

# LEARNING ABOUT



December, 2009

Web Site: [www.life.ucf.edu](http://www.life.ucf.edu)



## Santa Claus

By Erma Bombeck  
12-13-1993 column

I know Santa Claus personally.  
I met him when I was 5 years old.  
He brought me a desk, a doll and a tricycle. And we didn't even have a fireplace.  
I have believed in him ever since.



Through the years I have never stopped putting my faith in the magic he brings to the world at Christmas. People send greetings to friends they haven't seen in years. School children provide gifts and food to the have-nots. Churches are filled.

There are a lot of imposters out there—Santas who drop in for a beer after work, sell storm doors, alight from helicopters to dedicate a supermarket or hang out at the car wash. Tina Brown, former editor of *The New Yorker*, once rejected a picture of one of the pseudo-Santas for the cover of the magazine because it showed Santa relieving himself against a wall. The Santa business has clearly gotten out of hand.

I think we should have laws protecting him like we do the flag and the tags on pillows. Children have a tough time trying to find the real Santa without some yahoo dressing up in a cheap suit and phony beard, giving away soap samples at supermarkets.

I'll make it easy for you.

The real Santa Claus never owns an answering machine, goes on a diet or catches a cold. He never calls ahead. He doesn't carry a Medicare card, water ski, get food caught in his beard or eat fruitcake. He doesn't know what politically correct means.

He still employs dwarfs . . . not the vertically challenged. He never appears on talk shows, gets a divorce or worries about his reindeer being illegally parked. He doesn't pay taxes, own a tuxedo, endorse cat food or political candidates. If you see a thin Santa with low cholesterol, he's a fake. Don't even look twice at the Santa who is smoking a cigarette.

The real Santa is an enigma. He reveals himself only to people who believe.

I believe in him because I need to. In a less-than-perfect world, where every day our anger for one another erupts into acts of violence, I need to know that once a year a mythical man in a red suit appears to remind us that there is still some goodness out there.

Accept no substitutes.





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**NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING  
OF  
THE MEMBERS OF THE LEARNING INSTITUTE FOR ELDERS  
AT  
THE UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA**

The annual meeting of membership of LIFE at UCF will be held on **Tuesday, December 8, 2009, at 11:30 a.m. in the Cape Florida, third floor of the UCF Student Union Building.**

This brief meeting will be held to conduct several key tasks as required by the LIFE by-laws. They are:

- \* Approve the treasurer's report for the fiscal year ended July 31, 2009, as published in the August 2008 newsletter.
- \* Election of six members to the Board of Directors for a three-year term to end December 31, 2012. The following members have been nominated (Additional candidates may be nominated from The floor with the permission of the nominee.):
  1. Martin Wiener
  2. Roy Scherer
  3. Elizabeth Ingham
  4. Alice Reinhardt
  5. Charles (Chuck) Fritz
  6. Ian King

Please plan to attend. We look forward to your participation on December 8, 2009.

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**DON'T FORGET!** Classes begin again on January 12, 2010.



fa la la la la ... la la la la



# Good Tidings

## \$28,224 in Grant Awards

The Awards Committee met on November 5, 2009, to select the recipients of the year's annual awards. The committee is comprised of LIFE's Executive Committee, active past presidents of LIFE, the UCF liaison and a selectee from LIFE's general membership. Phil Rosenberg has served in that capacity this year.

LIFE traditionally awards two types of grants, directed and competitive. This year we funded seven (7) directed and twenty-one (21) competitive grants. The Board of Directors approved the committee's recommendation to obligate \$28,224 this year.

**Awardees will be honored at LIFE's Annual Awards Luncheon on December 8, 2009.** Each successful applicant may have one representative attend the luncheon as a guest of LIFE. Our awards are routinely processed and tracked through the UCF Foundation. So far LIFE has contributed over \$250,000 to a variety of UCF projects. 2009-2010 Awardees are as follows:

*Submitted by: Douglas V. Garner, Committee Chair*

### DIRECTED

- |                              |                     |
|------------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Athletic Department       | Mr. Joe Hornstein   |
| 2. Interdisciplinary Studies | Dr. Michael Hampton |
| 3. Global Perspectives       | Mr. John Bersia     |
| 4. Parking Services          | Ms. Ina Carpenter   |
| 5. Psychology                | Dr. Robert Dipboye  |
| 6. Student Union             | Ms. Jenny Hartman   |
| 7. Library                   | Mr. Barry Baker     |

### COMPETITIVE

- |                               |   |
|-------------------------------|---|
| 1. Burnet Honors College      | Dr. Alvin Wang                                  |
| 2. CAH/COE                    | Drs. Robert Kenny & Glenda Gunter               |
| 3. English Dept.              | Dr. Barry Mauer                                 |
| 4. History Dept.              | Drs. Peter Larson & Connie Lester               |
| 5. English Dept.              | Dr. Terry Thaxton                               |
| 6. Psychology Dept.           | Mr. Davin Pavlas                                |
| 7. Theatre Dept.              | Dr. Steven Chicurel                             |
| 8. Grad/Undergrad Studies-    | Ms. Carreen Knapt                               |
| 9. Anthropology Dept.         | Mr. George Long                                 |
| 10. College of Medicine-      | Dr. Kiminobu Sugaya                             |
| 11. Political Science         | Dr. Terri Fine                                  |
| 12. Psychology                | Ms. Anne Sinatra & Dr. Valerie Sims             |
| 13. Women's Research Center   | Dr. Leslie Lieberman                            |
| 14. Music Dept.               | Dr. Ayako Yonetoni                              |
| 15. English Dept.             | Dr. Melody Bowdon                               |
| 16. Biology                   | Dr. William Crampton                            |
| 17. Health Mgt. & Information | Drs. Reid Oetjen, Dawn Oetjen & Jennifer Sumner |
| 18. School of Social Work     | Dr. Ana Leon                                    |
| 19. Chemistry                 | Dr. Jerzy Mierzwa                               |
| 20. Interdisciplinary Studies | Ms. Marcelle Turner                             |
| 21. UCF Opera                 | Mr. Thomas Potter                               |





## MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING

A Summary

November 2, 2009

**President's Report** – Chuck recognized Betty Ingham's work preparing the membership directory. 217 copies were made initially.

