WITH TIDINGS OF COMFORT & JOY

To our loyal readers at Christmas

As we wrap up another holiday edition, we'd like to deliver an extra measure of thanks and best wishes to all of you. Here's hoping all your news is good news this season.

Winchester Press

545 St. Lawrence Street, Winchester
613-774-2524



Christmas Greetings



Special Supplement to the

WINCHESTER PRESS

Wednesday, December 14, 2005

4 - 3 - 2 - 1: The countdown's getting lower every day

Shepherd Talk
by Rev. Thurland Brown

I'm not ready for Christmas. You're not ready for Christmas. (My suspicion is that even the people who say they are ready are not ready.) How can you get ready when last Christmas is less than 12 months past?

JB Philips (in Good News: Thoughts on God and Man) calls Christmas "by far the most important and significant event in the whole course of human history" and he reminds us that it will be "celebrated, with or without understanding" at the end of the season of Advent. Unfortunately, in the lives of both believers and non-believers, this "towering miracle of God's visit to this planet on which we live" will be lost in the flurry of activities. Plain and simple, we get caught up attending to so many trivial things that we just don't get prepared for His coming.

Advent, meaning arrival, is the season to prepare.

It is the four weeks set aside each calendar year to prepare for Christmas. It is the season to walk with Mary and Joseph as they approach Bethlehem, the season to listen to the angels as they proclaim the good news that someone is coming, someone who will take away the sin of the world, and His name will be called Jesus. Wonderful, Counsellor, Prince of Peace; Jesus.

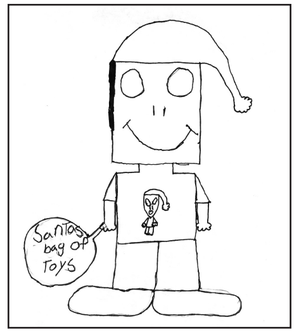
It is the season to listen to the Spirit as He reminds us that the sins of the world are personal sins — my personal sins — so I really need to prepare.

And, it is the season to look ahead to the Second Advent, the Second Arrival of Jesus. For the Scriptures remind us that one day "this same Jesus will return in like manner as you have seen Him go."

Of course, all of that reminds us that we are not ready. We're not ready for Christmas. And if we're not ready for Christmas, we're certainly not ready for the Second Arrival.

But take heart — in the midst of the hustle and bustle, you will hear the ringing of a bell, the singing of a carol, the whisper of the Spirit's promise. They will help you prepare: Prepare your tables to meet your family; prepare your homes to entertain your friends; and prepare your heart to worship Jesus, who is truly the reason for the celebration.

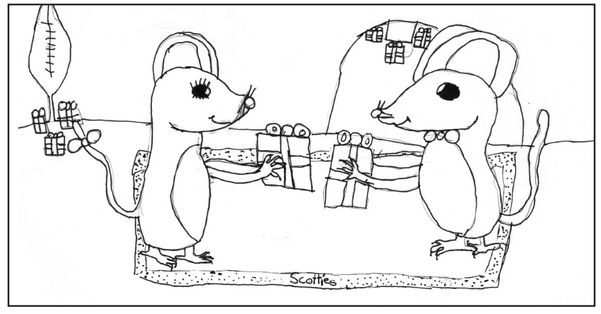
Four, three, two, one — ready or not, here He comes!



Jared Stewart, Grade 6,
Dixon's Corners Public School



Spencer Carruthers, Grade 4,
Morewood Public School



Marleigh Pemberton, Grade 6, Inkerman Public School

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Popular Christmas symbols revealed

Christmas is a holiday reaped in customs. Year in and year out, you decorate a Christmas tree, sip eggnog, and enjoy a candy cane beneath the mistletoe. But do you have any idea how these customs came about? To fully appreciate a holiday, you should understand its roots. This guide will help you get to the bottom of this festive and sacred holiday.

Advent calendars: The first calendar counting down to Christmas dates back to the 19th century. People counted down 24 or 25 days until Christmas (with the last day being Christmas Eve or Christmas Day), by using chalk lines to mark off the days. Later on the tradition of lighting a candle each night was born. Today, Advent calendars vary. Some have drawers or doors that are opened every day to reveal a religious icon, piece of candy or you may even find ones with cartoon characters like Mickey Mouse.

