

# 2023

# Christmas Edition



**petersburg**  **pilot**  
PETERSBURG, ALASKA

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Our local traditions are bricks that help build our wonderful community identity. At Christmastime they are all those things we love about the holiday that make people say, “ Come on up for Christmas in Petersburg! It’s so much fun and there is a tremendous feeling of community everywhere you go! And you go everywhere!” Many of these elements in our common culture have grown up since the town began.

An early newspaper was The Progressive. It reported in on the 1912 Grand Opening of Sons of Norway.

*From The Progressive, January 18,1913*

On Christmas Day the Sons of Norway opened their spacious new hall to the public with an informal reception and most enjoyable entertainment consisting of moving pictures and a concert by Petersburg’s excellent band. The Sons of Norway are to be commended for their up to date home with all modern conveniences , thereby showing a progressive spirit and keeping abreast of the growth of this thriving little city. We join with the public in expressing our appreciation of the addition of such a comfortable social hall for the town and in wishing them the greatest success both socially and financially.

And it is still going on at Sons of Norway at Christmas....julebukking is this Friday from 2 to 4 and everyone is invited.

A later newspaper, The Petersburg Press, reported the first community Christmas Tree. At first electricity in Petersburg was inadequate for such a thing. Whenever a movie was to be shown, the rest of the town had to go

dark. But commercial grade power came in from Crystal Lake in 1924 and the big tree downtown was lighted in 1930.

*From the Petersburg Press, December 26, 1930*

Close to 400 bags of candy and nuts were given away at the first Community Christmas Tree that has ever been staged in Petersburg. The children marched in double file from the school to City Hall where a large tree, obtained by Lloyd T. Swanson and Ed Nelson made an appropriate setting for a program. Mayor Earl Ohmer opened the program with a few remarks. After this many songs were sung by the entire audience, led by Miss Christensen. Immediately after completing the song program the original Santa Claus appeared on the scene, speaking a few words to the anxious crowd of children. After Santa Claus’ speech the pushing and pulling and stamping started. Everyone wanted to be the first to talk to Santa Claus. The crowd was kept very orderly by the able assistance of the Petersburg Public School faculty until each and every one had received their Christmas gift. The elaborately lighted Christmas tree which has been put up and lighted by the city will remain until after the holidays.

Later in that decade we have a report on what original julebukking in Petersburg was like. Brought to the community by the Norwegian pioneers, it was mostly in homes until it was embraced by just about everyone, including business owners. This is from a memoir by Justine Gronseth, who grew up on Excel Street in the 1930s, the days of wooden streets. Her father, Chris Gronseth, was the black-

smith who made gaff hooks for the fleet.

*From the Memoir of Justine Gronseth*

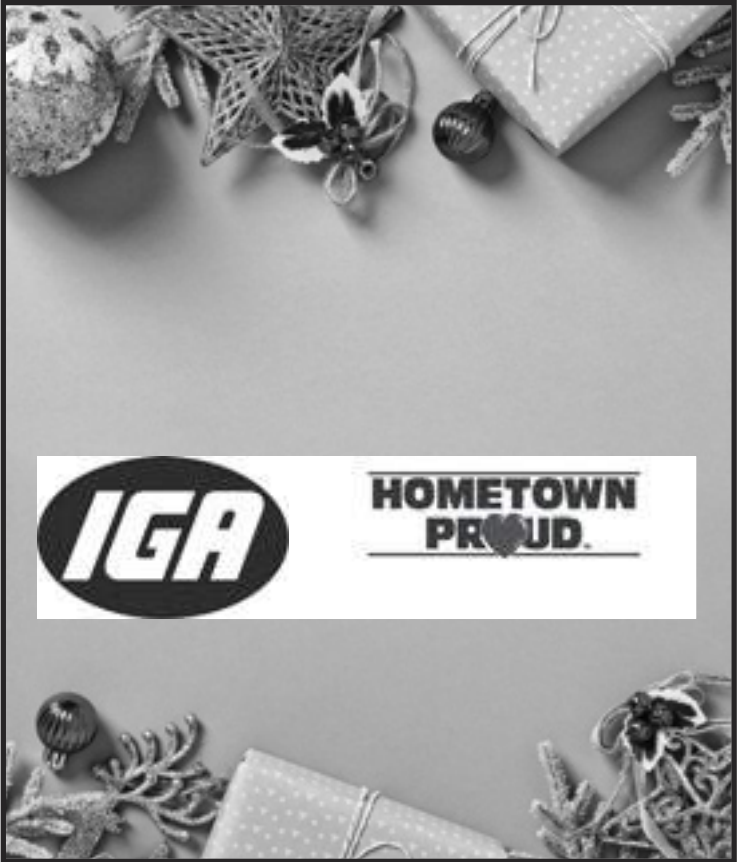
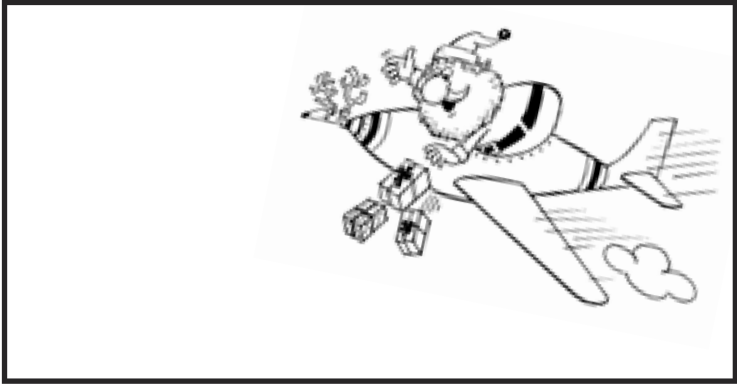
Christmas, the most beautiful of seasons is a cherished memory. Dad always found a perfect spruce tree and it had to be trimmed just so. I remember the candles on the tree. Such excitement in seeing them lit! When I was small Santa Claus showed up at the Sons of Norway Hall and at home. Mom baked and cooked for days and the table was loaded with goodies, with emphasis on the Norwegian dishes. It was lutefisk and rommegrot without fail on Christmas Eve. It was the custom to tuck the kids into bed and then the julebukking began. Sometimes it seemed like everyone in town was in our house and Mom and Dad were busy in the kitchen piling up trays of refreshments.

Eleanor Thomassen was young in the 1940s and had a julebukking memory from that era she related in a newspaper interview in the 1980s.

*From the Petersburg Press, December 22, 1983*

At Christmastime, when it was clear and cold, we went julebukking in the back of a truck. We went from one end to the next end of town. We’d have a drink at each house and we picked up more people on the way and then we’d go dancing. Pickled herring, smoked salmon, dried deer meat, Norwegian cookies and hot drinks and wine kept the julebukkers going. Adults and kids sang carols around the community Christmas Tree. All the kids turned out to see the tree decorated and visit with Santa Claus at the tree.

In the modern day churches, organizations, and families here have built up their own traditions. The Oxford Carolers have been singing around town for decades. Our community Christmas tree is a beacon in the center of the community and Julebukking is here to stay!





# Letters To Santa

Dear Santa,  
I want a real pet bunny like Cameron. I want a farming truck to carry hay bales. The hay bales go in the back and the guy drives in the front. A real guy. The big barn and farm animals. I want a skateboard too! I would like a toy tractor. I will leave a carrot out on the kitchen counter for your reindeer. I'll leave cookies for you.

Thank you Santa. How are Mrs. Claus and you?

Love, Levi, age 4

Dear Santa,  
For Christmas I would like a Gabby Dollhouse with all of

the people included in it. I want a baby bear and cheetah just like the toys we have at school. I also want a pink mermaid please!

How are the reindeer doing? I hope you are doing well. Thank you for the presents!

Love, Maeve, age 3

Dear Santa,  
Merry Christmas! I hope your reindeer are having a good time! I hope you are having a good time! I hope it's warm and cozy and not cold at the North Pole. And I hope your elves are making sure nothing bad happens to you, Santa.

For Christmas I want a Barbie dreamhouse and a Gabby Dollhouse and a Barbie car and some toys from the hardware store like stuffies and princess dolls and a Snow White diary.

And I love you Santa. This is the last thing, can you get me a real pet bunny? Say hello to Mrs. Claus for me. I will leave a carrot for your reindeer. I will leave cookies for you in the living room. I hope you have a good time.

Dear Santa,  
I want a scooping Transformer dump truck! Thank you for the presents!

