

# The Civic



## Birthdays

**Eileen Buscemi** - Dec 1  
**Helen Shine** - Dec 29

## Civitan Anniversaries

**Randall Beltz** - 4 yrs  
**Dennis Pymm** - 4 yrs  
**Cathy Welles** - 4 yrs  
**Buck Irvin** - 8 yrs  
**Peggy Marcus** - 9 yrs  
**Clark Saylor** - 16 yrs  
**Jeff Williams** - 28 yrs  
**Janice Synder** - 35 yrs  
**William McClinton** - 36 yrs  
**George Sawyer** - 43 yrs



## CHRISTMAS PARTY AT PAULA'S

There's still time to sign up for our annual Christmas Holiday party at Paula's Restaurant, which will be on Friday, December 12<sup>th</sup> at noon. Put this date on your calendar. It will be after the tree lot sales are done but we will still be selling peanuts at the Farmers' Market on Saturdays until they are sold out. It will also be our last day at Santa Land.

The Christmas buffet which will include chicken parmigiana, stuffed shells, lasagna, salad, bread, soft drinks, and dessert – homemade Christmas cookies made by Judy Lopez. The cost per person will be **\$25** – a real bargain for all this food and it includes all tax and tips. **Entertainment this year will be by the New Bern Ukes**, a ukulele Club to which our member, Mary Traina, belongs. They are coming back by popular demand for their second appearance. We enjoyed singing Christmas Carols with them last year.

Make your reservations by contacting the Club secretary, Maureen Comer at [MaureenComer0720@gmail.com](mailto:MaureenComer0720@gmail.com), phone **252-636-2217**, or **pay ONLINE**. Make your checks payable to the Club and give them to Van Rice. **Deadline is December 9<sup>th</sup>. YOU MAY PAY AT THE DOOR!** (Paula's owner, Roberto, needs time to order the right amount of food.)

You won't want to miss these festivities, as well as celebrating the season with old and new Club friends. Spouses, guests, and significant others are more than welcome. Our next meeting will not be until after the New Year on Friday, January 9, 2026, at 11:30 am at Paula's. This will be a Business Meeting, and you will be learning about a new Club tee shirt that we are considering.

If transportation is an issue, let Jim Comer know, and he will arrange a ride to and from the party. Sign up NOW. All of you have earned this party with the challenging work you have done and will do to make this another successful Civitan year.

Remember to "join us in the fellowship and service of Civitan" as well as the **fun!**

# SANTA LAND 2025

Santa Jim has dry cleaned his suit, polished his boots, washed his gloves, fluffed his beard, cleaned his wire-rimmed glasses, and loaded his sack of gifts. He is ready again for **Santa Land**, seeing over 200 children from the Craven County Pre-K program. It will again be held at JT Barber Elementary School. New Program Director Lois-Jean Stevens and her assistant, Kim Boyd, have worked with Santa and the Mrs. to again brighten the lives of the children in this program.

**Decoration of the “Santa House”** will be on December 1<sup>st</sup>. Classes will be visiting on December 3, 4, 8, 10 and 12 – about four classes a day between 9 am and noon. The **Coastal Photography Club** will be taking and developing the children’s pictures with Santa. Rick Meyer will again be coordinating this effort. Hats, scarves, gloves, and mittens have again been managed by **Operation Keep Warm** Chairperson, Eileen Buscemi. **Books for the children** have been collected throughout the year with special thanks to contributors Mary Lorio and Linda Gorecki. Club and community members have donated **stuffed animals**.

Elves in and out of the Club have volunteered to assist Santa. Mrs. Claus “organizes” this project and “barks orders” at each session – lovingly – of course. After 15 years of doing this, you would think Santa Land could run itself – NOT!

**This project does not exist without the help and support of our club members, community members, and ordinary people who have heard about our efforts and just want to help.** Books come from Michigan and Virginia. Stuffed animals have come from Washington D.C. and the mid-west. Home-made hats and scarves have come from as far away as New York. It is heart-warming to see how many people care and want to help these kids at Christmas.

As always, any Club member or guest is welcome to visit any of our sessions with the children. Want to have your picture taken with Santa for your kids or grandkids? Come on down!!! Thank you to all who make this undertaking possible every year.

# RCS SHELTER DINNER AND CHRISTMAS PARTY



Our annual RCS Shelter Dinner and Christmas party will take place on Monday, December 8<sup>th</sup> at 5:45 pm at the Shelter's Kitchen and Dining Hall. Eileen Buscemi and Dennis Pymm will provide the ham; the Leonards, potatoes; Cyndi Papia, vegetable casserole; Lovay Wallace-Singleton, bread, butter, and soft drinks; Mary Traina, salad and dressing; Judy Lopez, dessert – Christmas cookies.

