



Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

Battle of the Bulbs

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Most of the electrical supplies and other materials they used on their display were purchased locally.

"I wasn't quite sure if we would win or not," DeVos said. "There were other houses that were decorated really nice."

Sanow, who lives north of Minneota, placed second in his first year entering the contest with 164 points and his prize package is worth over \$250. The display at his country home had colorful lights in trees and on the house synchronized to music. A large speaker was placed in the yard blaring six traditional holiday songs.

"I've been (decorating for Christmas) for about 15 years," said Sanow. "This winter is the first year I decided to do this to music. I do most of the outdoor decorating myself. When my two daughters, Riece and Reghan Sanow, are here, they help me, too."

Sanow bought the family farm from his parents, Sylvester and Lillian Sanow.

"We used to have this roughly 30-40-foot-tall evergreen tree in the front yard and Dad would decorate that every year with lights," said Sanow. "He would put a bright white light on the very top that could be seen for miles away. From there, my love for outdoor decorating has grown."

Sanow plans to add to his display next year.

"Christmas is my favorite holiday," he said. "I'm hoping to keep adding more music and lights and setups in the future years to come."

Third place was awarded to last year's winner, Austin and Shannon Dritz of rural Taunton, who

garnered 152 points in the voting. Their country home was well organized and made good use of the various colored lights. They will receive over \$150 worth of prizes.

There were 15 participants in the contest this year.

Because of the generosity of the businesses donating items to be given for the prizes, the value amounts exceeded the original prize amounts of \$500 for first place, \$250 for second place, and \$100 for third place. We also were able to add a \$75 fourth-place prize, and a \$50 fifth-place prize.

Fourth place went to "Peanuts" and Ali Kloos of Minneota for the second year in a row with 137 points. Lynn and Barb Okrina of Minneota received fifth place for the second straight year, this time with 128 points.

To give everyone a chance at winning something for their efforts, the other 10 contestants all had their names put in a hat, with one name selected to win a turkey for the holidays. Police Chief Bill Bolt drew the winning name of Kaitlyn Kopitski on Monday morning.

The light display judging was done on Saturday and Sunday evenings.

On a sad note, Gus and Mayra Molina, who placed second in the contest last year, had entered the contest again, but judges who chose to observe the decorated homes on Sunday were unable to view their lights because the Molinas had to travel to Texas that day following the untimely death of a family member. The voters that were able to view their display on Saturday night gave it high marks, though.



4th place -
Peanuts & Ali Kloos

Mascot photos by Brian Jeremiason



5th place -
Lynn & Barb Okrina

Merry Christmas!

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Merry Christmas!



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Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!



MINNEOTA PUBLIC SCHOOL FIRST GRADE LETTERS TO SANTA - MRS. CROWLEY'S CLASS

Dear Santa,
How are the reindeer?
I have tried to be good
this year. For Christmas
I am hoping for a new
Wrestling Matz and a drone!
Have a good yearz
Santa Clause

Hudson From,
Hjermstad Hudson Hjermstad

Dear Santa,
How are you? I have
tried to be good this year. For
Christmas I am
hoping for coloring books, an
electronic scooter, and a
new sled. You are the best!

Ivory From,
Claeys Ivory Marie Claeys

Dear Santa,
Gana + nawnat
is there a reindeer?
I hope for a new
naugh + y list, I am
hoping for a Min + en
switching RC plane

From,
Jasper Knutson Jasper Knutson

Dear Santa,
How are the reindeer?
I have tried to be
good this year. For
Christmas, I am hoping for a
coloring book, flying hover board
and Christmas socks. Have a
good year.

Jessalyn From,
Gillund Jessalyn Kate Gillund

Dear Santa,
How are you? I have
tried my best to be
good this year! For
Christmas, I am hoping for
RC car, RC motorcycle, and a
motor. Have a merry Christmas!

Kristopher From,
Brandsrud Kristopher Brandsrud

Dear Santa,
Have you been busy
this year? I have been good
this year! For Christmas
I am hoping for a
flying hover board and a
tablet and a coloring
book. I love you!

Lily From,
Swoboda Lily Swoboda

Dear Santa,
How are the reindeer?
I have been very
good this year!
For Christmas I am
hoping for a tablet, xbox,
and a iPhone. I love you!