Candles: The first use of candles at Christmas was in the Roman festival of Saturnalia where tall tapers of wax were given as gifts to guests and as an offering to Saturn as a symbol of his light. As Christianity spread, candles were placed in the front window of homes to guide the Christ Child as he went from house to house on Christmas Eve.

Candy canes: According to the National Confectioners Association, in the 17th century, the choirmaster at the Cologne Cathedral in Germany gave his young singers sugar sticks to keep them quiet during ceremonies. In honor of the occasion, he had the candies bent into shepherds' crooks. In 1847, a German-Swedish immigrant decorated a small blue spruce with paper ornaments and candy canes. By the 1900s, the candy cane got its red and white stripes and peppermint flavors. They were mass produced by the 1950s, eliminating the laborious task of making the treat, and their popularity spread.

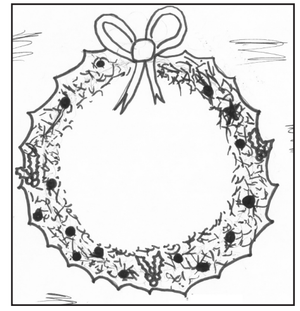


Christmas tree: Germans would decorate fir trees, inside and out, with roses, apples and colored paper. The tradition hit England and America via the German immigrants in Pennsylvania in the 1800s. Of course, a Christmas tree isn't complete without ornaments. Decorating trees dates back to the Victorian times. Woolworths department store sold the first manufactured Christmas tree, and the trend spread.

Mistletoe: The Scandinavians thought of mistletoe as a peaceful and harmonious plant. And they linked Frigg, their goddess of love, with mistletoe. The combination of these two schools of thought brought about the custom of kissing under the mistletoe. Those who kissed beneath the mistletoe were thought to have happiness and good luck the next year.

Poinsettias: America's first ambassador to Mexico, Joel Poinsett, is the namesake for this native Mexican plant which he brought to America in 1828. The plant was likely used by Mexican Franciscans in their 17th century Christmas celebrations. Mexicans thought the plants symbolized the Star of Bethlehem, leading to its association with Christmas.

Stockings: A man was so sad over the death of his wife that he spent all his money. Unfortunately, this habit left his three daughters without money for wedding dowries. St. Nicholas wanted to help the poor girls' cause, so he anonymously threw three small pouches of gold coins down the chimney of the their home. The coins landed in the stockings of the women who had hung them by the fireplace to dry.



Alyssa Ceelen, Grade 4,
Nationview Public School



Nicole Simser, Grade 4,
Ste-Thérèse-d'Avila

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Christmas Eve traditions

Excitement is a big part of the holiday season, especially on Christmas Eve when children eagerly await Santa's arrival.

"Every family has their own traditions that make this night a special time," says Denise Darragh of Hallmark Canada. "These special activities that are looked forward to all year are often created when children are young and parents mix favorite traditions from their childhood with new ones that reflect their growing family."



If you've got a young family and are looking for some inspiration on how to make Christmas Eve memorable for years to come, consider these ideas from the holiday experts at Hallmark.

• Leave cookies and milk out for Santa in a special cookie plate and mug.

• Find an outdoor ice rink in your area and set up a skating party for family members young and old. The exercise and fresh air will help young ones sleep later on Christmas morning as an added bonus.

• If you don't have a fireplace or your roof is slippery, leave Hallmark's Santa Key on your front door to provide a new route of entry for the jolly old elf.

• Sprinkle icing sugar on your dining room table once the kids are in bed. Tell them it's magic reindeer dust when they spot it in the morning (proof positive Santa stopped by).

• Settle excited kids with a bed-time story like the 'Night Before Christmas' and snuggle on the sofa together with hot cups of cocoa.

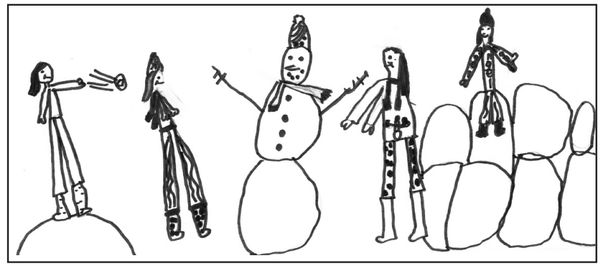
• While most families have decorated their tree long before Christmas Eve, consider saving a few special ornaments to hang on Christmas Eve.

