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CityBeat by Greg Barr – December 2008

Santa Claus is coming... to a computer near you!

Proving to the kids that Santa Claus came down the chimney and enjoyed the milk and cookies gets a little easier this Christmas thanks to a League City couple.

On Christmas Eve 2007, Steve Lockhardt and his wife, Heather, had helped their children bake cookies for St. Nick, only to forget to dispose of them before going to bed.



After waking up in the middle of the night to get rid of the evidence, the Lockhardts started brainstorming of an easier way to prove that Santa had visited their house.

They launched ICaughtSanta.com this month.

The site — which allows customers to take a picture of their living room or themselves, upload the photo to the site, choose from 22 different Santas and add him to the photo — has gotten 25,000 hits so far, and 700 photos were purchased at the time of this printing.

The finished photos are e-mailed back to the customer for \$9.95. The photos can be printed out at home or sent to any photo-printing retailer that accepts uploaded photos.

“We’ve been so busy that we haven’t had time to think of simple things like how to do this internationally,” says Steve Lockhardt, who points out that ICaughtSanta.com generated interest from people in Canada, France and as far away as New Zealand.

Since the Santa concept has been so successful, the Lockhardts are planning to add other ways to help parents keep their children believers.

They have secured domain names for Cupid, the Easter Bunny and the Tooth Fairy. Lockhardt is beginning work on the Easter Bunny Web site, which, along with the Tooth Fairy site, will go up this year.