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A Message From the CEO

Going Back, Slowing Down

by John Hawkins,
President and CEO, The Club

Been to an awesome Christmas party lately? We've got one for you — a different kind of Christmas party.

Since you're reading this probably in the beginning of December, when *Alive!* hits the streets and tablets, your holiday social calendar might not have filled up yet. Mark this one down: the Victorian Christmas event at the Banning Residence Museum, a City facility.

I've been around the City most of my life, and I don't know of another Christmas party that focuses on the Victorian era, when lots of the things we think of as being Christmas actually began. You can read plenty about Christmas in the Victorian era. You can even read *A Christmas Carol*, or see any of the few hundred (it seems) adaptations on TV and the movies. But where else can you *live* it?

In my interview with **Michael Sanborn**, Director of the Banning Museum, he mentioned family — the Banning Victorian Christmas event is a quieter, more family kind of event, and maybe even slower. Boy that sounds good. The Christmas season seems to get busier and more frenetic each year. But the Victorian Christmas event is a way around that — low-tech, a little slower, and maybe more meaningful. So give it a thought.

If you're interested at all in how we put the paper together, there's another interesting aspect of time as it relates to this event. Well, interesting to me as one of *Alive!*'s managing editors! Here's the scoop — we've wanted to place the Victorian Christmas party at Banning on our cover for several years, and have been in contact with **Melanie Streitfeld**, Banning's marketing rep, to try to make it happen. But the event usually lands on the first few days of December. Meaning: It wouldn't



Banning Director Michael Sanborn (left) and Club CEO John Hawkins on the Banning Museum grounds.

give enough lead time for *Alive!* readers to read all about it in these pages, and still have time to attend. But the calendar worked for us this year. Because Thanksgiving was so late, the Victorian Christmas event was pushed to Dec. 7-8. That gave us the time we needed to get the paper to our readers, so you still would have a few days to make arrangements to head down to the Banning Museum. We're happy we were finally able to make it happen in *Alive!*

Another thing I really look forward to this time of year is attending the retiree holiday parties, if I can make them, whether it's the RLACEI party with **Ed Harding, Hal Danowitz, Mary Beetz** and the whole RLACEI gang; the LARFPA party with **Lee Kebler**; or the DWP Retirees party with **Dolores and Vince Foley**. That reminds me — I've noticed over the last few months that the list of retirees in our paper has started to grow again. After the budget crunch and the early retirement offers a few years ago, the list had grown smaller. But it's creeping back up again. I want to encourage all the recent retirees to join the appropriate retiree association. They're fun, they're social, and they provide good information on pensions, healthcare, and other important topics. If you're retired, why not get involved and stay connected?

In other holiday news... Of course **Mariana Guevara** at the Club Store brought back the great Club deals on See's Candy and Honeybaked Hams. We know what Club Members like, and we work hard to get you a great deal on these two perennials. But I also have to love the Club Store's newest addition — the prepackaged ticket bundles. Whoa, great idea! I can stop by and get my wife, **Kelley Hawkins**, and the kids tickets to their favorite movie houses, for a set price, and I don't even have to wrap it. What could be more awesome! Again, the Club Store does all the work, and all you have to do as a Club Member is take advantage.

Speaking of my family: From the Hawkins family and everyone here at the Club, we wish you a joyful Christmas and Happy Hanukkah. Please spend slow, quiet quality time with your loved ones. It's the greatest gift you can give them.

Until next year!

JOHN



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Alive! Behind the Scenes



Here's Michael Sanborn (left), Director of the Banning Museum, and John Hawkins, Club CEO, being photographed on the Banning grounds by Club photographer Tom Hawkins.

Alive! Interview Pictures

