Papa says "If you see it in The Sun it's so." Please tell me the truth. Is there a Santa Claus?

The editor replied:

Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus. He exists as certainly as love, generosity, and devotion exist. And you know that they abound and give to your life its highest beauty and joy. Alas, how dreary would the world be if there were no Santa Claus! It would be as dreary as if there were no Virginias. There would be no child-like faith then, no poetry, no romance to make tolerable this existence. We should have no enjoyment, except in the sense of sight. The eternal light with which childhood fills the world would be extinguished.

No Santa Claus?! Thank God he lives, and he lives forever. A thousand years from now, Virginia, he will continue to make glad the heart of childhood.

Originally Adopted by
Sierra Vista Herald | Bisbee Daily Review

Legacy Sponsor:
The Clevan Family



Bedtime Story Santa

'Twas the night before Christmas...

Originally Adopted by
San Pedro Kiwanis/Just Kids, Inc.

Legacy Sponsor:
LeAnn Morrison



The Cookie Santa

In the olden days, Christmas cooking was prepared weeks in advance and the whole family joined in the fun. Spice cookies and honey cakes were traditional favorites throughout Europe.

Originally Adopted by
Cotner & Besselman families

Legacy Sponsor:
Girl Scouts of Southern Arizona, Cochise County



The Palace Santa ❄️ England

Cheerio! A Cheery Christmas to you!

Originally Adopted by
Sierra Vista Flowers & Gifts

Legacy Sponsor:
Linda Langer, Carol Jelinek, Julia Reiber Jones,
John & Pat Lloyd, and Nancy McDowell



Brocade Coat Santa

Turn-of-the-century postcards often show Santa dressed in richly ornate clothing. Here is our interpretation of a magnificently dressed Santa.

Originally Adopted by
Vicki Gilbert Insurance

Legacy Sponsor:
Cochise College



Santa's Journey

The Christmas season was a time of renewal.

Originally Adopted by
Dick Kohnen

Legacy Sponsor:
The Cleven Family



Belsnickle with Baskets

Belsnickle was St. Nicholas' companion on Christmas Eve. He brought sweets to the good children.

Originally Adopted by
City of Sierra Vista Arts & Humanities Commission

Legacy Sponsor:
Bob & Norma Jones



Naughty or Nice

Jolly Old Elf!

His gentle smile and twinkling eyes are endearing.

Originally Adopted by
Sulpher Springs Valley Electric Cooperative

Legacy Sponsor:
Sierra Vista Woman's Club, Inc.



Old Man with Toys

This St. Nicholas was painted with love and hope. By now his legend had become renowned. They could recognize him by his long full grown beard.

Originally Adopted by
Gene and Helen Manring

Legacy Sponsor:
American Southwest Credit Union



Father Christmas

Adopted from a dressed cardboard sign made during the 20th century and probably of German origin.

Originally Adopted by
Ron and JoAnn Kline

Legacy Sponsor:
Ardent Communications



Jolly Old St. Nick

This Santa is based on a late 19th century drawing by Thomas Nast, one of America's foremost illustrators and political cartoonists for Harper's Weekly.

Originally Adopted by
Vinny's New York Pizza

Legacy Sponsor:
Steve & Mary Aldrich



Julemand Sign Board ❄️ Denmark

When the Julemand, (Christmas Man) appears in December, children pledge their good behavior. However, they know he doesn't bring the gifts; it's Papa or Uncle Hans that does that. The Julemand looks very similar to the American Santa Claus, but there just might be some nisser with him to make sure everything is going alright. The nisse, a little dwarf, is very clever about getting around without actually being seen.

In Denmark, the Christmas season is known as the Season of Light in honor of the Christ Child, "the light of the world."

Originally Adopted by
Sierra Vista Woman's Club, Inc.