Love, Trygve, age 4

Dear Santa,  
I want a Gabby Dollhouse. And I want a Gabby Dollhouse kitchen out of Legos. And I want an open Lego Gabby Dollhouse. I want another Gabby Dollhouse like on my mom's computer!



OLA RICHARDS / Petersburg Pilot  
First graders from Rae C. Stedman Elementary line up to drop their letters to Santa in the mailbox outside the offices of the Petersburg Pilot.

I saw you at the hardware store! I saw REAL Santa. I love Maeve and you, Santa!

Love, Flora, age 3

Dear Santa,  
I wondering if this year I could maybe get some Jurassic world toy specificaly I would like the Hammond collection trex But if you can't it's completely fine and I understand Have a good Christmas!

From: Liam, age 10

bear Santa  
Santa I want a mini claw machine and a Playstationthree fortnite bisk Please and some books

From Torin

Dear Santa,  
I hope you had a grate year. For chrismis I hope... to get a... pet, sun and moon crimson invasion boosterbox, blastoise stuffy, maga ray quaza japanyz v Dragupult, japunyz vmax ushefu, axolotl, Naruxo book seres 1-27, oculus, stuffy gragon holding tabasco, Amoungus stuffy fron Dragon ball Z, the seven Dragon balls, super form guku, cat plushy, plasma ball, detectiv peckuchu returns, Zeldu, Vidyo game case, pro controler with lightning bolts/switch cotroler/blue fire/pro conthroler/Stars/Swich conthroler/green/voilet, Zelda swich controlers, rock cit and choclet.

Sincerly, Cooper

Dear, Santa  
You might not give me all of this stuf, But I realy want a grimace study, grimace shake stufy too. I would alsoe want mini brand as well. And a knew bike! I realy, Realy want PRIME! I want mistery and more. Can I alsoe have a lot of rere Pokemon too. Oh can I get a ridil Book as well? This is not for me but can I have cat toy's for Rufus! Thank you So much Santa thats all I want. Good time!!!!!! The end

from: Penny

Continued on page 4





# Letters To Santa



LIZZIE THOMPSON / Petersburg Pilot

Pictured left to right, Maeve Uppencamp, Cameron Versteeg, Flora Smith, and Trygve Broschat drop off their letters in Santa’s mailbox.

Continued from page 3

**Dear Santa**  
i have Been a good Boy. I would Like A 4 Powerwheel truck And boat. Wow  
*Love, Rowdy*

**dear santa**  
eLmo/stuffy  
LiLy CLOthes  
arrows LittLe  
bunkbed for LiLy  
CLOthes 7-7-A  
*Sandra*

**Dear Santa,**  
This year I want a new TV, so I can watch cartoons. I would also like light up rollerskates, a new raincoat for my dog, doggie booties, a barbie pop reveal, magic mixies, rainbow corn, pikmi pops, cookeez makery plushie bakery play oven, my own suitcase, new fidgets, the big squishmallows, fingerlings, a gymnastic bar, hoverboard, minibrands, new socks, moisturizer bubble, drunk elephant and freeze dried

candies.  
Ps. I would like to get my mom a pug.  
*Love, Aubrianna, age 9*

**Dear: Santa**  
My name is Rosie Lohr. And I Love the Kindness you bring to my house. For this christmas I want:  
1. A ipod that I can search anything up.  
2. A spy drone (no sound)  
3. A automatic train set  
4. A suger smoothie ball (for dad)  
5. And last but not least another pink deer just exactly like rose.  
Oh! And also I am going to leave cookies for you.  
ho! ho! ho! ho!  
thank you Santa  
*From: Rosie*

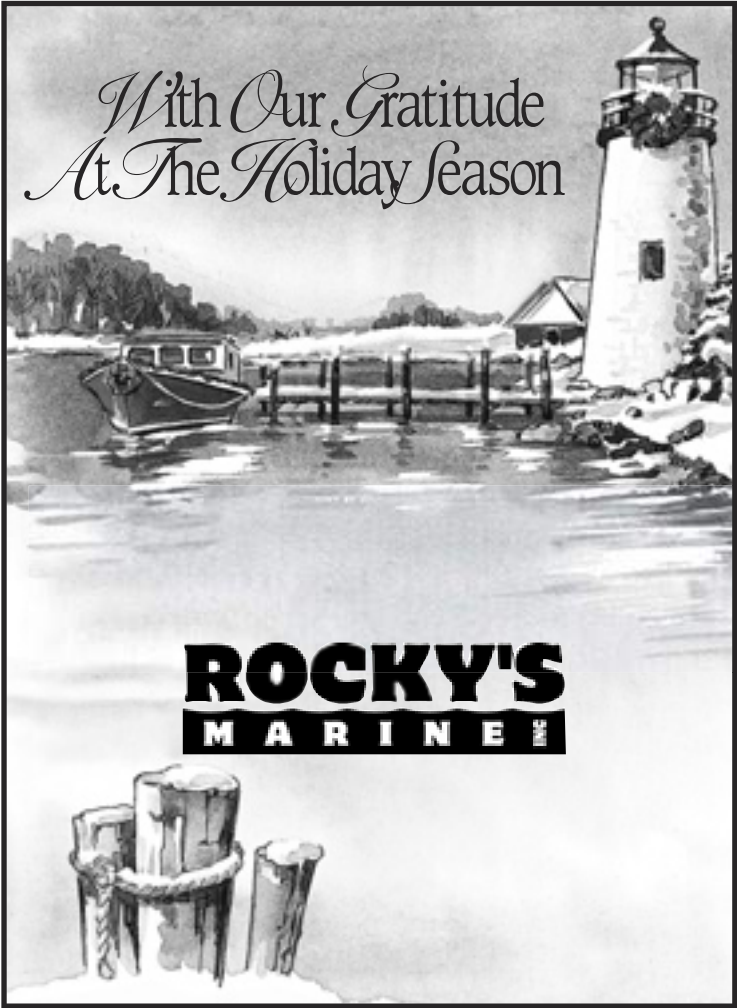
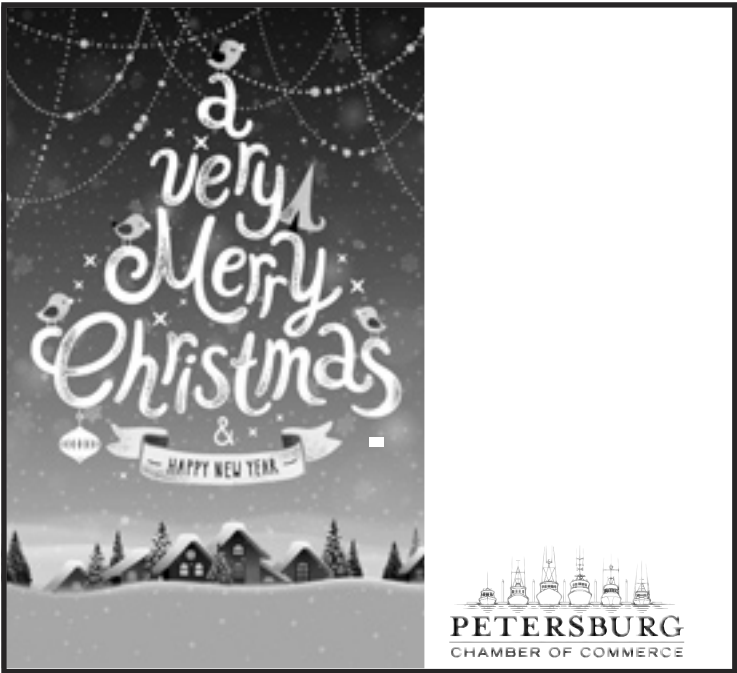
**Dear Santa,**  
I love all the toys that you give to kids and I love all the presents you bring for me. I hope you have a great Christmas holiday and you

make Christmas perfect.  
This year I would like a Big Lego race car that has a pirate ship by it. And a pokemon book with pokemon cards in it.  
*Finn*

**Dear Santa,**  
My name is Sawyer. I am 7 years old. This year I have been: nice  
These are three things I am wishing for:  
2 air sott guns, RC plane, Phone  
I will set out coolies and milk for you on Christmas Eve.  
*From, Sawyer*

**Dear Santa,**  
My name is Evie. I have been very good this year. I hope you bring me oL I want is a nisee moovee hi oL I want is pepl to be happy.  
oL I wont is a gud day.  
I'll set out cookies!  
*Fum, Evie*

Continued on page 5



20 7 GENERAL EXCELLENCE FIRST PLACE NATIONAL NE SPAPER ASSOCIATION AND  
NAMED BEST WEEKLY NE SPAPER IN 20 3 & 20 5 BY T E ALASKA PRESS CLUB

**petersburg pilot**  
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**P Insu nce!**



# Letters To Santa

Continued from page 4

Dear Santa,  
My name is ole Buotte and I am 6 years old. I have been litell bit bad but moslee nice

for Christmas I want a Kids didital watch, 1000 dolers, and socks

Love, ole

Dear Santa,  
My name is Annika. I am in the 1st grade. Foor christmas I wood like 1. A haPe chrismas. Foor crismis I Wood LiK a eLF on The shLFe but Jist to Hav Fun!