Thirty-one adults from the Shelter will be attending and five children (all under the age of 4). Each adult will get a gift bag of hats, scarves and gloves made by a local knitting group Loops of Love, socks, and a wallet or French purse donated by our Club, and toiletries donated by the Club. Judy Lopez has made decorative toiletry bags to hold the toiletries.

The parents of the five children have let us know of a gift each child would like. Through monetary donations by two Club members and an anonymous donor outside the Club, these gifts will be bought for the children. Wendy Fleming and Wendy Yager have done the shopping for the children's gifts. Santa Jim will distribute all these gifts at the party along with his special elf, Mary Traina.

We have many volunteer Club members who will help set up, serve and clean up after the party. There will be festive table decorations. It is our hope to bring some Christmas cheer to the residents of the Shelter during this joyful and blessed season.

# SHERIFF DEPARTMENT COMMUNITY AWARD 2025



The picture above IS NOT the Sheriff's Deputy Community Award winner – it is of Sheriff Chip Hughes. Why isn't there a picture of the award winner? Because he often goes undercover as a part of his job. The winner is Deputy A. Craft.

Sheriff Hughes is proud of his deputy as he is of all his deputies. The decision to choose one was difficult. Craft is a young officer who has proven himself very worthy of this honor in a brief time in the force. He is proactive, has wonderful follow-through, and does excellent reporting of his cases. In his abbreviated time in the Department, he has been instrumental in removing narcotics from the streets. Hughes said, "He has performed his duties well beyond my expectations. I see a distinguished career ahead of him."

When accepting this award, Craft said, "It is an honor to receive this award. I have received good guidance from my fellow officers and my family. I especially thank my wife who must put up with my long and unusual hours on the job." Other officers commented kiddingly that they had never seen Craft so dressed up in a suit! Along with some fellow officers, Craft's family were present. His father, a 30-year retired veteran of the Sheriff's Department, received the same award from our Club – twenty-five years ago! Service to the community was ingrained in his son by example.

We are honored to recognize this young man and wish him a long and successful career. Thank you to Helen Shine for organizing this ceremony and to President-elect/Past President, Roy Leonard, for leading the presentation.

# WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Two new Club Members were installed by President-elect, Roy Leonard, at our November 14<sup>th</sup> meeting. Buck Irvin sponsored Larry Gold. Roy did double duty - not only did he install our new members, but he also sponsored Richard Wilson.

We welcome Gary and Richard and hope they have a wonderful experience as a new member. Thank you to Buck and Roy for their support and sponsorship.



## AT LAST—THE AWARDS

Because of a mix-up, our annual awards did not arrive in time for presentation at our installation Banquet in September. They finally arrived and were presented on November 14<sup>th</sup> by President Eileen Buscemi (center) to Civitan of the Year Award, Betty Todd (right), and Civitan President Award to Roy Leonard (left).

Congratulations to all on well-done jobs!



## NEW BERN POLICE DEPARTMENT COMMUNITY AWARD



This year's New Bern Police Department Community Award went to Detective Rachel Rochelle. She joined the force in 2018, and according to her Chief, Patrick Gallagher, has demonstrated values necessary to positively impact the community – integrity, motivation, professionalism, accountability, commitment, and trust.

Rachel was selected as a Detective in 2021 for the Criminal Investigation Unit. She approached each case thoroughly from start to finish. She proved herself as a team member. This year, she transferred to the Forensic Evidence Unit and is now a member of the Internet Crimes Against Children task force, managing all cases involving online exploitation and abuse of children in the community. She is an asset to other detectives for her expertise in technology, cell phones, and computers.

In addition, Rachel has actively collaborated with Special Olympic athletes. She has operated a booth during National Night Out, participated in the Polar Plunge, the New Bern Police Department Golf Tournament, and the Special Olympics Final Leg Torch Run in Raleigh.

Chief Gallagher commented, "I congratulate you for your dedication and commitment to the community. It is in keeping with the highest traditions of the law enforcement profession and the New Bern Police Department that I proudly present you with this civic award as the Civitan Officer of the Year." Our Awards Chairperson, Helen Shine and Club President Eileen Buscemi participated in the presentation.

Best wishes to Rachel Rochelle for even more success in the future. We thank her for her dedication and support of the New Bern Community. The Club is honored to present this award to her.

# TREE LOT UPDATE



We will have no update in this December Newsletter about the Tree Lot and Wreath sales. The lot was open this year from November 28-30 with 200 trees for sale and wreaths. Randy King will be updating us with an article and pictures in the January newsletter.

