



# Kiwanis®

## CLUB OF PIQUA

**THE PIQUANIAN**

**December 2025**

Mark Wion (President), Mikaili Hall (V.P.), Gretchen Roeth (Secretary), Mark Wion (Treasurer)  
Kelly Meckstroth (Immediate Past President), Ralph Tracy (President Elect)

Board Members: Mark Greenwood, Brent McKinney, Warren Parker, Shane Schneider, Joe Shaffer

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### President's Report

Greetings!

I hope all of you had a happy Thanksgiving; enjoyed the time with your family and maybe friends. My wife and I spent the holiday in Texas with her family this year.

We have several important dates coming up in December and beyond.

Our Key Club and both Builders Clubs will be manning the Red Kettle, ringing the bells inside Kroger's from 3:30 to 7:30 pm during the first three Thursdays in December. The money collected will go to the Angel Tree Program. This program helps provide gifts for over 500 children in the Piqua area. According to Piqua Salvation Army Major Angie, they had to stop accepting children due to reaching their limit. This was over 100 more than last year! If you would like to join our SLP's ringing the bells they would love to have you join them and maybe sing a carol or two. Families who could not sign up for the Angel Tree Program were directed to the Bethany Center. Shawn from the Bethany Center said they served over 150 children last year and will do what they can this year.

The Salvation Army and Bethany Center also welcome donations as they have a larger number of families who are in need this holiday season. If you find it in your heart to give this Holiday season, please give to either program. You can give your donation to me at one of our two December meetings, drop it off at one of the Red Kettles, or take it to the Bethany Center.

The Christmas Parade will be held downtown on Saturday, December 6<sup>th</sup>. Those who are planning on walking in the parade need to be in line beside Readmore's Hallmark Shop by 1:30 pm. The parade starts promptly at 2:00. Since this is our club's 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary and K-Kids 25<sup>th</sup> year, we would love to have you join our K-Kids, Builders Clubs and Key Club members as they walk in the parade.

We are currently exploring possible locations for our club's 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary party. If you have any ideas, please contact me or Gretchen.

Our pancake day will be held on Saturday March 14, 2026, with set up the night before. Advanced planning will start in December. More on this later.

Since our next newsletter will not arrive until January, I want to take this time to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

In His Name

Mark Wion



## House Cleaning

### Birthdays

Shane Schneider (12/5), Kathy Vogler (12/11), Brent McKinney (12/23), Paul Doak (12/28)

### Anniversaries

none

### Wednesday Programs

- |        |   |
|--------|---|
| Dec 3  | Help Me Grow<br>Heidi Hewing will talk about Miami County Public Health's Help Me Grow home visiting program.     |
| Dec 17 | Piqua Area Chamber of Commerce<br>Kathy Sherman Hostetter will be our presenter.<br><b>Board Meeting</b> follows. |
| Dec 24 | No Meeting<br>Merry Christmas!  |
| Dec 31 | No Meeting<br>Happy New Year!   |

Wednesday meetings are held from noon to 1pm at the Piqua YWCA, 418 N. Wayne St., unless stated otherwise.  
Currently, we do not meet on the second Wednesday of the month.  
In the event of a program change, emails will be sent out with updated information.

For a lunch reservation notify Kelly Meckstroth by Monday.  
Call/text (419) 348-4329 or email [KMeckstroth@trio-healthcare.com](mailto:KMeckstroth@trio-healthcare.com).

*DID YOU KNOW*...current and back issues of the newsletter and up-to-the-minute meeting info can be found on our website at [www.piquakiwanis.org](http://www.piquakiwanis.org).

Newsletters are published at the first of the month. Please email news items to [mark1greenwood@gmail.com](mailto:mark1greenwood@gmail.com).  
Items must be received at least one week prior to the end of the month.

## The Back Burner



Just a few things on the back burner that are worth noting:

### Head Start Reading - **Third Tuesday of each month at 9:45 am**

If you would like to volunteer or get more information about the program, contact Mark Wion.

### Salvation Army Bell Ringing - **Thursday, December 4, 11 and 18 from 3:30 to 7:30 pm**

Key Club and Builders Club members will be ringing bells at Kroger. Stop by and show your support. You can also sign up to ring. Contact Mark Wion for details.

