



LSS NEWSLETTER

October 2021
Volume 3, Issue 4



Founder's Corner

It's Been a Tough Year ... It's Been a Good Year

As y'all know, we have had many Santa's and Mrs. Clauses take their Last Sleigh Ride over the past year or so. We have also had many who were very sick to thankfully regain their health with the help of so many of our prayers.

As I look at the demographics of Lone Star Santas, I understand that our average age is 65 with a range from ~40 to over 80. And many of us are overweight, have diabetes, heart, and other issues. Our saving grace is we are Jolly.

As your Founder, I often find myself somewhat depressed losing so many members who I've been fortunate to know and love over the past fifteen years. These folks have been inspiring to us and many have taken on real leadership roles.

Here is the good news!!! At Eatn' Meetn's, Roundups, and COT's, I see new members joining Lone Star Santas and wanting to serve and I see them volunteering. Our organization continues to grow as we spread our brand of Love, Hope and Joy. I truly believe we will continue to support our Santa Oath and the Principles, Mission, Core Values, and Goals of Lone Star Santas and will continue to grow and live on in perpetuity.

Love, Hope and Joy,
Santa Jim Fletcher

San Antonio/Central Texas Area Eatn' Meetn'

Date: October 30, 2021

Time: Saturday 2:00 p.m.

Location: Party room at Las Palapas, 4802 Walzem Rd, Windcrest, TX 78218

RSVP: jquein@hotmail.com or call 830.367.1133.

Attire: Comfortable Santa casual and/or your Lone Star Santa Vest. Remember your Name Badge

Eatn' Meetn' Breakfast Panhandle Area

October 23rd at 8:30 am the Amarillo/Panhandle area is having an Eatn' Meetn' Breakfast at Youngblood's Cafe, (620 SW 16th Ave, Amarillo, TX 79101). If you have any questions, please contact Santa Chrys Griffing (806-316-0009).

Santa Wonderland Annual Eatn' Meetn'

LSS 6th Annual Eatn' Meetn' at Santa Wonderland in Bryan/College Station will be on Thursday, December 30, 2021. LSS members will have free admission. Santa Wonderland makes donation to LSS while we are there. More Details to follow.

Plan to Gather for Round-Up 2022!

When? March 18-20, 2022

Where? Texas A&M Hotel & Conference Center

177 Joe Routt Blvd.
College Station, Texas 77840
(888) 654-4436

Theme: **Celebrating the JOY of Being Santa Every Day!**

Our Keynote Speaker will be Santa Joe Barney, member of the Santa Claus Hall of Fame.

We still have a few areas of service that we need to fill as soon as possible:

- Training and Education Chair – Plan, schedule, and coordinate our Break-out sessions on Saturday afternoon.
- Greeters & Volunteers – Plan and assign volunteers to help with various activities through-out the weekend.

To help as part of the Round-Up Committee, please contact Santa Ric Smith (281) 658-4942 or Mrs. Flo Smith-Claus (281) 658-3208 or by email RicFlo@att.net.

Hotel Registration is open, so get your rooms reserved as soon as possible. There is no charge to your credit card if you need to cancel, so please reserve soon! Be sure to mention that you want the Lone Star Santas block of rooms for a special money-saving rate! The conference facilities at TAMU Hotel & Conference Center are beautiful and spacious. The Guest Rooms are lovely and include a refrigerator and coffee maker.

Registration for the Round-Up will be available by October 15, if not already. Check your email and/or LSS Members-Only Facebook page for details and links. Round Up Early Bird registration is \$157 per person. Early Bird Cutoff will be a date to be determined in early 2022. After the Early Bird period, the rate increases to \$183 per person, so be sure to catch that lower price!

ISC - 2022 Atlanta Convention

The IBRBS is hosting International Santa Celebration 2022. April 28 to May 1, 2022, in Atlanta, GA, 30305. Reservations can still be made at

<https://events.eventzilla.net/e/international-santa-celebration--isc2020-atlanta-focused-on-our-future-2138720345#register>