Here is what we know:

- We had a great opening day with sales.
- Randy King and Gary Todd have been coordinating this effort for many years – thank you.
- About thirty volunteers came out to help unload the trees, take off the netting and trim them – these volunteers were Club members, Oxford House residents and volunteers from Cherry Point Marines. Thank you.
- Wreaths were made on November 24-26 – many volunteers came out to trim branches. Thank you.
- Betty Todd and others decorated the wreaths – thank you.
- Club members and Oxford House residents and others helped to sell and load the trees on cars – thank you.

We are hoping for enormous success this year so we may continue to support our local community and its charities.

# BEARY MERRY CHRISTMAS

As the New Bern Christmas ad says – “Beary Merry Christmas – Where Holiday Dreams Come to Life for All Ages!” Our guest speaker on November 14 is the coordinator of this event, Amanda Banks. She says she can’t even remember how many years she has been doing this because of the personal rewards she receives from seeing it all come together. Amanda is especially proud of the Santa House located in Bear Plaza. Here children and their families can talk with Santa and have their picture taken with him.



Amanda still gets a warm feeling from seeing all the many children and families who come year after year to this event.

Here are some other events to check out:

- ◆ Santa arrivers and tree lighting on Friday, November 28
- ◆ Candlelight at the Tryon Palace on December 12 & 13, 19 & 20
- ◆ Boat Flotilla on the Neuse River on Saturday, December 6
- ◆ Window Displays Downtown on Friday December 12
- ◆ Santa House Open from November 28 to December 24 – check the schedule  
There will be ice skating, snow making and more – just check the website – [BearyMerryChristmas.com](http://BearyMerryChristmas.com) .

We thank Amanda for all her hard work in keeping this tradition alive in New Bern. “Santa Jim” will be at the Santa House on Nov. 29 – 10 to 3; Dec. 5 – 10-3; Dec. 10 – 4-7; Dec. 13 – 10-3; Dec. 17 – 4-7; Dec. 19 – noon – 3:30; Dec. 24 – 10-2. Drop by to say “hello” – he would love to see you!

# CHRISTMAS HUMOR

What is the best possible holiday present? A broken drum – you just can't beat it!

Did you hear that Walmart is giving away dead batteries for the holidays? It's free of charge.

Did you hear about the man who stole Advent calendars? He got 25 days.

What did the bald man say when he got a comb for Christmas? "I'll never part with it."

What do you call a bunch of chess masters bragging about their games in a hotel lobby over the holidays? Chess nuts boasting in an open foyer.

Where do Santa and his elves go to vote? The North Poll.

What's Santa Claus's favorite type of potato chip? Crisp Pringles.

Why was the snowman looking through the carrots? He was picking his nose. (*gross*)

Why didn't Rudolph get a good report card? Because he went down in History.

How much did Santa pay for his sleigh? Nothing, it was on the house!

What is the vegan favorite Christmas carol? "Soy to the World"

Who is the Christmas tree's favorite singer? Spruce Springsteen.

What do you call a Yeti with a six-pack? The Abdominal Snowman

What do Santa's little helpers learn at school? The elf-abet!

What is Santa's favorite type of candy? Jolly Ranchers

What was Santa's favorite subject in school? Chemis-tree.

What is Santa's dog's name? Santa Paws

What's every elf's favorite music? Wrap, of course.

What do you call an obnoxious reindeer? Rude-olph.

What do snowmen eat for breakfast? Ice Krispies.

How do elves clean Santa's sleigh on the day after Christmas? They use Santa-tizer

Why did the Christmas tree go to the dentist? It needed a root canal.

How do Christmas trees get ready for a night out? They spruce up!

What did the stamp say to the Christmas card? Stick with me, and we'll go places.

What do you call Santa's little helpers? Subordinate clauses.

How does a sheep say Merry Christmas? Fleece Navidad.

What kind of photos do elves take? Elfies.

What does Santa suffer from if he gets stuck in a chimney? Claus-trophobia.

What is a Christmas tree's favorite candy? Orna-mints.

What do you call a kid who doesn't believe in Santa? A rebel without a Claus.

Why did Frosty ask for a divorce? His wife was a total flake.

Why does Santa have three gardens? So he can "ho, ho, ho".

What do snowmen wear on their heads? Ice Caps.

What is Santa's laundry detergent of choice? Yule-Tide.