Dear Santa,  
Merry christmas this year I would love a XBOX and a vr headset PokoMon 151 Booster Box and Nike shoes thack you!  
from, Lincoln, age 7

Dear Santa,  
Merry christmas! This year I would like a PS5, xbox, vr headset, yeoda Plushies, Nike shoes nintendo switch Merry christmas  
from Ben, age 7

Dea Santa Merry christmas. this year i would like a home work desk and a pokemon binder and polemom cards and Niting stuff. and Hacha Bulls, fishing Pul a pink one, a nome Book and Beeds.  
Thank you  
Love Blayre, age 8

Dear Santa Mrry christmas! this year I would like a 1. furby 2. a blankit 3. a santa stuffy 5. a stuffy reindeer 5. a elf on the shelf 6. a fish. Mrry christmas  
From natalie, age 7.

Dear Santa,  
Can I please have:  
2 BIG JARS of CRANBERRY SAUCE, 4 BOOBy TRAPS, A 2 PERSON WALKY TALKY SET, SILLY PUDDY, (very sticky) RIBON, AN ARMY GUY SUIT, AND STRING, GLUE, GOOGALY EYES, A NET AND A TOOL BOX!!  
THANK YOU!!  
LOVE, abby, AGE: 8

Dear Santa  
my name is Jimmy For Christmas I would like PS land PS 56 RC car with remote RoBot with Remote merry ChRistmas  
LOVE, Jimmy

Furby Barbie's new Sparkaly church dresse's. The BarBie that is waterproof.  
A blanket with our family on it.

Biggish minnie & mickey mouse stuffy. Christmas dresses.  
Charlie

American doll girl's with a wet drink system. Dr. Squish Squish ball maker. Elf on the shelf. Big barbie dream house with Play furniture. a lot of film.  
Brenda

Continued on page 6



## Warmth & Wonder

at this magical time of year

Merry Christmas

k f r  
tru t g u wt  
ur bu !

**Anchor**  
PROPERTIES

Bennett McGrath  
Broker/Owner  
p: 907.772.3300 | w: www.apalaska.com



Photo courtesy of Debra O'Gara

Petersburg Aunties House gathered over the past two weeks to create holiday stockings for the elders and residents at PMC's Long Term Care. The design for the stocking was made by Alberta Aspen, one of the original organizers of the Juneau Aunties House, part of the Juneau Tlingit and Haida Community Council. The Petersburg Aunties House will be a place for those who want to learn, share, and teach regalia sewing, and other arts and crafts.

## The holiday season fast approaches

from  
the Arrowhead LP Gas Crew

9 1/2 Mile Mitkof Highway 907-772-7419  
[www.arrowheadlpgas.com](http://www.arrowheadlpgas.com)  
Arrowhead LP Gas

the Bahá'í Faith

Fom B ' dW g



# Letters To Santa

Continued from page 5

V max’s, Flipamellow  
Pika’chew & charzar.  
fake nails, American doll  
girl furby

Natalie

Dear Santa

I’ve been a very good girl  
this year. I would like a  
rainbow unicorn  
Squishmallow and a remote  
controlled dino.

Love, Sophie, age 4

I hope you can grant my  
wishe’s Santa clause!!!!

Especially number 14!!  
Christmas list!!!  
Phone, tiny gumball  
machine, a bucket of candy., a  
robot Gog with a Remote  
controller, camelBak, its a Back  
pack Butt you drink out of it.  
Art Kit. Air Pods. a small  
bag of candy corns! nintendo  
swich.  
Vet kit for animals , wet  
Brush. Bunny keychaines for  
Back Packs, iPod case, mom’s  
life to be easier.

Love, Noelle, age 8  
Bye Santa!!

Dear Santa  
I want a red rIder BB gun.  
BLack dragon.

RYLaND, age 5

hi Santa, my name is  
Carter i. am 8. Please I would  
like an xbox5. I will leave you  
milk and cookies I an in 3rd  
grade

Dear Santa I would like for  
christmas is call of duty MW3  
2023 xbox one, ZHENDUO Gel  
Ball Blaster toy Blaster with  
Large Hopper, 50000pcs Warter  
Beads, xbox headset, charging



dock for xbox, controller, dino  
nuggies pillow, micro plastic  
ducks, spring trap bonnie  
plush

By: Riley, age 10

to Santa, from Kinsley. I am  
six. I Love you. Can you PlZ  
bring me BarBie house, and a  
heart Plushie, and graPe flavor.  
slime  
thank you. I am in 1st grade

Dear Santa,  
I want a stuffy Sonic, orange  
dragon. That’s all I want.

Mason, age 3 ½

Dear Santa,  
my name is Madi and I am  
in frst grade this hcristmas I am  
wishing for 1 a polly pocket 2 a  
pink camera 3 a brbea wordr ob

Love, Madi

Dear Santa,  
My name is Ava Sevesron  
and I am sis years old. I don’t  
no if I have been bad our nose.  
Four christmas I wot a guball  
massheen penees and a sreekit  
room.

love, Ava

Continued on page 7



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OLA RICHARDS / Petersburg Pilot

Petersburg’s Girl Scouts and friends sang carols around Petersburg last week. They popped into the Pilot while making their rounds spreading holiday cheer in downtown businesses.

REAL FOOD

SALTY PANTRY

MARKET & DELI

REAL FOOD

We Wish You A

Merry Christmas

Happy New Year

W e l c o m e

M o n d a y, Dec. 25 t h r o u g h F r i d a y, Dec. 26

M o n d a y, J a n. 1 t h r o u g h M o n d a y, J a n. 8

R e s t a u r a n t

Tues d a y S a t u r d a y

5:00 m - 2:00 m

M o n d a y:

5:30 m - 7:30 m

f r i d a y

14 Harbor Way

772-2665

# Letters To Santa

Continued from page 7

Dear Santa,  
My name is Kaleb I have been very good this year. I hope you bring me race cars sharks

I'll set out cookies!  
From, Kaleb

Dear Santa,  
My name is freya Stolpe and I am 6 years old. I have been nice. For christmas I want a

gloing wotch, rlrscates an money.

Love, Freya

Dear Santa,  
My name is Heidi Versteeg. and I am 7 years old. I have been good most of the year. For Christmas I want a omg dolls, dolls, and LoL dolls.

Love, Heidi

Dear Santa,  
My name is Vance Smith and I am 6 years old I have been good. For Christmas I want a, ipad, lageo boat, and lageo dragin.

Love, Vance

Dear Santa,  
My name is Katie Thomas and I am 6 years old. I have been nice this year. I want a puppee, a mrmad dol and a lot of munee

Love, Katie

Dear Santa,  
My name is SoPHia ThomaS and I am 6 years old. I have been good most of the year. Fori Christmas I Wanta doLL a firee doll and barbee.

Love, SoPHia

deAR SANTA  
mY Name is LiLYJUNe WiLLiAms FoR ChRisSTmAS i wouLd LiKe A BarRBie CAR ThAT is PURPlE ANd i WouLd LiKe iT To Be SuPeR FANCY ALso mAY i hAVe AN ALiCORN?

I LOB You SANTA

LiLY

dear santa  
I want a blak mustang for me and my dad and a signe that save do not come in dad

Continued on page 8



K I, Kevin,  
S m, D vid, J e P,  
J e V, S h,  
P m & S v nn

HAPPY

HOLIDAYS

... and K to

our volunteers, members and donors.

907 5 8 09  
PO B x 7,  
Pe e s u g, Ak 99833

ENDING  
OUR BE T  
AT THE  
HOLIDAY

H p h p b k u u u  
v w v b f w u  
w c v u p ck

CITY CARGO  
907-772-3010



# Letters To Santa

**Continued from page 7**  
and I need a carburetor for my  
for wheeler

*From your friende  
Brandt*

## Dear Santa

I want a real TurTle and  
everyThing That iT needs To  
Survive and I want a  
ninTendo Please

James

Dear Santa,

Thank you for my presents last year. I would like roller shoes, a paddle board and gymnastics equipment. Star and Nico, my dog's, would like new toys. Don't eat too many cookies!