• Get your youngsters involved in Christmas Day preparations by assigning a few special tasks to them the night before like decorating sugar cookies or helping to hang mistletoe

• Teach your kids popular Christmas carols or other seasonal songs and sing them together before bed time on Christmas Eve.

The traditions you start at Christmas Eve are only limited by your imagination. No matter what activities you choose, they'll provide happy memories for the whole family and enrich the holiday season with sharing and love.

For additional holiday tips visit www.hallmark.com or call 1-800-268-3230. *- News Canada*



Julia Graham, Grade 4, Inkerman Public School

Quick tips on choosing toddler toys

Whether or not you're a first time parent, grandparent, aunt, uncle or a seasoned mother of five, choosing a toy for the child in your life this holiday season can be both a fun and daunting task. "You should always consider the age of the child when you're selecting a toy," says Keith Gammon of Little Tikes. Keep the following guidelines in mind:

Toys to avoid (for ages 3-5)

When choosing a toy, make sure your gift doesn't contain any sharp edges that can easily cut small hands, or any small removable or electronic parts that can become a choking hazard. "Read the packaging carefully and pay particular attention to any age appropriateness and warning labels," says Gammon.

Toys to choose (for ages 3-5)

"All toys are different, but here are some fundamental qualities to look for in toys for young children," says Gammon. Look for: dolls with simple clothes, classic vehicles, building blocks (visit www.littletikes.com for information on the B.C. Builders Playsets – construction toys made over with a delightful prehistoric theme, or Little Tikes' Fairytale Playsets – a new take on an old classic) sturdy play dishes and books with rhymes, pictures or jingles, read-along/interactive toys and toys that can be easily stored and are generally durable.

When toys are safe the holiday season is much more fun for everyone, so choose for safety and fun.

- News Canada

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The soundtrack to the season

by Meghan Duncan
Press staff

...helping you get away from the "Jingle-Bells"-for-the-158th-time blues

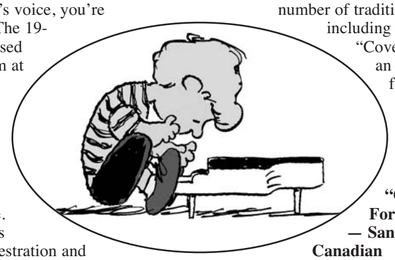
Nothing sets the atmosphere at Christmas time better than the right music. Whether it's good old fashioned carols, or more up-to-date songs, Christmas music is always an issue — how to please everyone and not play the same song over and over. Here are my picks for some great Christmas songs. If you're a download service user, grab a few of these tunes to add to your favorites, then make a mix CD, or if you want to buy the albums, hit shuffle on your player and the entire family should be happy.

"Linus and Lucy" — Vince Guaraldi

Though it's not actually a Christmas song, it's most often related to the scene in *A Charlie Brown Christmas* when Schroeder's at the piano and all the kids are dancing instead of rehearsing for the annual Christmas pageant. *A Charlie Brown Christmas* was released in 1965 — 40 years later "Linus and Lucy" is still a favorite. It's part of the soundtrack to the TV special, which includes all the favorites the Peanuts' cast sings throughout the show, including "O Tannenbaum."

"Elysium" — Charlotte Church

This song is the first on Charlotte Church's Christmas album, *Dream a Dream*. For those of you who haven't heard Church's voice, you're missing out. The 19-year-old released her first album at the age of 12, and has received high recognition for other several albums released since. "Elysium" has amazing orchestration and what can only be called "tingling" harmonics — not a typical Christmas tune, but it may strike just the right chord. The rest of the album includes a number of traditional songs, including the "Coventry Carol," an often forgotten song that should pull at everyone's heart strings.





"Christmas is For Children" — Santa Claus is Canadian

This is the first song on an album called *Santa Claus is Canadian,* a cultural project by the Ontario Lottery Corporation in 1981. This album was produced at Sounds Interchange in Toronto as a partnership with the Ontario Ministry of Culture and Recreation — with Reuben C. Baetz as minister. (The provincial government putting funds toward a Christmas cultural product? What?) This one is not widely known, and the album is not being reproduced, but it's a definite tradition in this writer's household — the tree can't be decorated without it. There are still copies floating around on ebay. Come on, a little patriotism at Christmas never hurt anyone!!



