

News & info from...

Executive Stress

OFFICE SUPPORT

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Quote: "In the old days it was not called the Holiday Season. The Christians called it 'Christmas' and went to church; the Jews called it 'Hanukkah' and went to synagogue; the atheists went to parties and drank. People passing each other on the street would say "Merry Christmas!" or "Happy Hanukkah!" or (to the atheists) "Look out for the wall!"

- Dave Barry

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WELCOME!

Dear [subscriber-firstname],

If I hear the words "Global Economic Crisis" one more time I think I'm going to scream! I don't know about the rest of you but I'm beginning to think that too much knowledge is sometimes **not** a good thing! The media have a lot to answer for. The stampeding investors pulling their funds out of their investments at such a rate of knots may not have been such a stampede if the media had been more responsible in their reporting. The banks could've been more responsible in their lending, and borrowers could've been more responsible in determining what they could actually afford instead of relying on a third party to tell them. Now is not the time for panic ... perhaps now is the time for buying up all those cheap US shares! And remembering that superannuation is a long-term investment. What goes down must come up ... eventually. It always does. The budget surplus the current government inherited is going to run out eventually ... it's just about gone now just one year after the changeover. Let's not expect it to be the government's responsibility to bail out private companies that go belly up because of mismanagement, to pay us \$8,000 for having babies, or to force businesses into paid maternity leave. I think we'd all benefit if our New Year's resolution was a simple one: **personal responsibility**.

On to better things....!

The Silly Season is upon us again - hasn't this year gone quickly?! I trust by now you're ready for it. In the spirit of the season this newsletter contains an article on surviving the office Christmas party and a reprint of the 1897 letter to the New York newspaper, *The Sun*.

If you have kids, here's something else fun to do with them Christmas Day - we kept this going during the day on the laptop to check in on Santa's progress around the globe. Since he comes to us here in



Australia first, it was great for Ceilidh to see just how he gets around! Ceilidh just loved it! Bookmark it! It's a great site. **Norad Tracks Santa**

I've also included info on the 2009 AVBN webinar series, as well as a warning about the Facebook virus doing the rounds.

Regular readers may be wondering how I went with last year's resolution to keep my [Outlook inbox under control](#). I'm pleased to announce that I've finished the year with one email outstanding. It's one I was keeping to go through during the 'quiet' time of the holidays. So it can be done!

No matter how you celebrate - or what festival you celebrate at this time of year - I wish you peace, good fortune and a wonderful time with family and friends.



Be safe. Till next quarter!

Virtually yours

Lyn PB

PS: Don't forget: [click here if you want to be unsubscribed](#). If you have a friend/colleague who may be interested in the content of our newsletter pay it forward and [forward the newsletter to them](#).

2009 Webinar Series

The AVBN 2009 business webinar series is nearly complete. There will be topics on insurance for VAs, using social networking sites effectively for business promotion, time management, working with authors, blogging, press releases, a motivational session and more! The full 2009 schedule will be available very soon so be sure to check out the [Webinar Page at the site](#) for full details.

In the meantime don't forget to register for our December webinar: "Goal Setting for the New Year" which will take place Wednesday 10 December! **Register now!**

And remember, recordings of all sessions are available so you can still order recordings from the 2008 series.

We've also changed our automatic system so if you missed out on the December announcement of that Webinar it's because you have not opted into our notification system. If you'd like to receive the reminders please [send me an email](#) and I'll make the adjustment.

Warning: Facebook Virus

In my June newsletter you may recall I included an article on Facebook and whether it's all it's cracked up to be. [You can see the article here](#).

If you ignored those warnings and ventured into Facebook anyway, it appears there's been a nasty virus doing the rounds of the social network. Technically it's a trojan worm

that disguises itself as an email from Facebook. Apparently Facebook have begun combating the virus by deactivating the phoney link when it can - but they've not yet released an official statement regarding the attack. You can [read more about the attack here](#).

As always my advice is the same: never click links you're unsure of, be cautious of emails that come to you from unknown sources or with spelling mistakes, and keep your AVS up to date. The full list of my tips was included in [my September newsletter](#).

And for those of you who have children using your computer, make sure they're aware of the tips too! More often than not I hear lamenting business owners who have allowed their teenager to use their computer only to find it riddled with viruses.

Office Christmas Parties

Tips for Surviving the Festive Party Circuit

(Reprinted from [Our Brisbane.com](#) - edited for length)

The office Christmas party is virtually compulsory in the Australian workplace. What appears to be a casual get-together with those that you cubicle with is, in reality, a minefield of social etiquette with the potential to leave you seeking employment elsewhere.

Be yourself and have fun, but consider the many pitfalls to avoid on the night:

Alcohol

Contrary to popular opinion, you don't have to drink alcohol at your Christmas party. Contrary to the preceding statement, you will want to drink alcohol at your Christmas party.

