

# DAS Times

Newsletter of the Connecticut Department of Administrative Services

## The stars were out that day

By John McKay

The Solomon Welles House in Wethersfield glittered in celebration of this round of Employee Recognition winners. ERP committee member Dave Elwell tickled the ivories as recipients and their guests mixed, mingled, and dined in the star-studded atmosphere.

The theme was built around being famous, so the house was appropriately decorated with star-shaped balloons and gold star tinsel.

“We want the recipients to know that their contributions to DAS are invaluable

and that their hard work doesn't go unnoticed. So we treat them like celebrities,” said ERP committee member Cheryl Sawina.

Procurement's Joe Giliberto who won the *Remarkable Innovation Award*, was extensively involved in book-marking online contracts making the OrderLink database user-friendly to DAS customers.

Suzanne Liquerman won the *Going the Extra*

fund transfer tracking.

Congratulations... you make us all proud!



Commissioner Waters joins Suzanne Liquerman (top), Joe Giliberto (below) and team members (l to r) Cathy Abadam, Janet Antani, Rayna Pickman, Debbie Jeanfaivre, Lynne Leonard, and Albert Landry.

*Mile Award*, for her vision and commitment to further opportunities and employment of individuals with disabilities.

FSC's business office took home the *Team Excellence Award* for multiple achievements in streamlining forms, conversion of computer files, and outstanding results in Social Security electronic



### IN THIS ISSUE

ERP Winners !

plus a special holiday section...

DAS employees share holiday memories, traditions, and New Year's resolutions, and predictions!



Another Holiday Party, another Macarena ('97)



Daria DiMatteo and friends Harley and Murphy are decked out for the holidays!

### Olga Delarosa's Tradition

**T**he Three Kings Day is important to the Dominican people (like me) because it represents a very special event.

The bible (and many biblical books for both children and adults) states that the Three Kings, Gaspar, Mellar, and Bartasar traveled all across the desert for many nights following the Star of David into the little town of Bethlehem to see baby Jesus.

When they arrived at the stable where Jesus lay, they revealed to him the presents that were brought for him from the three different kingdoms from which they had traveled.

It was said that the three kings arrived on the 6th of January. From then on, it became a custom every 6th of January, for children to be given presents just as Jesus was.

Today, this is still a holiday which is now spreading in many countries, especially in the Latin American culture.

In some countries, like the Dominican Republic, a parade is held on January 6 to represent the Three Kings Day.

### Carol Wilson's Tradition



One custom our family does every Christmas Eve is get together at church for the traditional German Lutheran Christmas service.

What's really special about the evening is that it's a candlelight service and at the end we all sing "Silent Night" with glowing candles with the second verse in German. That's the only German I know, but it's so touching it gives me the chills.

My children and family all take part and then we get together after at Grandma's and Grandpa's house for food and festivity.

It's a really wonderful evening and usually the climax of the Christmas spirit for our family.



From our scrapbook... This one needs no explanation.