What do you call Kris Kringle when he goes on his wife's health insurance? A dependent Claus

**And finally...**What do you call Santa Claus with unfolded clothes? *Wait for it...*Kris Wrinkle!

# NBCC EVENTS CALENDAR

**Saturdays, December 6, 13 and 20** – Peanut Sales at the Farmers Market 8 am to 2 pm. There are two-hour shifts for each day. If you can help, please contact Roy Leonard at [roy\\_leonard@hotmail.com](mailto:roy_leonard@hotmail.com). Thank you to Marie and Roy who are coordinating this fundraiser and who have spent EVERY Saturday since November 1, setting up, taking down and selling. They are doing an extraordinary job! Thank you. *Please continue to buy peanuts and encourage friends and neighbors to buy them, too. They make GREAT Holiday presents and Hostess gifts!*

**Monday, December 1** – Set up and decorate the Santa Land trailer at JT Barber, 9 am to ?

**Wednesday, December 3** – Santa Land – 8:30 am to noon

**Thursday, December 4** – Santa Land – 8:30 am to noon

**Monday, December 8** – Santa Land – 8:30 am to noon

**Monday, December 8** – RCS Shelter Dinner and Christmas Party – 5:00 pm

**Wednesday, December 10** – Santa Land – 8:30 am to noon

**Friday, December 12** – Santa Land – 8:30 am to 11 am

**Friday, December 12** – NBCC Christmas Party at Paula's Restaurant at noon. Please sign up by Tuesday, December 9, if you are planning to attend. Italian buffet, \$25 per person. Guests invited. Entertainment by the Ukulele group. Let Maureen Comer if you will be attending [Maureen-Comer0720@gmail.com](mailto:Maureen-Comer0720@gmail.com).

**Monday, December 14 to Monday, December 22** – Chanukah

**Thursday, December 25** – Christmas

**Friday, December 26** – Kwanzaa begins

**Wednesday, December 31** – New Year's Eve



## Officers

**President:** Eileen Buscemi

**President-Elect:** Roy Leonard

**Vice President:** Open

**Secretary:** Maureen Comer

**Assistant Secretary:** Susan Husson

**Treasurer:** Van Allen Rice

**Assistant Treasurer:** Amy Willis

**Sergeant-at-Arm:** Dev Lippitt

**Education Officers:** Helen Shine & Maureen Comer

**Chaplain:** Bill Baldree

**Assistant Chaplain:** Jim Comer

## Current Board

Term Expires

Buck Irvin	2026
Randy King	2026
Clark Saylor	2026
Betty Todd	2026
Wendy Fleming	2027
Marie Leonard	2027
Judy Lopez	2027
Tommaso Serra	2027

Webmaster, Civic Editor & Social Media: Cyndi Papia

# DECEMBER FACTS



- ◆ Christmas wreaths are shaped in a circle to symbolize eternity and hope.
- ◆ The tradition of exchanging gifts represents the wise men bringing gifts to baby Jesus.
- ◆ The star on top of the Christmas tree symbolizes the Star of Bethlehem.
- ◆ A typical Christmas tree standing 6 or 7 feet tall takes about 8 to 15 years to grow, depending on climate and growing conditions.
- ◆ According to legend, St. Nicholas dropped gold coins down a poor man's chimney, and they landed in stockings hung by the fire. This story inspired the tradition of hanging Christmas stockings.
- ◆ The White House has its own ornament collection. Since 1981, a new official ornament is released each year to honor U.S. history.
- ◆ Artificial Christmas trees started in the 1800s. They were first created in Germany using goose feathers dyed green.
- ◆ The tradition of decorating Christmas trees began in Germany in the 1500s and spread across Europe before reaching America in the 1800s.
- ◆ The Christmas tree was introduced to England by Prince Albert, husband of Queen Victoria, in the 1840s.
- ◆ The tradition of sending Christmas cards dates back to 1843.
- ◆ The first documented use of candy canes in Christmas decorations occurred in 1847. August Imgard, a German-Swedish immigrant in Wooster, Ohio, decorated his Christmas tree with candy canes, marking the start of a new holiday tradition.
- ◆ The song "Jingle Bells" was written in 1857 and was originally titled "The One-Horse Open Sleigh."
- ◆ The modern image of Santa—red suit, white beard, jolly smile—became popular thanks to Coca-Cola advertisements in the 1930s.
- ◆ Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer was created in 1939 by a department store (Montgomery Ward) as a promotional booklet for children.
- ◆ In December 1965, astronauts aboard Gemini 6 played "Jingle Bells," making it the first song broadcast from space.
- ◆ December 6 is Saint Nicholas Day. The patron saint of children is the model for Santa Claus and gift-giving. St. Nicholas was a bishop who was known for his good deeds, especially for the needy and children.
- ◆ December 7th is National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day in the United States.
- ◆ Look skyward on the night of December 13 for a chance to catch a glimpse of the Geminid meteors, the most active shower of the year. **Best Viewing Time:** After dusk until dawn, with peak activity around 2:00 AM local time.
- ◆ Winter solstice, which marks the shortest day and longest night of the year, occurs on either December 21st or 22nd in the Northern Hemisphere.
- ◆ The first known game of basketball was played on December 21, 1891.
- ◆ John Philip Sousa came up with the iconic march "Stars and Stripes Forever" on December 25, 1896.