Legacy Sponsor:
John & JoAnna Michelich, Jane C. Strain, and Col. & RuthAnn Britton,
in honor of family and friends



Patchwork Santa

*Old Santa Claus,
With much delight,
Wears a coat of many colors
To keep him warm
This frosty night.*

Originally Adopted by
Gail, Tom & Todd Edwards, in memory of Tammi Edwards

Legacy Sponsor:
Gene & Helen Manring and Family



A Child's Delight

*Puppies from Santa,
A gift to behold,
Mean more to a child
Than treasures of gold.*

Originally Adopted by
Reggie, Glenda & Brandon Story, in Memory of Eddie Story

Legacy Sponsor:
Rich & Christin Davis, in memory of Nicole Rae Davis



Faces of Santa

*The many faces of Santa
Are all gentle and kind.
Happy, jolly, and magical
In a child's mind.*

Originally Adopted by
Berg's Heating & Air Conditioning, in memory of Dick Berg

Legacy Sponsor:
Berg's Heating & Air Conditioning, in memory of Dick & Kitty Berg



Aussie Santa and Boomer ❄️ Australia

Much of the country “down under”, under the equator, is very hot and Christmas falls in the heat of the summer. An Australian Christmas wouldn’t be complete without dinner on the “barbie” (the barbecue), as it is often too hot to cook traditional meals indoors. Going to the beach and visiting relatives and friends are typical Aussie Christmas fare. However, there are still many families who try to maintain the more traditional celebration of an English Christmas, with roast goose, plum pudding and all the trimmings.

Originally Adopted by

Mike, Kerrie and Parker Cieszinski, The Outback Steakhouse

Legacy Sponsor:

The Westbrook Family: Bill, Rachella, William, and Jennifer



Starlight Santa on Skates

Originally Adopted by
Pat & Susan Bell and Mayor Tom & Nancy Hessler

Legacy Sponsor:
Tom and Connie Dooley



Kris Kringle ❄️ German

St. Nicholas comes December 6, St. Nicholas day. It is the official start of the Christmas season in Bavaria. Children put their shoes in front of their doors at night hoping St. Nicholas will fill them with goodies while they sleep. This stems from an old custom when children were instructed to leave out hay, straw, and carrots for his horse; in the morning they would find that St. Nicholas had left them a present.

Originally Adopted by
SueAnn Vannoy

Legacy Sponsor:
Deborah Holland, in memory of Jack Holland



Sinter Klaas

When the Dutch settled New Amsterdam they brought with them their custom of St. Nicholas, named Sinter Klaas. As more English settled in New Amsterdam, later called New York, they adopted the Dutch St. Nicholas, but had him come on Christmas Eve as their Father Christmas had done (Father Christmas was from England). When English children excitedly tried to say “Sinter Klaas” it came out “Santa Claus,” the name we now know in America.

Originally Adopted by
Eva Englund

Legacy Sponsor:
Arizona Financial Services, Teresa & Tony Waalkens



Midnight Visitor

The perfect Christmas is the same everywhere. All the family gathered together in laughter and love

Originally Adopted by
Stan Greer Millworks

Legacy Sponsor:
The Diekema Family



Kris Kringle

Kris Kringle was once thought to be the Christ Child's chief helper. The name evolved from the German word "Christ Kindle," meaning Christ Child.

Originally Adopted by
Dr. Jeff and Barb Franz, Franz Eye Care

Legacy Sponsor:
Tim Bullinton, Haymore Real Estate



Ded Moroz ❄️ Father Ice ❄️ Siberia

A Russian Fable

A woman had two daughters, one a kind and gentle stepdaughter, the other a spoiled and mean daughter. One day in a fit of anger and hate, she banished her stepdaughter from the house. As the young girl walked, she began to freeze.

Suddenly Father Ice appeared as a huge blizzard and asked, “Are you cold and unhappy?” She replied “No” as that was her nature. Charmed by her goodness, he showered her with diamonds. Upon returning home, the wicked mother ushered her mean daughter to reap the same benefits.

As before, Father Ice appeared and asked the same question. She began to scream, curse and complain of her predicament. Father Ice, in disgust of her behavior and bad manners, waived his arms and froze her for eternity.

Originally Adopted by

Rio Verde Realty: Christi Mestling, Patti Miller, Patty Huff,
David Bremer, John Brewer, Diana Adams, Jude Garvin, Josh Berkley,
Mary Holte, and Jodi Heck

Legacy Sponsor:

Dale Ann Schmitzer and Dennis Maruska
in loving memory of Kelsey ♥



Grandfather Frost

Russian Santa Claus

Legend tells us that Grandfather Frost lived deep in the woods and came to town on a troika, a sleigh pulled by three horses. He was both stern and jolly and brought gifts to the good children, forgetting those who were naughty. The singing of kolyadki, Russian Christmas carols, is one of the oldest of all traditions. Ornaments made for Christmas trees during the 1800s were of dried fruit, candy, and gold foil walnuts.