### Jay Tulin's Predictions

**Boston Red Sox—World Champions (Probably a pipedream!!)**

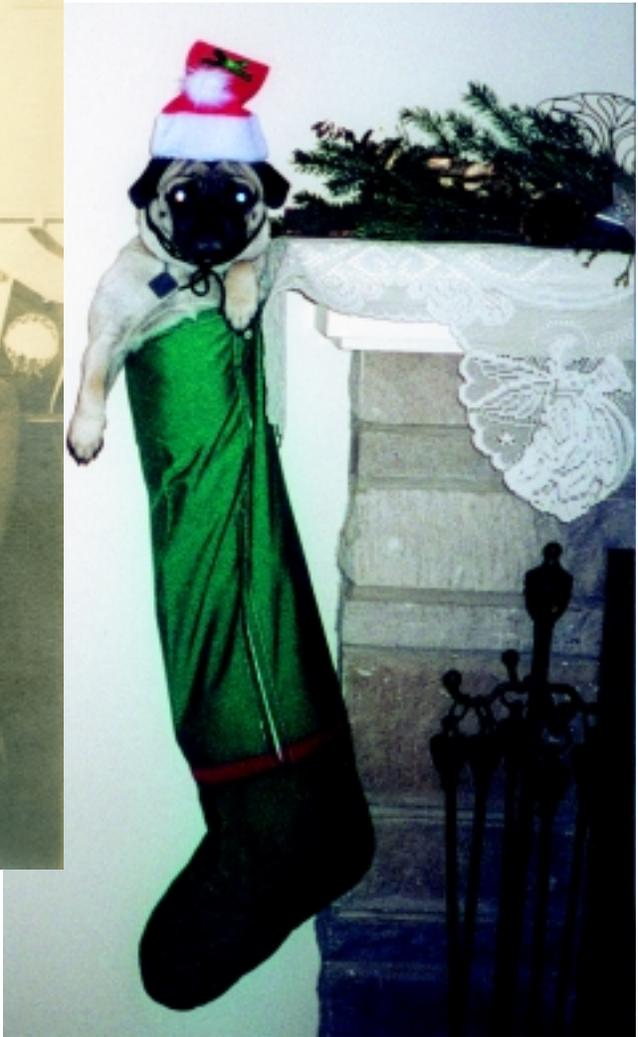
*Ed. note: No kidding, Jay.*

**I will get elected to the Berlin Board of Education....again!! (after a 1 year hiatus)**

**Philadelphia Eagles win the 2001 Super Bowl!**



L: None other than FSC Director Vin Lombardo at age four visiting with Santa. Do you think he's asking for zero-based budgeting?



Above: Amy Torre's "Mr. Pugley" doesn't exactly fit the definition of "stocking stuffer."



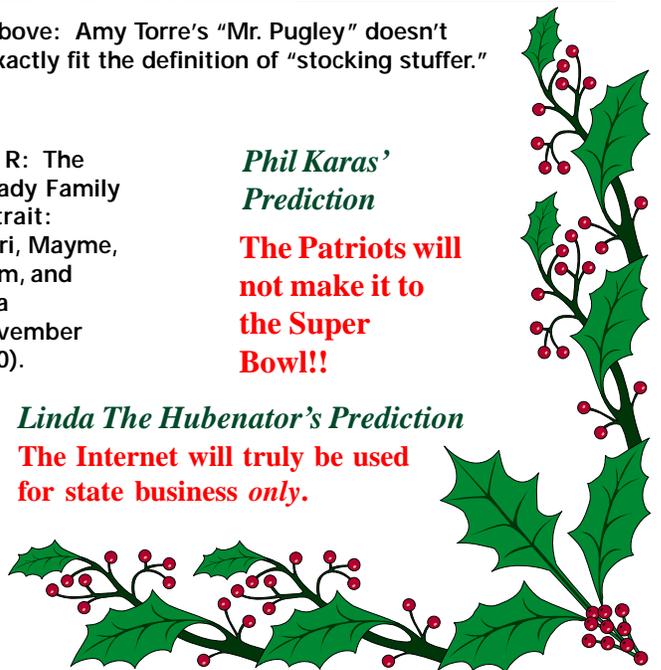
L to R: The Casady Family Portrait: Cheri, Mayme, Norm, and Cara (November 2000).

*Phil Karas' Prediction*

**The Patriots will not make it to the Super Bowl!!**

*Linda The Hubenator's Prediction*

**The Internet will truly be used for state business only.**





...And another Macarena ('98)



***Laurence Goulart's Prediction***

**Shirley MacLaine, while on vacation in Washington state, announces that she has discovered that the Sasquatch is really a visitor from a different dimension that has mastered trans-dimensional travel. While filming a Geraldo Special on the subject, Shirley disappears on LIVE TV.**

***Rick Andisio's Predictions***

**George Bush will be elected President.  
Aliens will make their presence here on earth known.  
Stock market will hit celestial levels.  
Arnold Schwarzenager will be elected Governor of California.**



**Tony Ferreira and family celebrate the millennium. Happy Holidays from their family to yours!**

***Robin Riddlesworth's Tradition***

**M**y husband is English, and at Christmas dinner for dessert we have plum pudding, then we pour brandy over it and light it. If it shows a blue flame you will have good luck for the entire year.

On Christmas Eve I light a votive bayberry candle and cannot go to sleep until it has burned entirely. This also means good luck for the entire year. ~~Both of these~~ traditions came from my great grandmother.



Cheryl Sawina announces a surprise visit from Santa (who remembers who it really is?) at the '98 Holiday party.

Who would guess, it's Kathy Valone (our own Ma Bell) talking with Santa in person, not on the phone.