### Christmas Parade - **Saturday, December 6** (see times below)

Be outside Readmore's Hallmark by 1:30 pm if you would like to walk in the parade.  
The parade starts promptly at 2:00 pm.

## WILL THE REAL SANTA PLEASE STAND UP!

There are lots of Santas in the world. Ded Moroz (Russia), Pere Noël (France), Swiety Joulupukki (Finland), Mikolaj (Poland), Christkind (Germany), Mikulás (Austria/Slovenia/Hungary), and Father Christmas (England) to name a few. But is there a real Santa?

Let's start with this guy. To most folks in the U.S. and English-speaking parts of Canada this is Santa. But there is a problem. This "Johnny come lately" was actually created by Haddon Sundblom, a Michigan-born illustrator, who was commissioned by Coca-Cola to develop advertising images using Santa Claus. In 1931 Sundblom's Santa debuted in Coke ads in *The Saturday Evening Post*, *Ladies Home Journal*, *National Geographic*, *The New Yorker*, and quickly became the Santa we think of today. In 1969 Coca-Cola adopted the slogan "It's the Real Thing". Unfortunately, their Santa was not "the real thing", only a refinement of our next Santa.



This overweight, bearded Santa was created by German immigrant and artist, Thomas Nast. It was his Americanized version the German figure of St. Nicholas and is considered to be the first modernized image of Santa. Nast's Santa covered an entire page of a January 1881 issue of *Harper's Weekly*. It was Nast's Santa that inspired Sundblom to create his iconic Coca-Cola Santa. Is Nast's Santa the real McCoy? Sorry, it's just an artist's rendition.



How about this lean, bearded Dutch version of Santa, Sinterklass. Sinterklass arrived in America in the 17th century via Dutch immigrants. He prefers a horse over a sleigh and reindeer. He also appears on December 5, St. Nicholas' Eve, rather than Christmas Eve. Before bed, children leave a treat, such as a carrot, in one of their shoes for Sinterklass' horse. Sinterklass leaves treats in the other shoe plus larger, wrapped gifts elsewhere, but that doesn't make him the real Santa.

Meet Nicholas, a 4th century Bishop and the real St. Nick! He was born in 270 AD died in 343 AD, so no one knows much about him or what he looked like. What is known comes from stories and legends written down many years after his death. In 2004, facial reconstruction software and skeletal remains from the tomb of St. Nicholas were used to create a facial image pictured left. Is this the face of St. Nick? Maybe, maybe not. It really doesn't matter. What matters is how this guy became the inspiration for Santa. Nicholas was left with a large inheritance when his parents died. He was very religious and used his fortune to help those in need, as story below illustrates.



"A rich man had fallen on hard times. He had three daughters of an age to be married. A dowry was needed to secure a bridegroom. The larger the dowry, the better the chance of finding a good husband. With no dowry, a woman was unlikely to marry and more likely destined to be sold into slavery, or worse. In secret, Nicholas tossed a bag of gold into the house. The gold was discovered and first daughter soon wed. Not long after, another bag of gold mysteriously appeared and the second daughter was wed. The father kept watch during the night in hopes of identifying the secret benefactor. When a third bag of gold appeared, the father caught Nicholas. Nicholas begged him to keep his identity secret."

Nicholas gave secretly, expecting nothing in return. That, along with his love of children, is what makes him the inspiration for Santa.

Final notes. St. Nick died on Dec. 6, which is St. Nichols Day. Many European Santas give gifts on St. Nicholas Eve, or Dec. 5, including Sinterklass (our 3rd Santa featured above).

Nicholas died a Bishop. He became St. Nicholas long after his death, but that date is unknown.

Take the **St. Nicholas Quiz** on page 8 to learn more about this ancient gift giver and Bishop

Finally, visit the St. Nicholas Center website at <https://www.stnicholascenter.org/> for even more info.

MERRY CHRISTMAS!

*Mark Greenwood*



## Springcreek K-Kids Hard at Work

Springcreek K-Kids put their November meeting time to good use. They worked in their school land lab raking up leaves to cover plants for the winter.