*P.S. I also Love stuffies.*  
Love, TuLa

Dear Santa,

Merry (Almost) Christmas! This year, I don't want toys or any of that. This might be big, but I want an iPad. Even tho I already have one, i'm ready to give it away. It's slow and I can't download things such as, Disney+, Hulu, etc. Any of the games I try to download it just goes back to the home screen.

If I got a new iPad, I would be able to have more chores when traveling, And if you know me, I travel A LOT. This year we're leaving out pretzel carmel things. My brothers are coming for christmas, make sure to get them something nice too.

*Merry Christmas!*  
*Lucia, age 12*

Dear Santa Claus,

This year I would like, APerfume of any Kind, any watch, and wire less headphones. Also do know

the show the amazing digital  
Cirrus? If you do I would like  
a stuffed animal of Jax. (The  
purple rabbit). Also I would  
like (Maybe) an I Phone 15.  
lastly can I have a Harry  
Potter Poster? Thats all bye!!

*Merry Christmas!*  
*Ivy, age 10*

Dear Santa,

I want a Paw Patrol House & Paw Patrol toys. I also want a farm with animals & two humans. And a toy gun and a toy hammer this Big.

*Love, NOLAN*

Dear Santa,

I want for Christmas is a fish robot that has batteries and lipstick with a magnet in the lips, and the fish follows the magnet.

*Bristol, 2nd grade*

Dear Santa,

I want a Artumes for  
Christmas please merry  
Christmas your the best.

Greyson

Dear Santa,

I would like E. Minny vers  
That is all i wat!

CORA, 2nd grade

Dear Santa,

you are the best Santa ever.  
I want legos and lego ninjas  
and I want racecars.

*Jeremiah, 2nd grade*

Dear Santa,

I think it is awesome that you can deliver all of those presents all in one knight? Do your randier ever get tiered?

Ether way if do get or what  
just give a SKATEBOARD!!  
Merry Christmas!

*Margo, 2nd grade*

**Continued on page 9**



Mitkof Dance Troupe (MDT) presented The Nutcracker in Wright Auditorium on Sat., Dec. 9 and Sun., Dec. 10. MDT is a local nonprofit organization with an enormous participation of dancers and community volunteers. The troupe dedicated this performance of the Nutcracker to Mindy and Rodney Anderson for all their support over the years. Without them MDT would not exist.

Candy Canes was directed by Alice Wegener. Pictured left to right are (back row) Sabrein Cole, Audrey Boggs, Brea Randrup, Ivy Worhatch, (Middle row) Daphne Brantuas, Lora Lombard, Ella Crump, (Front row sitting) Ryle McGrath, Johnnie Hess, and Libby Taiber.



Kelsey Lambe choreographed the Party Scene during which Freya Tucker is lifted across the stage by Canek Sosa.



Wegener also choreographed Kids with Toys, left to right with their teddy bears are Chloe Morrison, Kaylee Lenihan.



During Waltz of the Snowflakes, pictured left to right are Gabriele Whitacre, Maria Toth, Kate Thompson, and Mette Miller and Hannah Slaven bottom left corner

Photos courtesy of Kellii Wood





Alice Wegener choreographed the battle scene between the rats and the soldiers. Left to right are Anya Pawuk, Devyn Flint, Jozlyn Turland, Daisy Morrow, Cadum Whitethorn, Summer Wells, and Anya Curtiss.

Kaili Watkins choreographed the Angels, seen here are Madalina Ward in back, Brynnleigh Hudson in front.



Photos courtesy of Kellii Wood



LIZZIE THOMPSON / Petersburg Pilot



Nearly twenty kids filled the stage during Wegener's March Kids dance, seen here are Helmi Versteeg and Atlas Short.

Marzipan's choreography was by Olivia Reid. Pictured left to right are Cadence Flint, Kaija Wood, Sophia Cotta, Emi Anderson, Arielle Tucker, Jillian Versteeg, Jozlyn Turland and Maelle Boitor.

**On the Cover:**  
Caroline Crain did the choreography for the Spanish Hot Chocolate number, starring Emi Anderson, Maelle Boitor, Sophia Cotta, Cadence Flint, Arielle Tucker, Jozlyn Turland, Jillian Versteeg, and Kaija Wood.

# Letters To Santa

Continued from page 8

**Dear Santa,**  
Hello! What I want for Christmas is a giant teddy Bear a vetrinary book, a Pet Budgie, and a very merry Christmas!

*Beatriz, age 11*

**Dear Santa,**  
My Name is Charles and I am Six years Old. I hove been nise. For Christmas I Wont tablet a ball and a woch

*Love, Charles*

**Dear Santa,**  
mi Name is Lawson and can I haf for christmas I ot is a air craft carrier with Lago Bots, Planes 310,000 Pokemon kords 1 Branoo teevee. And a skif.

**Dear Santa,**  
My name is sigrid  
This christmas I am wishing for: A crama, joy, evr buty to be happy

*From, sigrid*

**Dear Santa,**  
My name is Henry  
I have been very good this year. I hope you bring me a R/C car and a poemos and Nurf gum I'll set out cookies!

*By, Henry*

**Dear Santa,**  
My name is Hayden  
I have been very good this year. I hope you bring me Matching Jammies I'll ser out cookies!

*From, Hayden*

**Dear Santa,**  
My name is Mya  
I have been very good this year. I hope you bring me PS 5, Snow on Christmas Pokemon, I'll set out cookies!

*From, Mya*

**Dear Santa,**  
My name is Sam. I have been very good this year. I hope you bring me A puppee that poops The sope in Mis H Classroom 1 watmar ufcal I'll set out cookies!

*From, Sam*

**Dear Santa**  
I am Torren.  
What i would like for Christmas a PS 5 and a X Box and a nintendo switch, electric bike.

*Love, Torren*

**Dear Santa,**  
My name is Henry Kandoll and I am 6 years old. I have been nise. For Christmas I want Fido feich and a I fone so So a I pea.

*Love, Henry*

**Dear Santa,**  
My name is Stella Cheney and I an a 6 years old. I have been nise. For Christmas I want a carving nire, a watch, and 1000000 doirs.

*Love, Stella*

**Dear Santa,**  
My name is Erikr Adams and I am 7 years old. Plus I have been nice this yer and I want a Ipad with minecraft, plec and pokemon cords. I rile wont a ipad with minecraft a cat to pleec neeo or oeer and 10 bags of cande

*Love, Erikr*

**Dear Santa,**  
My name is ms Amalia Norheim. I am 6 years old. I have been nice this year. For Christma sI want a kiten and ntento and a noow set of prinses.

*Love, Ms. Amalia*

**Dear Santa,**  
My name is Christian Hanahan and I am 6 years old. I have bin nise all year. I want google, X Box, soot case on wheels.

*Love, Christian*

**Dear Santa,**  
My name is Mateo i have been very good this year. I hope you bring me Rainbow charzar Arkious Mega evolution charzar Spinosaurus toy Gangard pokemon Champion arkious Charzard costume I'll set out cookies!

*From, Mateo*

Continued on page 10



## Good Tidings

& j &- & & &  
T k& & & &

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# Letters To Santa

Continued from page 9

**Dear Santa,**  
My name is Kinsley Griss and I am 6 years old. I have been good for Christmas I want a stuf anml cat a lupta and a pating set.  
*Love, Kinsley*

**Dear Santa,**  
My name is Riley Gaccnina and I am 6 years old. I have been nice for Christmas I wut a beebie gun, nrasikli and pokit nife.  
*Love, Riley*

**Dear Santa,**  
Hi. are you having a good day? Caose i am but anyway what i wish for christmas is a new sketchbook that has thick paper for my mchool markers a aphmeaw (five nights at freddys) surprise plush, fnaf plushie, super mario bros. Wonder rec room for the oclose, cute stickers, a bitzee and a micro pen fineliner. and thats what i wish for christmas.  
*From Rosalie, age 11*

**Dear Santa,**  
I want a jime plushe, xbox. Carrrrr, ntendo, trivv hushe, ackalviihg soot kas.  
*From Ridge. Age 7*

**Dear Santa,**  
Merry Christmas! This year I would like/love/enjoy good pokemon a craft plushy a intedo i hope you have a nuf energ.  
*From, Wilder*

**Dear Santa,**  
My name is Sandra. I am 6 years old. This year I have been nice. These are the three things i am wishing for:  
Clothes for lily  
Hello kitty pillows  
My own couch  
I will set out cookies and milk for you on christmas eve.  
*From, Sandra*

