

# Yep, it's really Santa — it says so on his driver's license

By Dustin Brady  
dbrady@sunnews.com

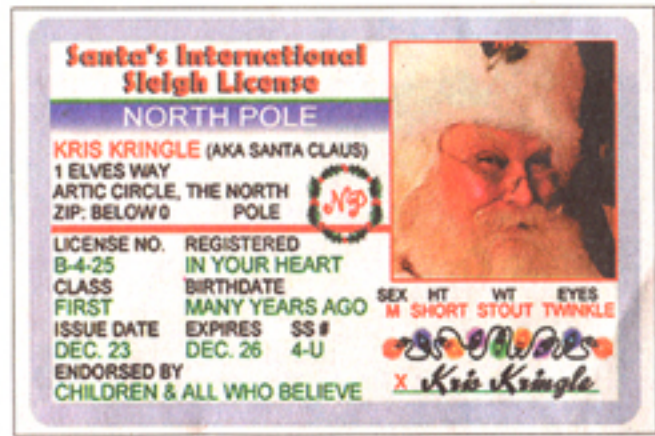
A day came in Karen Finley's life 30 years ago that all parents dread. While it is as inevitable as the first day of school, she, like most parents, hoped it would never happen to her.

Her 6-year-old questioned the existence of Santa Claus.

Finley said that her heart sank, but instead of resorting to the usual tricks of desperate parents (Look! Santa ate our cookies!), she got creative.

That year, after Finley's son opened all of his presents, he found a driver's license belonging to Kris Kringle at the bottom of the pile. The license gave Santa permission to fly on Christmas Eve and had instructions to return the card next year if found. It was enough to help him believe in Santa for another year.

Two years ago, Finley, who is from Olmsted Falls, finally decided to turn her driver's license idea into a full-blown business. Along with graphic designer Kate Holinek, she got creative. See **SANTA**, A10



Kris Kringle's license is proof that his eyes twinkle, his birthday is many years ago and, of course, he is registered in your heart.

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Believe Without a Doubt license graphic designer Kate Holinek and creator Karen Finley visit with Santa, Dana Kaplain, at a Chicago show.

**“News Sun” article  
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## SANTA

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designer Kate Holinek, she started Believe Without a Doubt and created licenses for Santa Claus, the Easter Bunny and the Tooth Fairy.

All of the driver's licenses are laminated plastic cards and have much of the same information on them as a real driver's license. Santa Claus' lists his height as “short,” weight as “stout” and zip code as “below zero.”

The Easter Bunny has restrictions on its license like “night time/early morning travel only,” “Bunny speed not to exceed 50 mph” and special allowances like “Unlimited hiding of Easter eggs.”

“We tell people that anybody who drives, hops or flies needs a license,” Finley said. “It's just too much fun.”

While the licenses are made with children in mind, adults have made good use of them as well. Finley tells of one man who got out of a speeding ticket by giving the officer his Santa license. The officer laughed and let him off with a warning. The man also shows the license to bartenders when asked for an I.D.

According to Finley, who has clearly thought this through, there are even more

uses for the cards. She said that they are great for gift toppers, ornaments, dinner place cards and baby shower gifts.

And she said that the Santa licenses are good for two years in a row—the year the child finds it and the year he gives it back.

When Finley first started the business, she had all the pieces in place except Santa Claus's picture. She searched for weeks before finding Santa — where else — on the Internet.

Dana Kaplain's picture was the last one sent to Finley by the Natural Bearded Santas of America, but it was perfect. “The minute I looked at him, I said, ‘that's Santa!’” she said.

Now, Finley sells her licenses in 12 states. She said that they seem to be selling very well this year because they make an affordable gift in a rough economy.

Finley wants to get her licenses in the hands of as many parents as she can to accomplish her company's goal. “We're just trying to keep kids young,” she said.

*Believe Without a Doubt licenses can be found in the News Sun area at the Artist's Colony in Grand Pacific Junction, the Berea Hallmark on Bagley Road and the Southwest General Health Center gift shop.*