Building Committee Moving Forward with New Facility

The Building Program Committee wants to bring all the members of Lone Star Santas up to speed on the latest Building Program news. We

are in the middle of one of the GREATEST efforts to help us to better respond to our mission of Convoy of Toys Disaster Relief for Children. Most of you know Santa Jim Fletcher been graciously donating the use of his property for storing toys and trailers since the inception of LSS. The organization has also been renting multiple storage facilities in Princeton, Houston and Waxahachie, Texas to store our trailers, equipment and donated toys. To help us better serve our designated regions when a disaster strikes, the building committee has been working hard to find a centralized area within the State of Texas and have several specific locations under consideration. Our new Convoy of Toys® Storage Facility will serve as a meeting place, to store our trailers, to inventory donated toys, provide a venue to sort toys and load the trailers. We plan to pay for this facility with donations designated only for building funds. There are currently an estimated 400 members in Lone Star Santas. If each member was able to donate \$100.00, this would gather about \$40,000.00, and along with other donations previously made, bring us close to our current goal. All tax-deductible donations to the Building Fund are appreciated and are kept confidential. Members who make an investment of \$250.00 or more will have the opportunity to have a personalized Paver Brick placed on the Donor's Walkway around the new facility. These Paver Bricks also make a great gift and wonderful way to celebrate and honor someone special in your life. You can donate at <https://lonestarsantas.org/donate-to-lss-building-fund/>. We hope we can count on your support of this important worthwhile effort and contribution to the future of Lone Star Santas Charities Inc. and Convoy of Toys.

Many Thanks,

Santa Russell Berrier
Building Committee Chair

Organization Changes

Treasury – Pauline Manes has graciously agreed to take over the duties of treasury. If anybody need reimbursements, please contact her:

Pauline Manes
9103 Benning Dr.
Houston TX 77031
Email pmanes46@hotmail.com
713-569-9274.

“Find-A-Santa” Page

If you want to be listed on the “Find-A-Santa” page on www.LoneStarSantas.org send Your picture and a brief write-up to Gene Goetz by October 31st at thegoetz@sbcglobal.net. The “Find-A-Santa” is being scrubbed of **non-current** members. Make sure you are current.

Background Checks & Insurance

Now is the time make sure your Background Checks & Insurance are current for the upcoming season. Get your background check before applying for insurance. Remember current background checks are required to be part of LSS. From [www.http://lonestarsantas.org](http://www.lonestarsantas.org) click on **BG Checks / Insurance** and follow the links.

LSS Communications

LSS use email and Facebook for the main communication methods. Emails are sent to members registered email address. If you are not receiving the emails check your profile email address on <https://lonestarsantas.org> and check your spam or junk mail. If you have Facebook and are not on our LSS Members Only page, please let Santa Gene Goetz know so we can get you added (santagene@att.net or 210.414.5499). It's a quicker way to get information out.

Welcome Our New Members!

(Members that have joined between June 6th to October 5th)

Shawn Apperson, *Conroe*
Raymond Beckley, *Corpus Christi*
Greg Bryan, *Lubbock*
John Clauder, *Arlington*
Jim Easterday, *Round Rock*

Ted Glodowski, *Tomball*
Ross Harper, *Groesbeck*
Sheryl Harper, *Groesbeck*
Michael Kelling, *Brenham*
Chris Lindemann, *Hockley*
Gary Mooring, *New Caney*
Michael Range, *Decatur*
Thomas Rominger, *Tomball*
Sam Tanksley, *Alvin*
Jerrell Thompson, *Crosby*

Last Sleigh Ride

It is with great sadness to report the following Santas and Mrs. Claus have taken their Last Sleigh Ride.

Paul Fanning – age 76, of Tyler, Texas passed away on Monday, August 9, 2021. Paul was born July 12, 1945. He was an Army veteran and an attorney. He joined LSS 2018.

Jerry England – age 72, of Sugar Land, Texas left us on Friday, August 27, 2021. Jerry was born October 5, 1948. He was LSS Treasurer for several years. He is greatly missed.

Debbie McKenzie – age 70, of Houston, Texas passed way on Sunday, 26, 2021. Debbie was a beloved member of LSS and the Northern Star of the ladies group Starzz.

Reid Fletcher – age 79, of Brookshire, Texas passed in his sleep on Sunday, October 10, 2021. Reid was one of the Founding Five Santas of Lone Star Santas. He was on the first ‘Convoy of Toys’® to Joplin, Missouri.

Special Accolades to Santa Reid Fletcher and Mrs. Claus Debbie McKenzie

As you all know, we have lost too many of our members who have made their Last Sleigh Ride. I would like to eulogize two of them ... Santa Reid Fletcher and Mrs. Claus Debbie McKenzie.

Both were true believers in Jesus Christ and lived in his ways. I am indeed sure the Lord was very pleased and welcomed them into his kingdom with joy.

I'm first going to talk a bit about Santa Reid. Santa Reid will be remembered as being one of the Founding Five Santas of Lone Star Santas. These members were: Santa Dale Bianche, Santa Gene Clayton, Santa Jim Fletcher. Santa Reid Fletcher, Santa Mike McIntyre. We have unfortunately lost track of Santas Dale and Gene. So, for now, only Santa Mike and I are left.