**Dear Santa,**  
My name is Brynn. I have been very good this year. I hope you bring me

Full butterfly makeup set  
Big dol  
A proght dol  
I'll set out cookies!  
*From Brynn*

**Dear Santa,**  
My name is Cora Corrao. Wut tip of cukee!  
I wat a gud crismes.  
I wat a now camra  
*Luve, Cora Corrao*

**Dear Santa,**  
My name is jacob for chrismas i want a ukulele.  
*Love, Jacob*

**Derar Sant,**  
My name is Erika. I wont a keremushen and a dallfin  
Pusl and a hope krismis  
*Love, Erika*

**Dear Santa,**  
My name is Ryder/ I am 7 years old. This year I have been nice. These are the three things i am wishing for:  
PS 5  
Hampster  
Hampster Ball

I will set out cookies and milk for you on Christmas eve.  
*From, Ryder*

**Der Santa,**  
My name is Brentan and I am 6 years old. I have been good all yer. I wont beeb guns. Krvi nife and hide. Christmas.  
*Love, Brentan*

**Dear Santa,**  
Look, I know your not real, but i just wanna let you know what I want for christmas  
Computer, Clothes, Room decor, Bean bag, Candies, Earrings, Hope this helps.  
*Daisy rain morrow*

**To SANTa**  
I WANTa REMOtE  
CONTROLLE bond RAYM  
TRACTrOR  
*From Raymond (age 6)*

WE WISH YOU



NORTHERN LIGHTS SMOKERIES



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## Coloring Contest Winners

*Congratulations to*



IST PLACE:  
Sophia Thomas, Age 6




2ND PLACE:  
Libby Taiber, Age 9

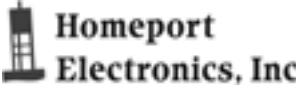


3RD PLACE:  
Lauren Helms, Age 10





WE'VE MOVED







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## Christmas Call to Action, December 2023

It is easy to make the Christmas season just a time for celebration, parties, and gifts. It is also easy to make the Christmas story into one that is only spiritual – about the coming of Christ to save the people from sin, looking forward to a future, eternal bliss.

For many in the world, however, this is not a “Merry Christmas” or “Happy Holidays.” Many are struggling, suffering, anxious, frightened, mourning, and more.

Christians often speak about the “meaning of Christmas.” I offer to you a reading from Isaiah, one that was read during this Advent season and which Jesus himself used as declaration of his mission.

1 The LORD God’s spirit is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me. He has sent me to bring good news to the poor, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim release for captives, and liberation for prisoners, 2 to proclaim the year of the LORD’s favor and a day of vindication for our God, to comfort all who mourn, 3 to provide for Zion’s mourners, to give them a crown in place of ashes, oil of joy in place of mourning, a mantle of praise in place of discouragement. They will be called Oaks of Righteousness, planted by the LORD to glorify himself. 4 They will rebuild the ancient ruins; they will restore formerly deserted places; they will renew ruined cities, places deserted in generations past... 8I, the LORD, love justice; I hate robbery and dishonesty. I will faithfully give them their wage, and make with them an enduring covenant. 9 Their offspring will be known among the nations, and their descendants among the peoples. All who see them will recognize that they are a people blessed by the LORD. (Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-9 Common English Bible)

Christmas is not merely a cultural celebration. Nor is it limited to a spiritual realm. The message of Christmas includes a mobilization call to change the present world for the better.

Wherever your faith journey might be today, may you have a meaningful Christmas, and may you carry the spirit of Christmas into your interactions this coming year.

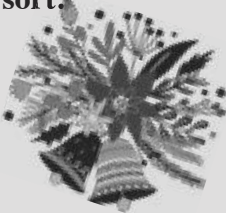
Mark Kubo,  
Pastor,  
First Presbyterian Church

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Dash to AML, send back that snow machine  
El Nino’s here and making this year’s winter pretty green  
How about Alaska Air, it’s now Hawaiian too  
Soon we will fly direct from here to Hono-Lu-Lu-Lu!  
Things are bigger and they’re better now like Napa and Homeport  
More housing will be following...we just don’t know what sort.

Dashing to the dock, not many ferries there  
But trollers got to fish, the second judge was fair  
Beat otters to the crab, serve herring roe each day  
Put fishermen on the Board of Fish, don’t go to No Pay Bay!  
O, Keep those Russian humpies over there where they belong  
Let’s have some GOOD inflation, make the longline price real strong.



Dash to watch the fun, congress opens up the doors  
George Santos, Bob Menendez just can’t stay there any more  
They’ll ride on out of town, in Clarence’s RV  
With classified materials, hope no fist fighting to see!  
O Biden, Trump, DeSantis to the right and left they drift  
To all we hear objections...so just how old is Taylor Swift?

Dashing round the states, Silicon Valley banks expired  
LeBron is making lots of points, Tom Brady has retired...REALLY?  
Dial up some new Star Link, plug in electric cars,  
Shoot down those Chinese spy balloons, we’re headed now to Mars!  
O, with Finland now in NATO all those saunas will be safe  
Hope next year will be peaceful in our town and everywhere!



*Joy Is Knowing  
Folks Like You*

Seasons come and go, but our best wishes remain  
with you today and always.

Thanks for your generous support and faith in us.  
We appreciate you, and we wish you a wonderful holiday.

Best Wishes from  
Lynne, Becky, Tom, Stacy, Jenni and Yu-Yun

VINE

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MERRY

# Wishes

FOR A

## BEAUTIFUL CHRISTMAS

*Rooted in faith, nurtured  
by love, filled with joy...*

*May your holiday season be adorned with every happiness*

At this wonderful time of year, we're especially grateful to be here among the friends, family and neighbors who make being home for the holidays so special.

As a local business, the support of this community means the world to us.

We owe our success to the unwavering loyalty and kindness of our valued customers, and we thank you all for choosing us.

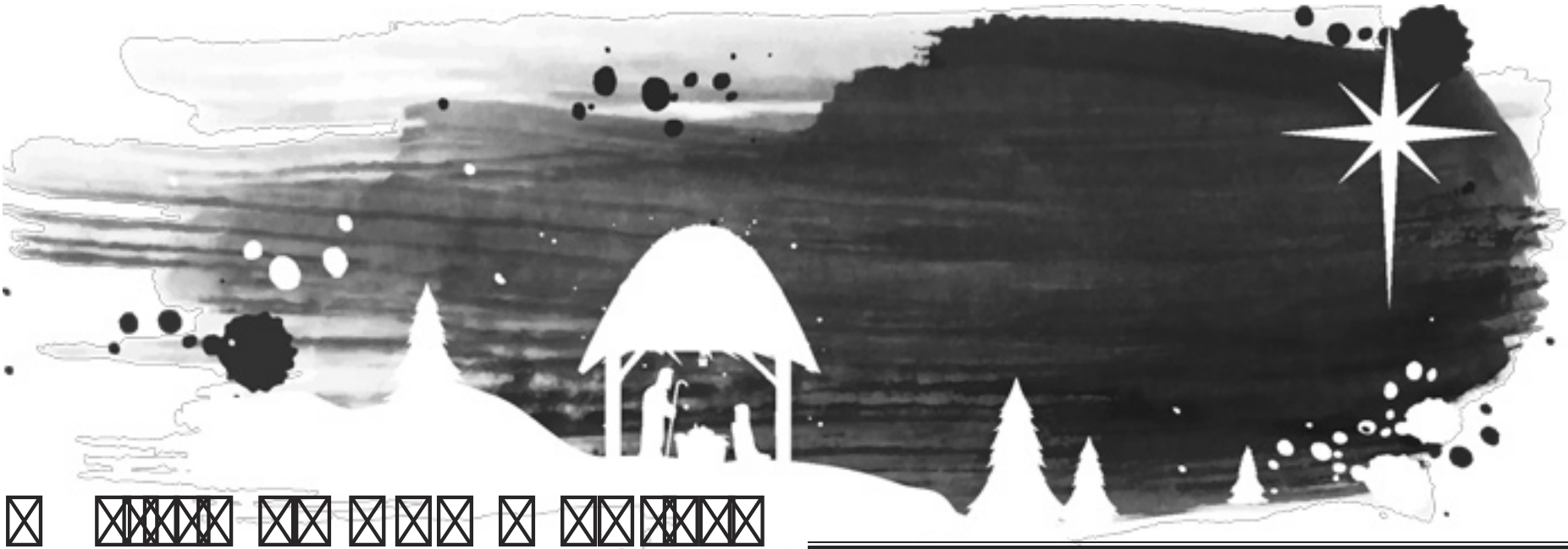
With appreciation and admiration, we wish you the very best!

