Here comes Santa Claus

**SANTA'S REINDEER** were resting up for the holiday, so Kris Kringle arrived at the MGH via MedFlight helicopter Dec. 21 for a pre-Christmas visit.

Santa — known any other day as Mike Lessard, MedFlight Equipment Retrieval operator and Dedham Fire Department Lieutenant — was accompanied by a pilot and two elves who double as nurses for their fourth aerial arrival to the hospital.

Santa and his flight crew visited pediatric patients, including McKenna Lappin, at right, on Ellison 17 and 18. They handed out helicopter pens, calendars and polar bear stuffed animals.

Thanks to MedFlight's quick transport, the jolly ol' man in the red suit has plenty of time to make it back to the North Pole and ready his sleigh for the big night.

Happy Holidays!
BLUE CHRISTMAS: For many, the holiday season is a time for celebration, however, for others emotions elicited by this season can be difficult. A Blue Christmas Service was hosted Dec. 20 in the MGH Chapel, providing an opportunity for people to come together and know that in the midst of their struggles, they are not alone. The service included hymns, readings, prayers and a lighting of candles. All were invited to decorate a tree with messages of hope, concern, prayers and joys.

COMFORT AND JOY: This holiday season HAVEN (Helping Abuse and Violence End Now) hosted a gift card drive. More than 50 MGH departments and individuals participated, providing 90 HAVEN families and more than 100 children with gift cards. Organizers include: Front row, from left, Denise Cremins, Admitting Department; Michele Golden, HIM; Abby Farrand, HAVEN; and Sarah Kinnane, HAVEN; back row, Sandra Elien, HAVEN; Tyler Marchini, Admitting Department; and Diane Hurley, Admitting Department.

HO, HO, HOCKEY PLAYERS ARE HERE: Christmas came a bit early for Colton Nykaza, 8, and other pediatric patients in the MassGeneral Hospital for Children (MGHfC) Cancer Center and inpatient units at MGHfC. On Dec. 11, Boston Bruins players – Ryan Spooner, Jake DeBrusk, Zdeno Chara and Brad Marchand (pictured here) – scored a hat trick, signing autographs, posing for photos and handing out Bruins gift bags. During the annual Bruins Holiday Toy Delivery, players also donned seasonal hats and costumes to the delight of children and their families.

THE SPIRIT OF GIVING: The MGH Blood Donor Center collected more than just blood this holiday season. Sacks full of toys and gifts were generously donated throughout the month of December by members of the MGH Pathology Department to the center’s toy drive. Then on Dec. 14, O’I Saint Nick – with help from Kim Cronin, manager of MGH Donor Services; Alyssa Hill, Blood Donor Center marketing specialist; and Elf Jodi – packed Santa’s sleigh and delivered the toys to 50 children on pediatric floors in the hospital.

A HAVEN of hope

From platelets to presents

A service of solace and light

Bruin up holiday cheer
HOLIDAYS AT THE HOSPITAL: A photo from the MGH Archives depicts a candlelight service at the hospital in 1942 which – as is written on the back of the photograph - was “a regular feature at Christmas at MGH.”

An old time Christmas

EAGER ELVES: Teens from the Revere Youth Zone, led by peer leaders, enjoyed a Wrap Party Dec. 18, as part of the annual MGH Revere HealthCare Center’s Holiday Toy Drive. The gifts are donated to children in need at the health center. Grace Schiebel and Melissa Silverberg, from the Revere HealthCare Center’s Pediatric Department, organized the event and delivered the gifts.

Packages, boxes and bows, oh my!

Stuffed with love

BEAR-Y MERRY: A new fleet of furry friends made their way to pediatric inpatients just in time for the holidays, courtesy of the Baker family of Newton, Massachusetts. The holiday tradition began when Jana and Bobby Baker’s son, Gary, received care at MGH as a toddler. For the past 17 years, they – along with Gary’s siblings, Kevin, Kylie and Brooke – have delivered teddy bears from Build-A-Bear to patients on Ellison 18. Fun, festive and adorned with red holiday bows, the bears are hoped to spark smiles and spread holiday cheer.

Lifting voices, lighting the night

CHOLIDAY CHANUKAH CHAPPENING: MGHers gathered in the East Garden Room Dec. 14 to celebrate the third night of Chanukah. The celebration was hosted by MGH Chaplaincy and Human Resources. Rabbi Ben Lanckton helped light the menorah and attendees celebrated with songs, dancing dreidels and foods made with oil – doughnuts and potato pancakes.
MERRY MELODIES: Merry carolers fa-la-la’d in the White Corridor, spreading cheer to colleagues, patients and visitors Dec. 19 during the annual Holiday Songfest hosted by the MGH Spiritual Care Department. Songbooks in hand and decked in their holiday best, MGHers happily sang and invited passersby to join in the merry making.

A HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS: MassGeneral Hospital for Children received dozens of books, puzzles and stuffed toys from ROFEH International—an organization dedicated to supporting families who travel to Boston for medical care. The group delivered the gifts to a gathering in the Ellison 18 playroom, where children celebrated the second night of Hanukkah with a candle lighting ceremony and traditional songs and food.

SPOTTED SOX: On Dec. 15, the Boston Red Sox made their annual holiday visit to MassGeneral Hospital for Children’s inpatient units. The pitching staff, including Heath Hembree, Brian Johnson, Austin Maddox and Robby Scott, accompanied by Wally the Green Monster and his sister, Tessie the Green Monster, played pinball with patients, posed for photographs and gifted each child a signed baseball. The tradition dates back to 2002 when the Fenway Sports Group acquired the team.

JOY TO THE WORLD: MGHers gathered together Dec. 5 and Dec. 13 for the annual Holiday Reception hosted by Peter L. Slavin, MD, MGH president, and MGH Human Resources. Celebrations took place on both the main campus and at the Charlestown Navy Yard featuring jolly gingerbread men, festive music, smiling colleagues and general excitement about the holiday season.