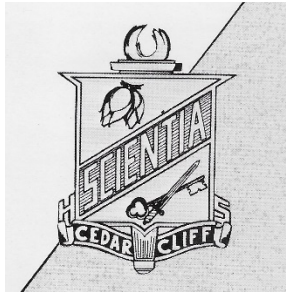


1961



Cedar Cliff H. S.

December 2023

St. Niklaus

St. Niklaus was a catholic bishop in eastern Europe during the 3rd and 4th centuries. He is remembered as the patron saint of children, among many other people. The traditions related to St. Niklaus are different in various places in the world, but clearly embody the gift-giving practice of the Christmas holiday.



St. Nikolaus delivering presents to children.

St. Nikolaus was born wealthy, but his parents died when he was a young boy, and he used his inheritance to help others and rescue them from poverty or other life emergencies. During a famine he bought grain to help save an entire town from starvation.

Today we celebrate St. Niklaus' Day on December 6. In some countries the children place their boots outside their front door, hoping that St. Niklaus will fill them with small treats. Others hang their stockings by the chimney (sound familiar), others receive small presents under their pillows (no tooth needed). And still others receive small presents in the mail. Whatever the custom, only good children receive these presents. If the child has been naughty this year, no presents are received other than maybe a lump of coal, which was passed out by a rather fierce-looking companion named Knecht Ruprecht.

You may have never heard of St. Nikolaus, unless you have attended the annual Christmas Markets, also known as Christkindl Markets. I didn't until I started to teach German, and trying to add some interest in my classes, I developed a unit on Christmas customs of Germany. I was surprised to learn about this custom, which is still carried on in many European countries. We also started it as the children got to be old enough to understand its message of giving. Obviously, there are strong connections between St. Nikolaus and Santa Claus.

school career, I organized my academic schedule so that I could, with her permission, take Art III my senior year. I wasn't her best student or most talented, but I enjoyed her class immensely. This is my long about way of saying that my interest in art has never waned and although I'm still not as accomplished as I would like to be, I spend many enjoyable hours "crafting" various objects. One of those are Christmas Santas, which I started making in 1985. I know it was then, because my wife, Lori, always reminds me to sign and date anything I make.



Santas by Brian Small, framed and arranged by Sherry Phillips Deibert

My real avocation in artful activities began when I became a father. As soon as our children could hold a crayon, we were coloring, probably even cartooning. We made leaves and pumpkins in fall, Easter eggs and bunny rabbits in spring, Valentines of course, and Christmas trees, wreaths and bright chubby Santas. These were carefully pasted on the front windowpanes, because good artwork must be displayed. Visitors were always greeted by the latest artwork of eventually five children. And the neat thing was that they were always happy to see dad get out the construction paper, scissors and markers.



In 1985 I started making Santas at Christmas, first for Lori, adding additional family members in the early nineties and as the children became adults, they each received one as well. Eventually I made eighteen Santas each year. Currently the number is fourteen and I make two different styles. While they are by no means "fine art" they have been part of a rewarding hobby, which I'll probably continue as long as I can hold a brush. To the left are the same fifteen Santas as above, which Sherry organized creatively.

Missing Classmates

We currently have a list of just over one hundred viable email addresses for classmates. We also have street addresses for ten classmates who do not have email and to whom we mail our Updates. Based on our list of classmates who have passed we believe that we have approximately one hundred eighty surviving classmates. The remainder are in a group which we call “Missing Class Members”. In our next Update we will list those whom we believe are in that category. When it arrives we ask if you know the whereabouts of any of them, we would appreciate their contact information, so we can reconnect.

Book Report- Outlive

A recent New York Times Best Seller is the book “Outlive”, by Dr. Peter Attia, who is not only a physician but also a marathon swimmer, who despite his physical activity and medical knowledge had some serious heart problems. As a result he examined what he believes we are doing right and what we may be doing wrong in taking care of ourselves. While Dr. Attia believes that we should do more preventative medicine before we start to age, he believes it’s never too late to follow four basic steps as we are able.

1. Exercise-this can be hard when we have age-induced limitations, but however we can keep moving will be helpful.
2. Diet- lots of vegetables, fruits, good protein, (beans, nuts); avoid fats, added sugars and salt and processed foods (most foods that come in a box or bag are processed in some way)
3. Sleep- aim for seven hours a night, avoid watching TV or using a computer for thirty minutes before retiring. Naps are great! Sleep is the time your brain is recovering.
4. Emotional health- stay in the game, stay connected regularly with people, by phone, text, email or best, personally. (Family, old friends, neighbors, new friends) and learn new skills, pursue old ones and hobbies- stay connected.

We have a number of classmates who worked in the healthcare field and would encourage any of you to add anything to this report which you feel is inaccurate, impossible or overlooked.

Sharing Your Hobby or Activity

We’re hoping that you are enhancing your emotional health by pursuing a hobby or activity. If you are and are willing to share, please send a short description (or a long one) with any pictures as appropriate to us at brinschmahl@verizon.net. Don’t be shy. We still have a lot of talent!

Happy New Year

On behalf of our staff, we wish you all a most blessed' Christmas for you and your family, filled with love, light and laughter and a 2024 of peace, happiness and good health!

Brian