From the Board of Directors and Employees of Hammer & Wikan



# Hammer & Wikan





This will be a different kind of Christmas for my family. For the first time in 53 years, I will not spend Christmas with my extended family. No brothers. No sisters. No nieces or nephews. No parent. No daughter or son-in-law. No mother-in-law. Just my son, my wife, and me. That's a big deal for my family. We've always had a routine. Christmas Eve was spent

with my wife's family, enjoying a steak and lobster dinner. Then, we spent Christmas morning with my family. That morning, everyone crammed into my parent's home, enjoying a big breakfast, and then gathering in the living room to exchange presents and watch A Christmas Story. But this year will be different. We'll FaceTime and see everyone, but it will be different.

I'm not complaining, mind you. Different is not bad. It's just ... well ... different. But the difference has reminded me of some truths. I'm reminded first that I'm homesick. I'm not talking about a "Tender Tennessee Christmas" homesick. I'm talking about a real homesick. I'm homesick for the home God has provided for me in heaven. No more sin. No more sickness. No

more death. I just want to be with Jesus, who has died for me and lives for me. I can't wait to see Him and be with Him forever.

I'm reminded of the importance of family. My family is certainly not perfect (just like I am not), but they are still the people I love and who love me. Some of you reading this may cringe at the word family. Perhaps your family was not the healthiest. Maybe your family caused pain. Perhaps your family was not the most supportive. For that, I am genuinely sorry. That's not the way it should be.

But that brings me to my final reminder. I am reminded that I have a larger family. Because of our bond in Jesus, I have brothers and sisters all around this world. I have them on every continent on this planet. I have met many of them right here in Petersburg. In Jesus, I have a family. Even though I may miss my extended family for Christmas, I will still be with family right here. If you would like to be a part of a family, why don't you visit us at Petersburg Bible Church? We would love to be a family for you and your family.

Dwight Jenkins,

Pastor, Petersburg Bible Church




HAPPY NEW YEAR



# MERRY CHRISTMAS!


*Petersburg Medical Center would like to extend our appreciation to our work family, patients, and community members. Thank you all for your kindness, support and generosity. Best wishes for a happy holiday season and a healthy New Year.*

Joy Janssen Clinic and Business Office will be closed on Saturday, Dec. 23rd through Monday, December 25th in observance of Christmas and will resume regular hours on Tuesday, December 26th. Emergency Services will remain open.



**PETERSBURG MEDICAL CENTER & JOY JANSSEN CLINIC**

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## Brightest Wishes & Big Thanks

It brings us joy to provide energy to your homes and we wish everyone a very special Holiday and Happy New Year





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Affordable, safe and reliable power is our mission

We are delighted to light up your Holidays!





ORIN PIERSON / Petersburg Pilot

Kinder Skoggies took the stage at the Clausen Memorial Museum’s Annual Holiday Open House last Sunday, to sing a few songs, including a dazzling rendition of Gayla Peevey 1985 holiday hit, “I Want a Hippopotamus for Christmas.” When they finished, and after the roaring applause quieted, Santa came ho ho hoing into the museum, handing out candy canes.



ORIN PIERSON / Petersburg Pilot

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Emmanuel, God is with us

In this sacred season of celebration, let the resounding message of Emmanuel, “God is with us,” echo in our hearts and homes. Christmas is a time to commemorate the profound truth that, in the humblest of circumstances, God chose to dwell among us. Jesus’ birth brings hope and love to all because he is Emmanuel, “God is with us”.


The name Emmanuel is a powerful reminder that, in our joys and challenges, triumphs and tribulations, we are never alone; He is with us, in us, loves us, and will never leave us. This divine presence is a source of comfort, guidance, and unwavering love that transcends the bounds of time and space.

As we exchange gifts and gather with loved ones, let us also reflect on the ultimate gift, the birth of Jesus Christ, the embodiment of God’s love for humanity. In the midst of the festivities, may we find moments of quiet reflection, expressing gratitude for the profound meaning that Emmanuel brings to our lives.

Emmanuel is a message of hope that transcends religious boundaries, uniting us all in the shared understanding that divine love is present in every corner of our lives. All our Christmas celebrations may give us the awareness of God’s presence within us and let His presence inspire us in acts of kindness, generosity, and compassion. Let us extend a hand to those in need, offering comfort and hope, just as God, in His infinite mercy, reached out to us through the birth of His Son.

May this Christmas be a time of profound connection and renewal, where the awareness of God’s presence within us may transform our hearts and communities. Let this season inspire us to be better, do better, and spread the warmth of kindness to everyone we encounter.

Fr Jose Thomas, St. Catherine of Siena Catholic Church



MERRY  
*Christmas*


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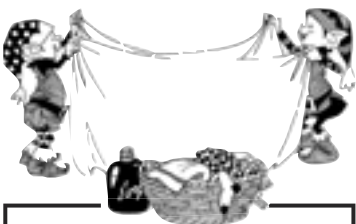
PETERSBURG  
ALASKA





ORIN PIERSON / Petersburg Pilot

Heidi Lee, Cynthia, and Sig Mathisen greet holiday shoppers and offer up a plate of Sig's award winning smoked salmon and pickled herring, at Lee's Clothing during last Friday's Chamber of Commerce Men's Night Out event.



## A LOAD OF THANKS

An p f w h  
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M Ch m &  
H pp N w Y f m  
  
Gl i  
L n



Our little town of Petersburg is in the middle of a snowless Winter, except for a little teasing of Snow that quickly melts away. The rain has been falling in our rain-forest in abundance. The Streams are full, the woods are soggy and the pot holes are filled with water. Our Children go to school in the dark and come home to it becoming dark again. The talk around town lately is often related to the exceptionally rainy and dark winter we are having. But The Town Christmas Tree is up, lights are shining around

town and the decorations are up on houses and businesses. Our Annual Jule-bukking is upon us and family and friends are coming to town. With or without snow and with or without clear skies, Christmas Day is upon us.

I remember as a child in Petersburg, singing the Old Christmas Song "O little town of Bethlehem". The melody jumps up and down and across the musical scale in such a beautiful manner. This song reveals the meaning of Christmas. It portrays a great picture of the coming of Christ into the human heart. It reveals a wonderful image of the Light of Christ shining in the darkness, bringing hope and dispelling fears that were expe-

rienced by many during that long period of time. Also, it displays that Christ's Birth brought love to earth and peace for all to receive.

### O LITTLE TOWN OF BETHEHEM

By Lewis Redner and Ralph  
Vaughan Williams

O little town of Bethlehem,  
How still we see thee lie  
Above thy deep and  
dreamless sleep, The silent  
stars go by  
Yet in thy dark streets  
shineth, The everlasting light  
The hopes and fears of all  
the years, Are met in thee  
tonight

For Christ is born of Mary,  
And gathered all above  
While mortals sleep, the  
angels keep



Their watch of wondering  
love  
O morning stars together,  
Proclaim thy holy birth  
And praises sing to God  
the King, And peace to men  
on earth.

Our Lord Jesus Christ's  
birth on Earth offers us, even  
still today, everlasting light  
and hope in the midst of  
fears.

The rain in Petersburg will  
continue and the darkness  
most surely will for a time  
but a new day of hope began  
for each of us, the moment  
the angel revealed himself to  
the shepherds, the star  
showed in the sky and Mary  
gave birth to our Savior in  
the manger.

The Lord's Holy Birth  
brought hope to earth, and  
from a baby he became our  
King. From life to death to  
life again he brought peace  
for you and me.

Merry  
Christmas  
Petersburg  
Nathan Lopez,  
Lighthouse Assembly Of  
God Pastor

## We're All REVVED UP...

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H Nw Y !

F g g  
E E U G  
N



HARBOR BAR WILL BE CLOSED  
ON CHRISTMAS DAY  
LIQUOR STORE WILL CLOSE AT 6PM  
BUT  
KITO S AND LIQUOR STORE  
WILL BE OPEN ON CHRISTMAS DAY  
10AM 2AM



n ppreciation  
of your loyalty and support,  
best wishes for a erry hristmas and appy ew ear.

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W kf w  
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H Y HOLID YS  
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W rk Or er Reques F rm

**Joy to the  
WORLD**

And many  
thanks to you,  
our friends  
ighbo s.