• continued on next page

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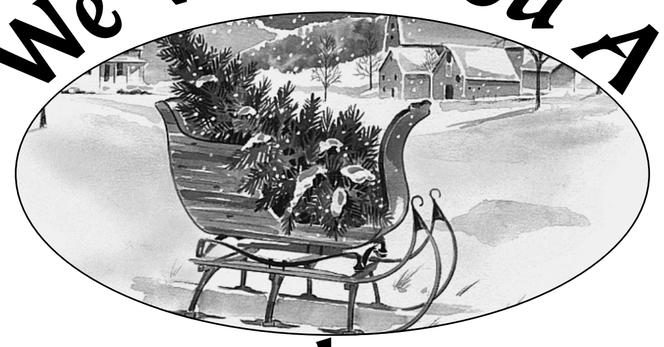

Merry Christmas
'Tis the season for us to say.
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May it be filled with joy and contentment,
Along with laughter and love and old-fashioned sentiment!
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Soundtrack

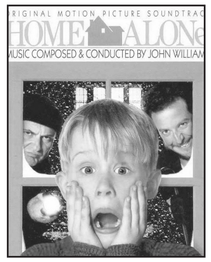
• continued from previous page

"Mr. Snowflake" — Stompin' Tom Connors

Keeping with the Canadian theme, it's our very own Stompin' Tom with his album, *Merry Christmas Everybody.* With 11 original songs, you won't get the Christmas-song-repeat blues, and if nothing else, it will be a conversation starter.

"Christmas in the Valley" — Wayne Rostad

For true Eastern-Ontario melodies, pick up *Christmas in the Valley,* a limited-edition three-track EP released by Wayne Rostad, of *On the Road Again* fame, as a fundraiser for local charities. Or if you can't find the shorter version, the full-length 15-track version includes old favorites like "Silver Bells" and "Thank God For Kids" as well as "Christmas In The Valley."



"O Holy Night" — George Beverly Shea

If you want to hit even closer to home, try Grammy winner George Beverly Shea's *Christmas Hymns*. The legendary bass-baritone gospel singer was born in Winchester in 1909, and is still going strong at 96. He has recorded about 500 vocal solos, and holds the Guinness world record for singing in person to the most people ever. The album includes 20 lesser-known Christmas hymns, including "Sleep Precious Babe" and "Once in Royal David's City."

"Dickens' Dublin (The Palace)" — Loreena McKennitt

Step away from "Jingle Bells," and "Let it Snow" — this song is from one of McKennitt's first albums, *Parallel Dreams,* and deserves special notice. An uncredited child recites a version of the first Christmas Eve, describing the arrival of Joseph and Mary at the stable, the travels of the three wise kings and their encounter with King Herod, and the "party" in the sky over the shepherds' heads. The child's thick Irish accent and slang combine with the occasional hesitation make for a soul-searching piece. The vocals of the song are from the perspective of a beggar who's looking for shelter on Christmas Eve. And if you want a completely Christmas album by McKennitt, the five-song EP *A Winter Garden* combines enchantment with familiarity, including a spectacular version of "God Rest Yer Merry Gentleman" with a middle-eastern beat. McKennitt's full-length Christmas collection, *To Drive the Cold Winter Away,* will also make you rethink holiday songs — weepy enough to please Grandma but not so sappy they sound fake. Add two cups of eggnog and a roaring fire, and McKennitt will turn any Scrooge into a Christmas junky — an antidote of sorts to the commercialisation of the season.

"Christmas in Killarney" — Various artists

"It's nice, you know, to kiss your beau, while cuddling under the mistletoe..."

If you are into the truly Celtic Christmas, you can't be without this toe-tapping tune that's been performed by many artists over the years — pick your favorite. This one's sure to make you want to "kick your heels and join in the fun of the jigs and reels."

Nothing off the Backstreet Boys' Christmas album made the list. Sorry.

"Kentucky Homemade Christmas" — Kenny Rogers

"Kentucky Homemade Christmas," about a poor family determined to have as good a time as they can, is the second track, only after "Christmas Everyday" on *Christmas Greetings*. Rogers has recorded five Christmas albums — four solo and one with Dolly Parton — but this was his first. "When a child is born" and "My Favorite Things" help complete the 10-track list of songs both familiar and foreign. Or check out his newest album, *The Gift*. With children's voices and great medlies, you'll forget you're listening to your mom's favourite artist. It's just good music.