If you do drink, your primary goal for the night is to retain your dignity. If you can't hold what you are drinking with one hand, it's probably too late for that. Hopefully one of your colleagues has enough decency to steer you into the back of a cab before you drag everyone to karaoke.

What to wear

Wear something, and continue to wear something until you crash-tackle the hat-stand in your own hallway. Don't let the cute guy from marketing or the humidity convince you otherwise.

This isn't the time to start experimenting with your wardrobe. If you wouldn't wear it to work don't wear it. The exception to the rule is 'tasteful' Christmas accessories (hats, earrings etc), which are mandatory.

The photocopier

Yes. Your bum would look big on this. Nothing useful has ever been photocopied during or after an office Christmas party. Why not play it safe and promote December as 'paperless office month' and relocate the copier to another floor, building or time zone.

Love and other catastrophes

If you have a partner, bring them if you can. If you don't have a partner, this is not the night to find one.

If you are the hugs and kisses type you are entitled to one hug and/or kiss only. Going back for seconds is bordering on adultery.

After-shocks



Despite the most honourable of intentions things can always go wrong. The question then is what you should do if you did what you shouldn't do. The answer is absolutely nothing. Hopefully you work with people honourable enough to know how embarrassed you are and the whole sorry saga will never come up.

If it does come up, smile politely and be thankful someone didn't post your festive faux-pas on YouTube.

Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus

In 1897, Francis P. Church, an editorial writer at the now-defunct New York newspaper *The Sun*, received a letter from a girl called Virginia, questioning the existence of Father Christmas. Here is her letter and his famous reply.

Dear Editor, I am 8 years old. Some of my little friends say there is no Santa Claus. Papa says, "If you see it in The Sun, it's so". Please tell me the truth: is there a Santa Claus?
Virginia O'Hanlon

Dear Virginia,

Your little friends are wrong. They have been affected by the scepticism of a sceptical age.

They do not believe except they see. They think that nothing can be which is not comprehensible by their little minds. All minds, Virginia, whether they be men's or children's, are little.

In this great universe of ours, man is a mere insect, an ant, in his intellect, as compared with the boundless world about him, as measured by the intelligence capable of grasping the whole of truth and knowledge.

Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus. He exists as certainly as love and generosity and devotion exist, and you know that they bound and give to your life its highest beauty and joy. Alas! How dreary would be the world if there were no Santa Claus. It would be as dreary as if there were no Virginias.



There would be no childlike faith then, no poetry, no romance to make tolerable this existence. We should have no enjoyment, except in sense and sigh. The eternal light with which childhood fills the world would be extinguished.

Not believe in Santa Claus? You might as well not believe in fairies! You might get your papa to hire men to watch in all the chimneys on Christmas Eve to catch Santa Claus, but even if they did not see Santa Claus coming down, what would that prove? Nobody sees Santa Claus, but that is no sign that there is no Santa Claus. The most real things in the world are those that neither children nor men can see. Did you ever see fairies dancing on the lawn? Of course not, but that's no proof that they are not there. Nobody can conceive or imagine all the wonders there are unseen and unseeable in the world.

You may tear apart the baby's rattle and see what makes the noise inside, but there is a veil covering the unseen world which not the strongest man, nor even the united strength of all the strongest men that ever lived, could tear apart.

Only faith, fancy, poetry, love, romance can push aside that curtain and view and picture the supernal beauty and glory beyond. Is it all real? Ah, Virginia, in all this world there is nothing else real and abiding.

No Santa Claus! Thank God he lives and he lives forever. A thousand years from now, Virginia, nay, 10 times 10 thousand years from now, he will continue to make glad the heart of childhood.

SendOutCards - Always Keep in Touch!



Looking for a marketing tool that helps you keep in contact with your clients and contacts?

SendOutCards enables you to send REAL greeting cards to your contacts/clients, personalised with your message or even a picture. You simply choose a card from their range of over 10,000 cards, write your message and click send. SendOutCards then prints the card and mails it for you for less than the cost of a store-bought card. You can upload your contacts to their online contact manager so you'll never forget to keep in touch with clients again!

With the recent spate of problems with e-greetings this might be the solution you're looking for - at the very least it's a great marketing tool to add to your current business promotion strategies.

And it's now available in Australia! [Check out the site for more details](#) - you can even try it out first by sending yourself a free card.

Gifts that give twice!

If you're looking for last minute gifts don't forget to check out the **Tassie Devil Diner at Cafe Press** and arrange to have the gift sent directly to your recipient.

These gifts give twice with 100% of the net proceeds going to Devils in Danger Foundation.



And one final thing....

(Courtesy of my mate Adrian...)

It looks like he finally ended the year on a high note and did it.....



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