Mykel From,
Tetzloff Mykel Tetzloff

Dear Santa,
How are you?
I hope I'm not on
the naughty list, I'm
hoping for a table, a house
a uni corn and
a lola fox and
video games. Have a
merry Christmas!

Lorraine From,
Husted Lorraine Husted

Dear Santa,
What are you making? I have been
very good this year. For Christmas I am
hoping for a house, an iPad, a new
Helenz movie. You are the best
love you, Santa!

Rosemary From,
Ascheman Rosemary Ascheman

Dear Santa,
Have you? I
tried to be good this
year. For Christmas
I am hoping for a new
Switch and a Batman
remote control truck
and a phone. Have a
great year!

From,
Titan Fier Titan Fier

Dear Santa,
Have you been busy this year?
I have tried to be good this
year. For Christmas, I am
hoping for a Nintendo
Switch, RC boat, and RC car.
Have a good year Santa
Clause.

William From,
Buysse William Buysse

Dear Santa,
How are you?
I have tried to be good
this year. For Christmas
I want Bakugans, a drone,
and a bey blade. Have
a good year.

William From,
Desmedt William Desmedt

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Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Santa Visits library



Santa Claus drew a big crowd at the Minneota Public Library on Saturday morning. Contributed photo

Home

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She spent the two previous years in Slovakia, while also studying abroad in other countries.

"I love traveling around to different countries," she said. "I've been in more countries (17) than I have been in states (five)."

Rachel graduated from Marshall High School in 2015 and then attended the University of Minnesota and earned her Bachelor's Degree.

"I didn't know what I wanted to do after graduating from the University of Minnesota, and a family friend recommended that I apply to an English teaching program through the ELCA," she said. "So, I got a position as an English conversation teacher."

After spending two years in Slovakia, she is now studying for a Master's Degree in Human Rights in Sweden.

"I knew my time in Slovakia was coming to an end and I wanted to get a Master's Degree," Rachel said. "But trying to take the GRE while in a different country seemed very difficult. So, I applied to Sweden instead."

Although she has made it back home for a portion of the summer the past two years, her last time home for Christmas was 2018.

"I had not planned on coming home during 2019 as flights are expensive and I wanted to experience Christmas in Europe," she explained. "Because I had studied abroad in Denmark, I knew that Christmas markets were something I wanted to see. I actually also ended up flying out to Japan with a friend to visit some friends who were stationed there for a few days."

Last year, the pandemic made things difficult for people to travel.

"The pandemic was a big reason I didn't want to come home in 2020," said Rachel. "Slovakia had some fairly strict restrictions at the time, and I would have had to travel to Austria to fly out, so trying to travel seemed like too much. On the plus side, I got to experience Slovak Christmas."

Being out of the United States can also make someone realize the things they miss back home besides family and friends.

"Especially when you can't find the ingredients to make the food you want to," Rachel told. "I had a Christmas party with some friends before I flew home and I wanted to make Star/Hershey Kiss cookies because it's something my family has a lot. But I couldn't find Hershey Kisses. I can't even make Tator tot hotdish because I can't find cream of mush-

room soup."

Rachel will be home for a couple of weeks before flying out of the Twin Cities on Jan. 5 to return to Sweden.

"I am really not good at planning things out more than a few years in advance," she said, "but I will for sure be in Sweden until 2023. I don't have plans to move back to the United States even after I graduate. I have always wanted to live abroad, so, that is something I hope to continue to do."

The Bossuys open gifts on Christmas morning each year and when Rachel was living at home, she perennially was the first one up to open gifts.

"I'm sure she will be the first one up again this year," Chanda noted. "It doesn't seem like it's been three years since she was here for Christmas, but we are so grateful to have her home."

"I would wake up first and then I would lay on the couch by the tree so I could be first," she laughed. "I am really excited to celebrate at home again this year. I also know that my family, particularly my grandparents, are really excited, which is also nice."

When Jeff and Chanda, who were seated on the couch, looked down on the floor where Rachel was sitting, they likely realized that Santa had brought their gift early ... their daughter was home for Christmas.



Manger Scene

This nativity scene sits outside the Minneota Manor building each year. Mascot photo by Scott Thoma

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Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!
From the Mascot staff - Scott Thoma, Brittany Moore, LuAnn Fier and Brian Jeremiason

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