XXXXXXXX XX X XXXXXXX



OLIVIA ROSE / Petersburg Pilot

Santa arrived by skiff at Sandy Beach and warmed up in front of the crackling fireplace in Shelter 1 last Saturday night, and posed for dozens of pictures with Santa fans. The photos were a highlight of the first ever Petersburg Parks and Rec Holiday Jingle and Mingle. The event was well attended and regarded as a great success by the organizers. It sounds like a new holiday tradition has arrived for Petersburg. Members of the Petersburg Volunteer Fire Department Nick Espeseth, William Bergmann, Chrystine Lynn, and Coby Holder surround jolly ol' Saint Nick for a photo.



Photo courtesy of Petersburg Parks and Recreation

Ambre Burrell jumped in for a photo with Santa, too.



The Petersburg Police Department tended the fire in the barbeque trough near Shelter 1 and provided the goodies for s'mores all throughout the event.

OLIVIA ROSE / Petersburg Pilot




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Shelter 2 provided sensory activities and party games.



OLIVIA ROSE / Petersburg Pilot



May the hope and beauty of  
this season ease your cares and  
fill your heart with happiness.



**TIDES INN**


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**Peace & Joy**  
TO ALL THE WORLD

Merry Christmas  
and  
Best Wishes  
for the New Year.

From  
sincerely  
&  
s  
Munich  
VwMn




**H p Y u  
H i y  
I ic  
f H v n!**

S

T k &

oliday hours posted on  
papabearspizza.com and  
our facebook page





**Season's Greetings**

WISHING ALL OF OUR CUSTOMERS HAPPY HOLIDAYS AND  
A PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR!

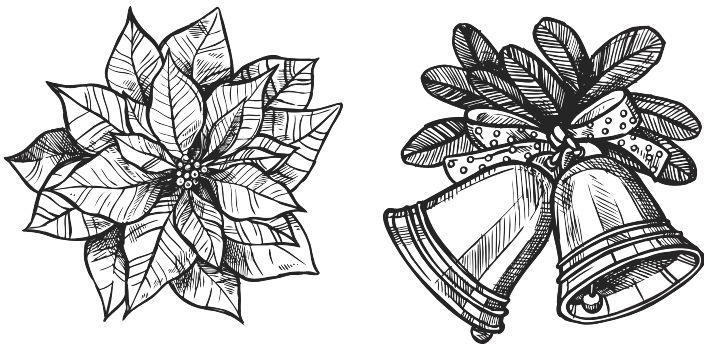
THANK YOU FOR LETTING US  
SERVE YOU!

We will be closed Monday, December 25th  
in observance of Christmas Day

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 **FIRST BANK**  
The one who's here.





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We read, see and hear the news every day. We learn about the ongoing wars in Ukraine, Israel and Palestine. We learn about natural disasters, both locally and globally, like the landslide in Wrangell, earthquake in Nepal, hurricane in Latin America, typhoons in Southeast Asia, wildfires in Australia, Canada, and the U.S., and more. We learn about the political divisiveness that has grown over the past decade, fueled by how to respond to a global pandemic as a nation, as a state, or as a community. Couple all of this troubling news with discord on the personal level: isolation, loneliness, addiction, estrangement, medical problems, aging, mental illness, and more. And we wonder: Is there any hope in our world?

We believe that it is out of great love for humanity, that our God chose to enter into the chaos of our world and the trouble of our lives to unite people; to build communities where neighbors see others who are hurting and offer a helping hand. Communities where all people are welcome – no matter their economic or educational level. No matter if they are retired, employed, underemployed or unemployed. No matter their race, ethnic background or gender. No matter if you are single, partnered, married, divorced, or widowed. No matter if you are a teetotaler, in recovery, or are actively dependent on drugs or alcohol. No matter if you have a criminal record or haven’t gotten so much as a speeding ticket – we want to build a community where all people come together for the good of all. If you are looking for a place where you are accepted as you are and for who you are, come check us out.


Christ gave us two primary commandments: To love God and to love our neighbors. Period. There are no asterisks claiming who is worthy and who isn’t. There is no fine print with specific terms and conditions. God’s goal is love. Love is our goal, too. We haven’t yet succeeded, but we are working on it.

Merry Christmas to all!  
Pastor Tim Bernard and  
Pastor Deborah  
Gelerter,  
Petersburg Lutheran Church

eli vering ruckloads  
of heer  
n v n h  
p c m f !



M








A Blessed Time

May you a d you b  
bl d wi h p ac a d joy  
all h ough Ch i ma a d  
b yo d.  
  
Tha k you fo vi i i g u .  
  
Fi s B p is  
Chu ch  
  
& Gj  
  
I 4 I I 5


Ple e j n  
f e f M c, T e S y, pec l ble ng  
f e c ld en, nd c ndlel g ce e ny





Merry  
CHRISTMAS  
and Happy New Year!  
From  
PPD crew:

Chief James Kerr, Captain Robert H. Mgr., Sgt. Derek Thorse, Sgt. Andrew Ariss,  
Lieutenant Erwin Wolf, Officers Jeremy P., Robert Weher, Carter A. Brown, Brian  
A. Reynolds, Peter Terg, Meredith Evans, David Seg, Virginia Parker



As the year comes to a close, we reflect on the blessings we have received and the challenges we have overcome. We are grateful for the love and support of our families, friends, and community. We look forward to a bright and hopeful new year ahead.

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### The Perfect Time

*"When the fullness of time had come, God sent forth His son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." Galatians 4:4-5*



In many of the events that concern people, timing is important and beneficial, but we are often unable to control the timing of events that affect us. Our text tells us that God's timing is perfect. He is never too early; neither is He too late. At the most appropriate time in history, God sent his Son to earth, born of the virgin Mary. Fully man and fully God, Jesus fulfilled his mission on earth. He declared that He came to seek and to save the lost. To this end, He lived a perfectly sinless life and offered himself as a sacrifice on the cross in our place that we might become children of God. This Christmas can be a time of joy if we accept God's perfect timing and his perfect gift of Jesus as Savior and Lord. There is no better time than today. Today is the perfect time to accept Jesus as your Savior or to renew your commitment to him as the Lord of Lords and the King of Kings.

Earl Midkiff, Pastor Emeritus, First Baptist Church

WISHING EVERYONE IN PETERSBURG  
A WONDERFUL HOLIDAY  
AND A HEARTFELT  
THANK YOU FOR ALL YOUR SUPPORT  
& BEST WISHES FOR THE NEW YEAR!

Carey Carmichael Case  
of Wild Iris Photography





ALASKA  
IBEW  
LOCAL 1047

From your  
& neighbors IBE





Carolyn Kvernvik, winner of the People's Choice Award for her outstanding bbq black cod tips at last week's Sons of Norway Pickled Herring Contest, holds her trophy alongside her father Kurt Kvernvik whose pickled black cod also won a first place prize.

Photo courtesy of Janet Kvernvik



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c n inued f iendship & usiness

Merr Chr tm &  
w n erfu New Ye r  
fr m S r h, Ge rge, J n & K rn

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T

Andy  
Kim Chomovsk  
Stacey  
Geekie  
Angel  
Cate Gausche & Family  
Erika Winkler  
Jina  
Maxine  
Peter Kowalski

Se ving Pe e s u g f ve 50 Ye s

PETERSBURG  
**Rexall Drug**  
W t t ou l s w t t ou ow .  
O M S ree 772 3265




Have A  
Wonderful  
Holiday  
Season!




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**We woof you a merry Christmas**

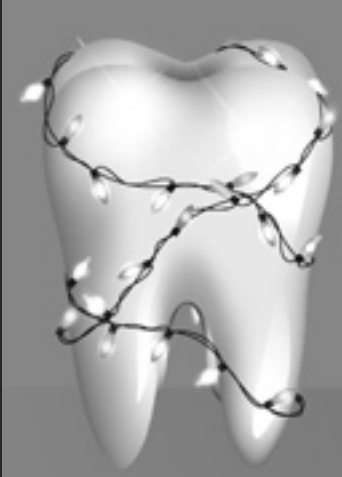


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772 3191 1216 S N c D v

**We hope your holiday is all smiles**




Thanks to the wonderful patients and friends who have given us so many reasons to smile this year. We wish you health and happiness this holiday season.

**OCEANSIDE DENTAL CLINIC:**  
Dumbuos Asigri, DDS  
Kelsey Caples, DA  
Sandra Duarte, RDH  
Maria Wagemaker

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Learn more by visiting [www.searhc.org](http://www.searhc.org) or by calling 907.772.3320.



*Merry Christmas*  
and Happy New Year



A big ilw m e  
i c mm iy w de fl.  
We eci e e c deve y e fy !  
y f y l c l f 54 ye !  
Happ H l a f m t L Fam l  
a t G l at L !!!