### *Donna Micklus' Tradition*

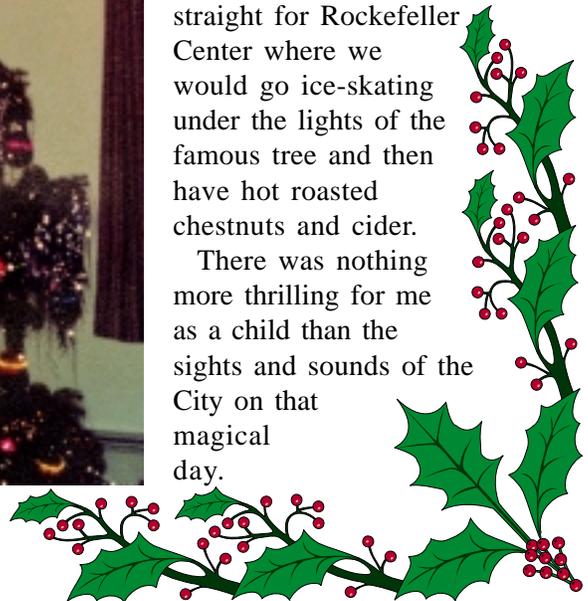
**G**rowing up just outside New York City was always special to me, but never more so than at Christmas time.

After exchanging gifts and having Christmas dinner with family and friends, no one ever sat around napping or watching football on TV. My parents, brother, and I often headed straight for Rockefeller Center where we would go ice-skating under the lights of the famous tree and then have hot roasted chestnuts and cider.

There was nothing more thrilling for me as a child than the sights and sounds of the City on that magical day.



Making a fashion statement even at age four, Heather Cavanaugh sports red nail polish as she poses with brother, Jason.





The 1999 DAS Holiday Party... employees are cutting a mean rug, and for once it's NOT the Macarena.



Martha Gallagher earned extra money in college working as an elf during the holidays !



Ten-month old "McEnroe" Micklus-Ciccalone doing his finest Rudolph imitation.

### *Teresa Dupont's Tradition*

**M**y family still keeps many of the old Lithuanian traditions while adding a few personal touches of our own. My two brothers and sister along with their families gather at my parents' home to share a traditional meatless evening meal on Kucios (Christmas Eve).

After my Dad gives a personal family grace, this joyous occasion starts with sharing a white Christmas wafer (plotkele) and greeting

every single person with love and happiness. The wafer emphasizes that we pray all sadness in our lives to be healed and we forgive each other for past misunderstandings.

Twelve different dishes are served representing Jesus' twelve apostles.

After finishing the meal, we darken the living room and light a candle for each grandchild (eight so far) who will read a line or two of the Christmas story from the Bible.

We then sing a few Christmas carols, including of course, the

grandchildren's favorite, "Rudolph." The hectic chaos exchanging gifts with each other begins.

Too soon the night air is filled with goodbyes and Linksmu Kaledu (Merry Christmas) as family members depart for their respective homes. Others try to keep awake to attend Midnight Mass at the local Lithuanian church.

Once again, family ties are strengthened since each family member from near or far made an effort to come home to celebrate Kucios.



It took Mom a whole roll of film to get this perfect holiday photograph of Nicholas and Emily Yetishefsky !

### *Anna Tara's Prediction*

**The Red Sox will win the World Series!**

*Ed. note: Maybe someday, but not in this lifetime.*

### *Phil Karas' Resolution*

**I'm just way tired of being told I'm nice – I want to be bad...so if anyone has some technical advice, contacts, etc., please let me know. But please don't e-mail me.**



A three-year-old John McKay, making a fashion statement of his own, takes time out from playing with Christmas toys to strike an angelic pose for the camera.



Carl Hosmer's "Abby," in full holiday garb, poses with her favorite Teddy Bear.

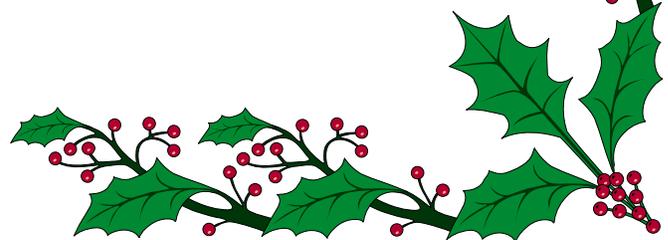
### *Mike Felix's Tradition*

**W**hen gathering for a holiday at my parents' home, it has been tradition to have the first holiday toast/drink of egg nog from an egg nog glassware set that has been in my family since the Civil War.