Originally Adopted by
Elizabeth Showalter

Legacy Sponsor:
Curtis & Mary Tipton, in memory of Elizabeth Showalter



The Gingerbread Santa

Nürnberg, Germany is the most famous city for its Gingerbread Cookies and Cakes. The dough originally had seven spices to symbolize the seven days it took God to create the world.

Originally Adopted by
Lark Beaugureau, "Light Cooking With Lark"

Legacy Sponsor:
Lark Beaugureau



Buckskin Santa

The Christmas Traveler
Ring on Sweet Christmas

Originally Adopted by
Tonya, Denny & Becky Christensen

Legacy Sponsor:
Gloria Burek, in memory of Gerald Burek



German St. Nicholas

A basket of toys and wonderful robe would bring a smile to any child's face. The turn of the century brought German printed cards to the country. These old printed cards are an inspiration to all of us who still love the tradition of St. Nick.

Originally Adopted by
Sierra Vista Regional Health Center

Legacy Sponsor:
Chris & Shari Ward, REALTOR®



Norway Santa

Originally Adopted by
Robert and Mae Anderson

Legacy Sponsor:
Lona Jensen & Family, in Memorial of Neil Humphreys



Santa's Sack Full of Toys

*Santa never lets us down.
He gives us tradition and
Stability in a world of rapid changes.*

Originally Adopted by
Cochise County Republican Club

Legacy Sponsor:
Thunder Mountain Republican Women



Czechoslovakian Svaty Mikalush

Svaty Mikalush, our Chech St. Nicholas comes to earth each Christmas Eve on a golden rope. He brings with him an Angel and a Devil with switches. Good King Wenceslas is the Czechoslovakian patron saint.

Originally Adopted by
Laura Sudduth & Dan Abrams

Legacy Sponsor:
Sierra Vista Sunrise Rotary Club





St. Nicholas in Paisley Coat

A reminder of Christmas past.

Santa Bringing toys to all the children he will visit.

Originally Adopted by
Long Realty

Legacy Sponsor:
William Sullivan, M.D.



Chef Claus

Seasoned with Love

Adopted for Derek Mayette, Mya & Devon Marshall, Reese, Ariel, Shannon, Tyler, Samantha & Jamie Lancy, Meghan & Brittany Delaney, Jordan Tucker, and Jake Chicano.

Jolly Noel,
Peperre & Nana

Originally Adopted by
Chef Ray And Karen Lamy

Legacy Sponsor:
Landmark Cafe



Civil War Santa

During the Civil War, Santa Claus was one of the few concepts the North and South agreed upon. Both sides used the jolly old elf as propaganda material.

Originally Adopted by
The Green Family, in Memory Col. George E. Green

Legacy Sponsor:
The Flissar Family, in memory of William Flissar



Victorian Santa Claus

*Here he comes!
This time in a Victorian setting
to give you sweet dreams
from season to season.*

Originally Adopted by
Lance & Marion Alley, Carpet One

Legacy Sponsor:
Just Kid's, Inc., a foundation of San Pedro Kiwanis



Starlight Santa

*Just imagine that this wise old man
will make it through sleet and snow
to bring us his Christmas cheer.*

Originally Adopted by
Nancy Fyffe

Legacy Sponsor:
Nancy Fyffe



Weihnachtsmann (Christmas Man)

Everywhere the Germans migrated they brought with them their beloved traditions. St. Nicholas filled the children's shoes on December 6. The Weihnachtsmann brought the presents. This is an interpretation of a 1908 German card.

Originally Adopted by
Joyce Tomlinson and Al Taylor

Legacy Sponsor:
In loving memory of Christian John Twite



St. Nicholas and the Christkind

Many of our Christmas Traditions have been Adopted from German Christmas customs. In Bavaria, St. Nicholas was thought to be the message runner. He took the Children's requests to heaven while it was the Christ Child, or Liebes Christkind (Dearest Christ Child) who actually brought the gifts to the children's houses on Christmas Morning.

