

Bartlett's News Briefs



NOT JUST ANYBODY

community-sponsored stories

by Pacifican Jean Bartlett, longtime Bay Area News Group writer

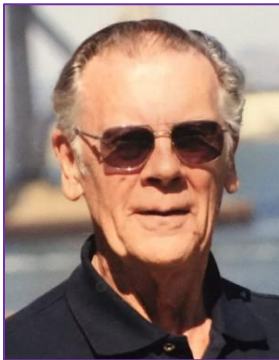
For 12 weeks in the New Year, five Pacificans, who all happen to be veterans (*with guest answerers as needed*), answer a Question on the Street

Background: when I wrote features for the printed *Pacifica Tribune*, for many years that also included a question on the street – *Bartlett's Bullets*. It's interesting to hear what our neighbors think. I've asked five well-known community volunteers, all veterans and members of the Pacifica American Legion, to answer a question each week for 12 weeks. The purpose is not to stir up annoyed responses from people who are not part of this group, but to just have a listen to what someone else is willing to share. It is also to encourage community dialogue.

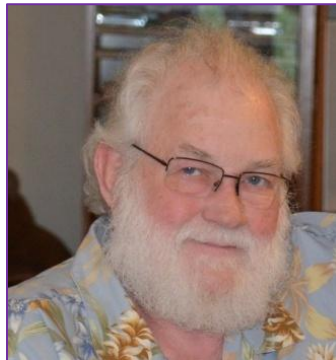
Date: March 3, 2026

Question 9: What do you think Santa would like from adults in the U.S.?

Answerers:



Robert Biby



Ed Clements



Jay Crawford



Allan Hale



Greg Stepanenko

Robert Biby. (Served: United States Marine Corps)

I think Santa would very much like for everyone to be kinder and pay much more attention to the downtrodden in the rest of the world. For a while, we used to help the entire world and we've gotten away from that. We used to be able to help stop wars regardless of party. I think if the Israel/Gaza war had started ten or fifteen years ago, we would have told them to stop instead of helping them. I think Santa would be happy if we stopped that war. I think Santa might like everyone to grow up and realize that if you are more kind to people that you don't know or don't like, your ongoing life will be a lot smoother. Also, our nation needs to be more adult regarding what they say on social media. That would make Santa smile. And of course Santa would like everyone to have a bigger chimney!

Ed Clements. (Served: United States Navy)

Right now we are pretty disoriented in this country: what we are doing, which way we are going and how we are supposed to be doing it. I think that what Santa would like to have is that the responsible adults in this country, look at the way it used to be and should be as far as our Constitution goes, and step up and say something, not just sit there and let all this stuff go by – hopscotching from one topic to another which, to me, is nothing more than self-serving for the President. If the answer he gets from us isn't what he wants to hear, he just doesn't listen to it and moves on to the next one. So, what I think Santa would really like is to see the adults in our nation, step up and be adults. If you have a responsibility, do it. Everybody has jobs they go to each day. Each member of our U.S. House of Representatives has a job that they go to everyday. The same is true for the members of our U.S. Senate. I haven't seen any of them step up and do anything. I think Santa would really be happy if they did their jobs and said, "Okay, here's what we need to do and we will do," instead of sitting and watching the chaos that we are in.

Jay Crawford. (Served: United States Army)

Santa embodies the spirit of giving. It's a particular type of spirit in that reciprocal gifts are not expected. He doesn't want to distract from his purpose. I have often wondered if the whole idea behind giving gifts, anonymously, is really an attempt to help other people to enjoy the spirit, to enjoy "sharing" without expectations. To me, that is the reason that I enjoy the Christmas season so much. In my family we got to the point where we weren't so much interested in giving big, fancy gifts to each other, as we were in what would be in Santa's stocking. Not much money was spent, but a whole lot of imagination was used. When I was a kid, I can't tell you how many times my father spent quite a bit of money and time setting up great displays of our presents. My sister and I would always run straight to the chimney to see what Santa brought, which was usually junk. Ha! Ha! If I was Santa, the biggest gift I could receive would be to come down the chimney and find a home that was peaceful and loving, and supportive of the children. I think that would make my millennium! And it wouldn't hurt, if up on the mantel next to the stockings that were hung with care waiting to be filled by Santa, there was a little card that said, "A donation has been made in your name to the Home for Wayward Reindeer."

Allan Hale. (Served: United States Coast Guard)

I believe what Santa would really like is for the adults in this country to actually do, every day, what we are reminded of at least every year during Black History Month, when we hear the words from Martin Luther King Jr.'s acceptance speech for the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964. I believe Santa would love it if we incorporated the meaning of those words into our daily lives and lived them, words which include the following. "...I have the audacity to believe that peoples everywhere can have three meals a day for their bodies, education and culture for their minds, and dignity, equality and freedom for their spirits." Martin Luther King cared about us, and so should we. I also believe that Santa would like us to remember something else that Martin Luther King said, which I am paraphrasing – that we, all of us, are created equal.

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Greg Stepanenko. (Served: United States Navy)

I think Santa would like adults in the United States to give him peace on earth, a peace that shall have no end. I think he would also like the gift of the Golden Rule, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you."

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By Jean Bartlett (March 3, 2026)

Writer Jean Bartlett was recognized by the Board of Supervisors, County of San Mateo, for "her writing that connects community and preserves local history." She can be contacted through her website, www.bartlettbiographies.com. This article was anonymously sponsored.