Land lab coordinator Jennifer Everett and K-Kids advisors April Presser and Megan Johnson organized the event. Pictured below are a couple of K-Kids hard at work.



Where were these guys when I was winterizing my yard?



## Getting into the Holiday Spirit

The Piqua Highschool Key Club is gearing up for some holiday activities! They will be at Kroger on the 4th, 11th and 18th of December ringing bells for the Salvation Army. They will also be walking in the Christmas Parade on December 6.

If possible, stop by Kroger and show your support by ringing a bell or dropping a little something in a kettle! Also feel free to join our Key Club, Builders Club and K-Kids members in the Christmas Parade.

**Please see page 3 for bell ringing and parade times.**



Pictured above: 15 eager Key Clubbers gearing up for the holidays. They look like an entire parade on their own!

## NEW ARRIVAL

Meet Kallen Hall, the latest addition to the Hall family. Kallen was born on November 18th and weighs in at 7lbs 4 oz. At 20 and a quarter inches long this cutie is a keeper! Mother, and Kiwanian, Mikaila and baby are doing well, but Kallen's big brother is still adjusting to the idea of a sibling.

Do we have a future Kiwanian on our hands?

Time will tell!



Kallen, above, enjoying a nice nap.



**Ho...Ho...Ho!**

Try your hand at the Christmas themed riddles and St.Nicholas Quiz below.

(Answers can be found on the following page)

----- **Christmas themed riddles** -----

1. How many ghosts visited Scrooge in a Christmas Carol?
2. What was the Massachusetts Bay Colony's idea of celebrating Christmas in 1659?  
a) drinking wassail b) sharing gifts c) charging a penalty d) a Christmas day feast
3. How many of Santa's reindeer's names start with the letter "D"? Name them.
4. I am a ball that does not bounce. What am I?
5. When does Christmas come before Thanksgiving?
6. the night Christmas

----- **St. Nicholas Quiz** -----

7. When the old Bishop of Myra died, Nicholas was selected as the new Bishop. What made the selection possible?  
a) Influence from his uncle, the Bishop of Patara  
b) He walked into the church at the right time  
c) A group of Bishops gathered and selected him from a list of candidates
8. In what year did Nicholas become a Bishop? a) 300 AD b) 262 AD c) 349 AD
9. St. Nicholas was the patron saint of a) sailors b) children c) falsely accused
10. Why did Nicholas travel to Constantinople (now Istanbul) to see the emperor?  
a) for lower taxes  
b) for permission to set up the first Ecumenical Council  
c) to oversee the Orthodox Church in the city
11. During a gathering of Bishops at the Council of Nicea it is rumored that Bishop Nicholas  
a) Walked out in protest over a disagreement  
b) Opened the Council proceedings with a special prayer that he wrote  
c) Punched one of the attending Bishops in the face



----- answers to riddles -----

1. Three. Jacob Marley's ghost first appeared followed by the ghosts of Christmas Past, Present and Future.
2. C. From 1659 to 1681, anyone in the colonies found celebrating Christmas would face a fine of 5 shillings.
3. Three. Dasher, Dancer and Donner.
4. a snowball
5. in the dictionary
6. the night before Christmas

----- answers to St. Nicholas Quiz -----

7. B  
Legend has it that the oldest and wisest bishop on the selection committee had a vision telling him that first person to enter the church, on the following morning, by the name of "Nicholas" was to be the new bishop. Nicholas was in the right place at the right time!
8. A  
The exact date is unknown, but 300 AD is agreed upon by most sources. Answers B and C are out since they fall either before he was born or after his death!
9. A, B and C
10. A.  
Nicholas traveled to Constantinople to plead with the emperor on behalf of the people for lower taxes. He was also a patron saint for the poor!
11. C  
Yes, Santa lost his cool. One of the Bishops in attendance, Arius, was responsible for Arianism, which taught that Jesus was created and therefore not co-equal with God. Nicholas got into a heated debate with Arius over the issue. When Arius persisted, Nicholas crossed the room and punched (or slapped) him in the face. The Council of Nicea condemned Arianism as heresy, so Santa was right, although his tactics were a little rough!  
FYI: The Nicene Creed was created at the Council of Nicea. That was 1700 years ago. It is still read in many churches today.