### *Mary Yabrosky's Resolution*

**To be nicer to Jim Hutt (for more than a day).  
To accept things that I cannot do anything about and improve/change the things I can (then I don't have to be nice to Jim . . . ).**



# Happy New Year, DAS !

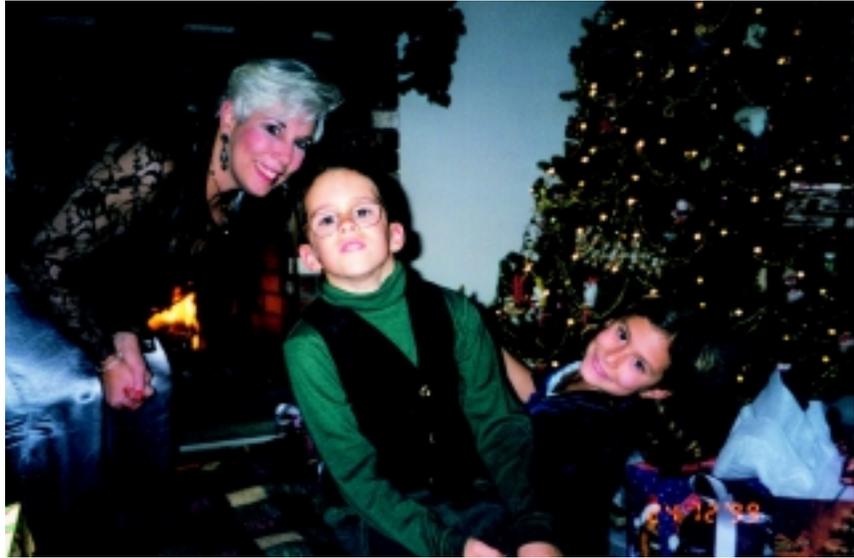
Diane Donato with niece Ashley and nephew Bobby on Christmas Eve

## *Dick Omohundro's Prediction*

**I'll build my new deck and the roses will be beautiful.**

## *Cheryl Sawina's Resolution*

**My goal this past year was to run the Manchester Road Race with my husband, and I did. I would like to run it again next year, but this time be able to keep up with Deb Atkinson, which would mean shaving about 10 minutes off my time.**



## *Martin Anderson's Tradition*

**I** live in a blended family with my wife, daughter, and two step-daughters.

If families of the same religious traditions become blended, they have to make adjustments because every family does something slightly different than others. Our home has compounded the blending adjustments because my daughter and I and my wife and her daughters are of different religious traditions.

When Hanukkah and Christmas are far apart on the December calendar, the holidays can coexist fairly easily. For Hanukkah, we have pleasant evenings together lighting everyone's Menorahs by the front window of the house (some made when the step-daughters were quite young), singing the traditional blessings over the candles, wishing everyone a Happy Hanukkah, and exchanging small gifts among all the members of the family. There is usually some Hanukkah gelt to pass around (although most of the gold "coins" inside are eaten the

first night). There are lots of phone calls from family members who live far away. Oh, and there is usually the smell of the first potato pancakes of the evening that I have managed to burn. To separate and respect the individual holidays, we typically leave Christmas decorating for as late in December as possible.

My daughter Monika and I do most of the Christmas tree trimming using decorations we brought with us to this family. However, we've added many decorations since this family formed in November of 1996—usually picked up during our travels. Wife Becky and Monika have started their own tradition of decorating the fireplace mantel together with holly, candles, and stockings. When Christmas comes, it's been a quiet and peaceful day where gifts are opened in the morning and I cook the holiday meal later in the day. (Last year though, we spent the midday serving food at an area soup kitchen to receive the gift of giving.)

Everybody in the family has a stocking awaiting them in our home with goodies and small gifts inside. It's interesting that I never spent many Christmases in my own home until I married into a Jewish family. Go figure.

The times we are most uncomfortable are when these celebrations overlap. The tiny Menorahs are easily outshined and overpowered by Christmas trees, holly boughs, twinkling lights, and other Christmas decorations.

Still, we get better and better at sharing our traditions every year. I always try to remember that the best part of all of the celebrations is simply having the blessing of wife Becky, daughter Monika, and step-daughters Sarah and Abby together in one home regardless of the things we do differently.