**Vice-President's Report** – Ann reported that the Awards Luncheon will be held December 8. Committee will meet tomorrow.

**Secretary's Report** – Alice thanked the Fritzes for taking minutes and distributing them in her absence. Minutes of October board meeting were approved.

**Treasurer's Report** – No report in Kermit's absence.

### STANDING COMMITTEES

**UCF Liaison** Dick Tucker commented on Provost Hickey's memo re: "new proposals designed to enhance the quality and efficiency of our undergraduate instructional programs." Contacts would likely come TO us, not FROM us, so no action is necessary. The UCF-LIFE Partnership Agreement is to be signed tomorrow. The UCF President, Alison Shetler, Mike Hampton and Chuck Fritz will make brief statements and sign the document along with Life board secretary Reinhardt.. LIFE members are to be reminded that parking is legal in student parking lots only.

**Membership** 56 names on waiting list. Four parking passes have not been picked up.

**Curriculum** is almost completed for Spring 2011.

**Marketing** No report.

**By-Laws & Policies** Ed Haddad reported one change reflecting current practice for dues collection. A copy is on file with the Secretary.

### AD HOC COMMITTEES

**Scholarships & Awards** Doug Garner reported committee will meet tomorrow to screen applications and determine amount of grants. Doug acknowledged Bert Blau's efforts at creating a spreadsheet with application summaries. Number of requests are down, according to Doug.

**Audio** Roy Scherer asked that he be called on his cell phone when LIFE members have announcements for meetings. Suggested that some verbal announcements could be put on slides.

**Sunshine** No report. Betty Howe is presently ill but will continue to serve as chair.

**Safety** Carolyn Fast reported no incidents. More space has been left between rows of chairs at Tuesday meetings with a designated area for wheelchairs.

**Discussion Group** Chuck reported on continuing problems in the group due to little or no growth. Ralph Schaeffler, the leader, would like a replacement.

**Historian** Joyce Robel continues to do a good job.

**Honors Program** Marty Wiener will have a schedule for Honors Program events after the first of the year. The proposed LIFE campus orientation tour was discussed. His goal is to have itinerary ready to publish by December. A virtual tour is possibility for those who cannot walk a great distance.

### UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Jack Gresham reported that 137 people have signed up for the Burnham Research Facility Tour.

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## HAPPY HANNUKAH!

### The Festival of Lights

First candle lighting in the evening Friday, December 11, 2009 (the first "day" of Chanukah being Saturday, December 12.) Candle lighting is each evening thereafter until Friday, December 18.

Chanukah is based upon historical events spanning an era from about 165 b.c.e. to about 80 c.e. Documented by historians such as Josephus, the scroll of the Hasmoneans, as well as modern scholars, the laws and traditions are set out primarily in the Babylonian Talmud tractate Shabbath. While the agreement was that one light per household per night would certainly suffice to commemorate the miracles of Chanukah, the practice of each person lighting an increasing number of lights from one to eight corresponding to each night has universally been accepted as the Chanukah candle custom.

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# Happy Holidays

## A CHRISTMAS MEMORY

There are so many wonderful stories written about Christmas, but one of my favorites is A Christmas Memory by Truman Capote. It has become a tradition of sorts for me to read this short story every year, taking time to reflect on its meaning. A young boy and his mentally-challenged relative have their own traditions and figure out a way to make the holiday special. It will make yours special as well.

--The Editor



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## KWANZAA

Kwanzaa is a week-long, African American holiday observance held from December 26 to January 1. Timed to serve as an alternative to the growing commercialism of Christmas, it was founded in 1966. Kwanzaa is not a religious holiday, but a cultural one, a syncretic festival, based on various elements of the first harvest celebrations widely celebrated in Africa around the 10<sup>th</sup> month of the year.

The name Kwanzaa derives from the Swahili phrase "matunda ya kwanza", meaning "first fruits". Each of the seven days of Kwanzaa is dedicated to one of the following principles: unity, self-determination, collective work & responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose, creativity, and faith.



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E. E. CUMMINGS

little tree  
little silent Christmas tree  
you are so little  
you are more like a flower

who found you in the green forest  
and were you very sorry to come away?  
see i will comfort you  
because you smell so sweetly

i will kiss your cool bark  
and hug you safe and tight  
just as your mother would,  
only don't be afraid

look the spangles  
that sleep all the year in a dark box  
dreaming of being taken out and allowed to shine,  
the balls the chains red and gold the fluffy threads,

put up your little arms  
and i'll give them all to you to hold  
every finger shall have its ring  
and there won't be a single place dark or unhappy

then when you're quite dressed  
you'll stand in the window for everyone to see  
and how they'll stare!  
oh but you'll be very proud

and my little sister and i will take hands  
and looking up at our beautiful tree  
we'll dance and sing  
"Noel Noel"