Santa Reid and his loving wife Florence, along with two of their granddaughters (dubbed Elves) drove their motor home on our first 'Convoy of Toys'® (2011) as we journeyed to Joplin, Missouri. At subsequent COTs, he photographed and provided photos of the 'Santa in the Chair' to families affected by natural disasters.

Santa Reid will be remembered as one of the most loving and giving Santas. He focused on kids of all ages. He always had a bag of small toys for the girls and boys along with pens or notebooks for the adults ... each with a message 'JESUS is the reason for all seasons!', or "Keep CHRIST in CHRISTmas!". I am personally in sorrow as he and I often referred us as 'Brothers from Other Mothers' as we shared the same last name.

Now I'm going to talk about our Mrs. Claus Debbie McKenzie. She will always be remembered as a lady with unbelievable energy and organizational skills. She will also be remembered as a most giving and loving person. She always focused on each individual she met. Of course, her main focus was on Santa Deryl. She and Deryl have been in 'the Santa business' for many years ... devoting so much of their efforts to this, while fitting it all in with their devotion to family and friends.

They were providers of Santas and Mrs. Clauses and scheduled all Santas and Mrs. Clauses at Santa's Wonderland near College Station. This has become a cherished association working with the owners and Lone Star Santas Charities, Inc. has been the

recipients of Santa's Wonderland's generosity for many years.

Most recently, in 2020, Debbie formed a 'women's auxiliary' to Lone Star Santas named STARZZ. She was named the 'North Star' as their guiding light. This group was formed with the role of Mrs. Claus in mind including costumes, acting, roles and supporting their Santa. But it was more than that. They also focus on fine-tuning their expertise in toy sorting, setting-up and managing our 'Convoy of Toys'® efforts.

It will take a team of people to replace all that she has done in the past. Debbie will be truly missed by all our Santa world.

Santa Jim Fletcher

News from the Board

- The Board held their Face 2 Face meeting September 11, 2021. Some of the items discussed were the following:
 - Membership Committee Report.
 - Building Committee Report.
 - It was decided to offer personalized Paver Bricks placed on the Donor's Walkway for donation of \$250.00 or more.
 - Policy & Procedure Manual
 - The PPM was present and review by the Board.
 - Election Nominating Committee
 - Recommendation for the committee were made.
 - The procedure of holding the election were discussed.
 - 2022 Round-Up Report
 - Keynote speaker was discussed.
 - Worksheet was present for discussion of comparison costs and fees collected.
 - Chaplains Report
 - COT Committee Report
 - Procedures on determining the need for a COT
 - Certain details and needs were discussed on running a COT.

LSS Chaplains

If you are in need or know of someone that needs a chaplain or are in the hospital, please contact Your LSS Chaplains:

N. Texas - Santa Barry Swindall (817) 269-9874
Houston - Santa "Doc" Brad Black (832) 628-6313
Central Texas area - Santa Sid Dowel (361) 813-9424

Membership Notes & Tips:

- If you are not getting the LSS emails, check the email address in your profile on www.LoneStarSantas.com. If you only view your Santa email address during the season, this not the email to have in your profile.
- Join **LSS Facebook** Page, it is a private group follow this link [LSS Charities, Inc.](#) then request to join. It is a great way to keep-up with our latest events!
- If you need a LSS shirts, hats, decals, magnetic signs, license plate holders, members vest or other merchandise contact:
Santa General Store.
<https://santageneralstorelss.com/> or email workshop@santageneralstore.com.

Current LSS Board Members

Voting

Santa Glenn Westberry – President
Mrs. Claus Jane Quein – Vice President
Mrs. Claus Pauline Manes - Treasurer
Sue Thomason – Secretary
Santa Gene Goetz – IT/Communication
Santa George Campbell – At Large
Santa Russell Berrier – At Large

Non-Voting

Santa Jim Fletcher, President Emeritus
– COT Lead
Santa Gary Bierschwale - Membership
Santa Deryl McKenzie - Marketing
Santa Jim Flinn - Marketing
Santa Doc Brad Black – Chaplain
Santa Sid Dowel - Chaplain
Santa Barry Swindall - Chaplain
Santa Tom Sorrels - Insurance

Santa Lance McLean – Lead Sleigh Master
Santa Bob Engle – Sleigh Master
Santa Ed Welsh – Assistant Sleigh Master
Santa Johnny Vykukal - Assistant Sleigh Masters
Contact info is in the Directory on the LSS webpage.

LSS Newsletter

If you have any suggestions or ideas for future editions or comments, or need some information publish in the next edition, please send Joy Phillips an email. joyphillips14@gmail.com;