**L****hin**



Photo courtesy of Laura Wong-Rose

Petersburg Pet Center hosted julebukking for pets last Saturday and it was a nonstop parade of cute moments and lots of photos with Santa Claus. Santa was all smiles when Buddy and Sophie Morin joined him for their picture.

**Happy Holidays**

H p t p t f  
t a fl  
a w t l v , l t  
a la t !

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Photo courtesy of Chelsea Tremblay

# Evergreen memories

by Chelsea Tremblay

This is my daughter Lyra’s first winter, so I have been thinking a lot about seasonal traditions. As new parents who are short on time and energy, we focused on our favorite things to celebrate this winter. That meant going to the forest to cut down a tree and cedar greens for windows. The house felt transformed after a single morning out the road yielded a beautiful pine that we covered with multicolored lights, ornaments, and the handmade tree skirt from my childhood. It left me curious. Where and when did the tradition of evergreens inside a home during winter come from? Why did it feel important to me on a deep level to make sure that, even in a year when time is precious, I carved out enough to make sure it happened?

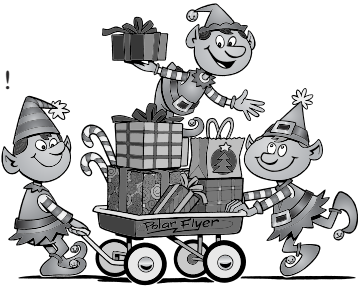
Christmas trees are a part of a long history. Evergreens at midwinter festivals were symbolic of the conquering of light over darkness, life over death, in many old traditions. This includes Druids of Ireland, Romans, and Vikings of Scandinavia. It isn’t isolated to Europe; ancient Egyptians commemorated the return of the sun god Ra with green palm fronds. So how, of all the variations, did an evergreen tree inside of a home decorated with lights become so ubiquitous? One story of decorating Christmas trees is associated with Protestant reformer Martin Luther, who according to lore was walking home one night and was struck by stars contrasted against the dark German forest. He was inspired to go home and put candles on his tree to recreate the experience, representing Christ as the light of the world. Then there’s Catholic doctrine around Saint Boniface, who in the 8th century

cut down an oak tree that was being used as a pagan symbol for worshipping Thor, and offered a fir tree representing endless life in its stead. Seemingly the one constant in the history of Christmas trees is dueling theories. According to National Geographic, Latvia and Estonia both claim to be the home of the first town Christmas tree, in either 1510 or 1441 respectively. And the tradition as many practice today, with the tree in a personal home, more likely comes from the Alsace region of now France, then Germany, started during the 16th century. A tree was installed in the Strasbourg Cathedral in 1539. The practice spread throughout Europe by the end of the 18th century. The tradition only grew as Europeans made their way to North America, despite some resistance. Puritans saw osten-

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## FIVE FINGER LIGHTHOUSE



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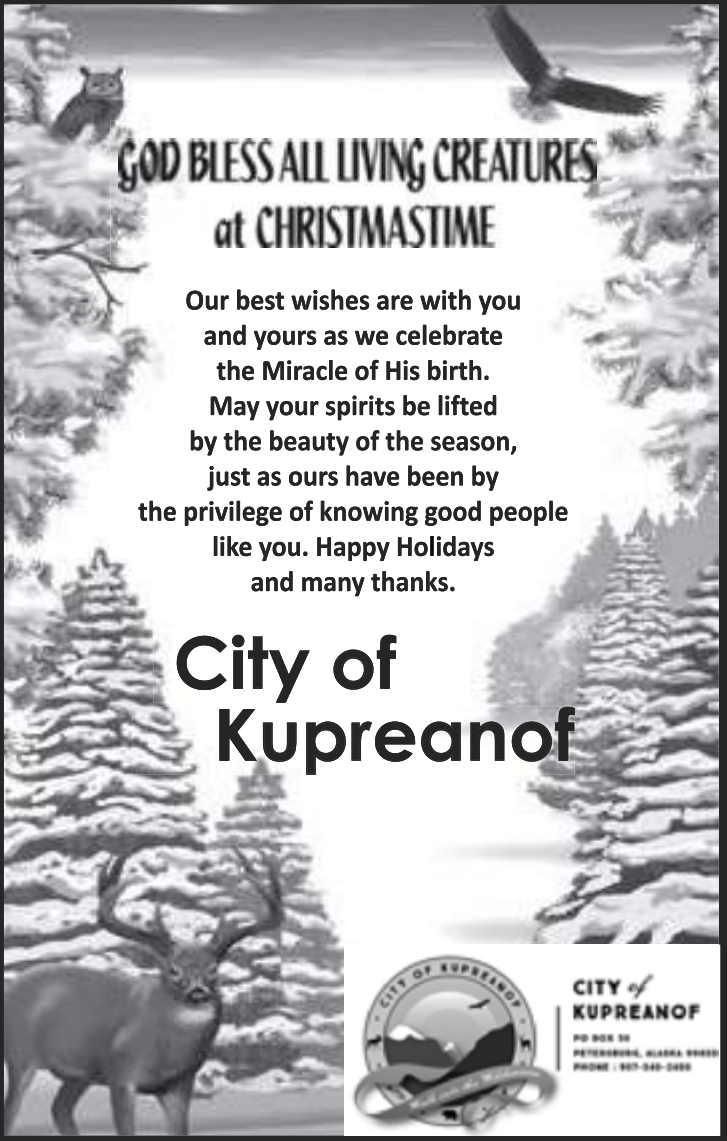
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## GOD BLESS ALL LIVING CREATURES at CHRISTMASTIME

Our best wishes are with you and yours as we celebrate the Miracle of His birth. May your spirits be lifted by the beauty of the season, just as ours have been by the privilege of knowing good people like you. Happy Holidays and many thanks.

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ARTIST'S RECEPTIONS

Artist's receptions in Petersburg are popular community events, supporting the local gallery and museum, and celebrating the work of the many talented artists who call Petersburg home. December is often the busiest month of the year for art shows. Silversmith Erin Kandoll's jewelry was featured in Firelight Gallery and Framing earlier in the month.



Pia Reilly's watercolor and oil paintings were showcased at Firelight as well.



Joe Viechnicki's latest distinctive, colorful landscapes were also featured at Firelight Gallery.

The Clausen Memorial Museum hosted Suzanne Fuqua's first ever solo exhibition featuring around 50 paintings and drawing a big crowd of art enthusiasts on the show's opening night.



EVERGREEN MEMORIES

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tatious celebration of the holiday as a desecration that encouraged debauchery and waste. For a time it was illegal to decorate for Christmas in parts of the colonies. Eventually more immigrants from a variety of European regions continued to make their way across the Atlantic, shifting the dynamics and easing the tight grip of restraint on the season of frivolity.

The royal touch also played a role in influencing public opinion. Queen Charlotte of England, originally from a German territory, is believed to have introduced trees to the British royal family in 1800, but it was an illustration of the popular Queen Victoria and her family dancing around a decorated tree that helped the concept explode among a certain class of citizenry. The sizeable number of German immigrants to North America, over three million between 1840-1880, helped the practice take deeper root.

Those immigrant communities were eventually building the Rockefeller Center in New York City. And in 1931 they pooled money to put up a tree at their worksite, with

ornaments handmade by their families. By 1933 hosting a Christmas tree became a formal practice of the building, and over 125 million people travel to view the tree at Rockefeller Center in all its glory today.

Even fake trees have a longer history than you might expect. Many Germans became worried about deforestation in the late 1800's, and by the 1880's the first known fake trees - made out of goose feathers dyed green, draped over wire - became a widely used option. As technology has shifted, so too has the design of fake trees, and for many the convenience and cleanliness is the preferred way to bring light to the mid-winter dark.

But in the end, for me, it's all about the sensory experience of an evergreen. Interestingly enough, it turns out that some of the French background of my family includes the county that contains Alsace. So this might have been a longer family tradition than I could ever have imagined.

Our quick house decorating this year included two framed pictures on the mantle, one of myself and another of my partner, as babies under Christmas trees. In mine I am two years old and completely entranced, gazing in wonder at the mix of shiny, nostalgic, and homemade decorations lining the branches.

This year, a typical morning has included laying my four-month old daughter down in front of the tree, where she happily chatters away while I drink coffee and catch up on the news of the world. In a year when Christmas celebrations in Bethlehem are canceled to mark the violence happening in Palestine, the peace of a quiet morning half a world away sometimes sits like a weight on my heart. So I let the light of the tree fill me with warmth, letting it fuel the inner fire that keeps hope alive in the cold light of day.






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