Originally Adopted by
Council member Carol Dockter and Bruce Dockter

Legacy Sponsor:
St. Stephen's Episcopal Church Sierra Vista,
Sierra Vista Evangelical Lutheran Church,
and Bruce & Carol Dockter



Unnamed Santa

Legacy Sponsor:
Virginia & Jim Clevon



Musical Santa

*On Christmas Eve
families join hands and sing and dance
around the Christmas tree.*

Originally Adopted by
Fran and Jim Landwehr

Legacy Sponsor:
Julie Bowden and Steve Smith



Santa with Basket of Apples

Tradition tells us that he was a bishop during the 15th century who was famous because he went to the poor sections of the city. Wearing his beautiful cap and gown he gave apples and gifts to the children. Thus, our Santa carries a satchel of apples.

Buon Natalie

Originally Adopted by
Helen H. & Patrick Daley for Cathy, Tim & Tom,
and grandchildren Matt, Kim & Jack

Legacy Sponsor:
Dale Ann Schmitzer and Dennis Maruska
in loving memory of Kelsey ♥



Olde Santa Claus

Clement Clarke Moore, born 1779, is the author of “A Night Before Christmas.” The poem was first published on December 23, 1823. His poem did much to solidify the idea of St. Nicholas as a gift giver.

Most importantly, it changed him from a tall stately fellow to a jolly elf, trimming his robes with fur and giving him a twinkle in his eye! Santa Claus even replaced his horse and wagon with reindeer and a sleigh.

Originally Adopted by
Thunder Mountain Republican Women

Legacy Sponsor:
Sulfur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative



St. Nicholas

Bishop of Myra and His Angel Helper

St. Nicholas, Bishop of Myra, was the original Santa Claus. He is said to have been very wealthy and secretly gave away generous portions of his wealth to the needy, especially maidens and children. He was born in the 4th century in a small province of the Roman Empire of Asia Minor. With the emergence of a Christian continent, St. Nicholas became the official gift bringer. Traditionally, a little angel comes with him carrying a big book of names of boys and girls.

Originally Adopted by
Southern Arizona Contractors Association

Legacy Sponsor:
The North Pole Elves



The Windy Santa

*The lamp symbolizes
the light coming into the world
at Christmas.*

Originally Adopted by
Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative

Legacy Sponsor:
Virginia & Jim Clevon



The All American Santa

The development of Santa Claus is an integral part of our American heritage and he is a figure that people from all over the world acknowledge.

Originally Adopted by
Coca-Cola Bottling Co.

Legacy Sponsor:
City of Sierra Vista

SAVING SIERRA VISTA'S OLD WORLD SANTAS

Once they were first debuted in 2006, 53 hand-painted Old World Santas encircling the trees in Veterans Memorial Park quickly became a hallmark of the holiday season in Sierra Vista.

Many local families made visiting the Santas a tradition. Some would take an annual photo with a special Santa, measuring their children's growth by having them pose alongside their favorite jolly giant.

Former Sierra Vista mayor Tom Hessler and his wife Nancy spearheaded the effort to make the Santas, working with local artists Susan Bell, Sue Ann Vannoy, and Laura Sudduth, in addition to numerous other volunteers, to create these handmade pieces of art. The Santas were inspired by traditions and representations from around the world and each included a narrative or poem telling that Santa's story.

But the Santas' plywood construction had its limitations and despite efforts to minimize weathering and prevent wear and tear, the original Old World Santas deteriorated over time. In 2018 the Santas were no longer fit for display.

So the City worked with Stronghold Signs to have the original Santa artwork reproduced on high-performance vinyl and mounted on 4-foot by 8-foot weather-resistant aluminum substrate. This has created Santas that can last for decades.

To fund this project, the City developed a "Save the Santas" campaign and turned to the community for help. Individuals, businesses, and organizations quickly rose to the occasion by making \$550 donations to sponsor all 53 Santas for reproduction.

This booklet is a companion piece to the revitalized Old World Santas display. It shares the original narratives and poems that tell each Santa's story.

Thank you to the many people who helped create this beloved Sierra Vista tradition and to those who have helped restore it. Seeing the Santas appear in the park each year fosters a hometown feeling that we hope will connect generations of Sierra Vistans for many years to come.