"Carol of the Bells" — John Williams

This is a haunting arrangement of the traditional tune off the soundtrack to *Home Alone*. It should bring back great memories for all those now grown-up kids who thought Kevin was the coolest kid in the world. The rest of the soundtrack is good, too — from "Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree" to the children's choir singing "Candles in the Window," this is the perfect soundtrack to the perfect Christmas movie.



Wishing You Joy

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– The Lecours Family

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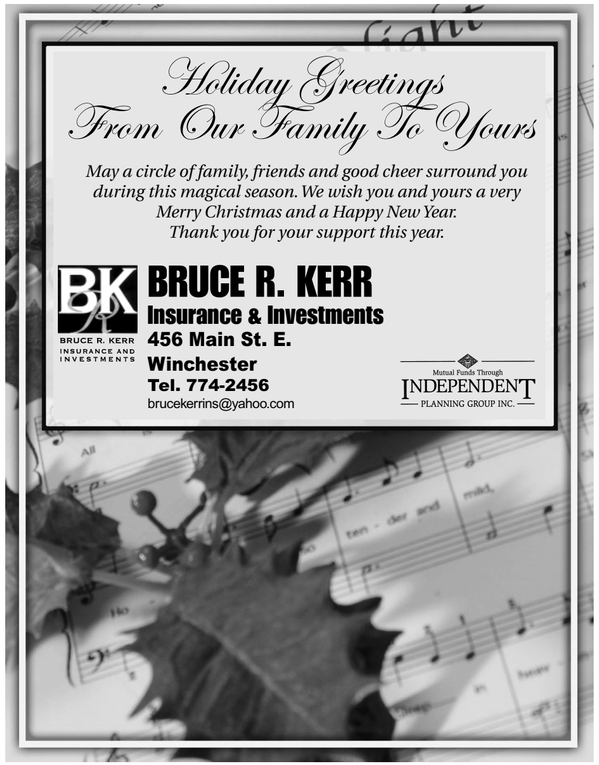

NOEL

Enjoy the season and all that it brings! We wish you a wonderful holiday and thank you for all the little things.
Danielle, Ken & Staff
CRAZY LOONIES
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774-0111

Holiday decorating trends

Decorating your home is an activity that captures the holiday spirit and reflects personal style. Choosing two main colors and building your Christmas décor around them is a great way to get maximum impact. Here are some Christmas color combinations to help you create a beautiful, festive space:

• **Enchanted Forest -** Burgundy and gold form a warm, welcoming look that is contemporary and easy to achieve.

• **Romantic -** White and apple green create a romantic, modern look using pure, radiant white and apple green accents. This simple, elegant color combination can begin with white lights and glass tree decorations and carry through to apple green candles and wreaths.

• **Country Get-Together -** Classic holiday colors mixed with vintage style characters create a country theme. Start with a berry topiary for the table and feature snowmen and other holiday characters throughout the house. Stuffed character stocking holders add some merriment and fun to your holiday decor.

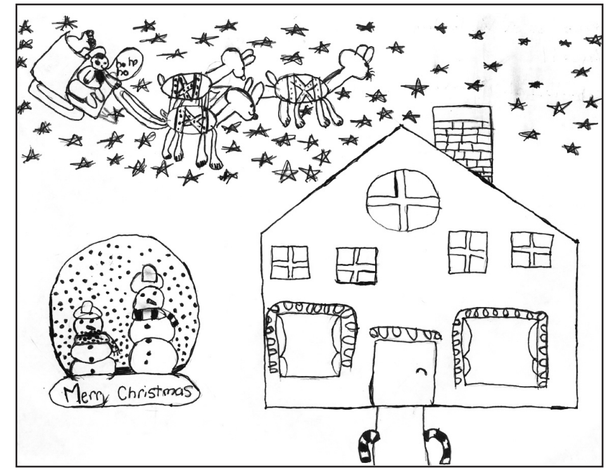
• **Angels -** Ivory and gold create a warm atmosphere and a sense of harmony with the use of gold accents with soft ivory undertones. A wide range of tree skirts, table runners, ornaments and candles are available in gold and ivory. Candles enhance the warmth of a room and invite friends and family to make themselves at home.

• **Winter Wonder -** Turn your home into a winter wonderland using blue and white. Crisp, clean lines will offer maximum impact with minimum effort and give a modern look to your Christmas décor. Nickel and silver-plated items complement blues and bring the look together.

• **Violet Dreams -** Create a contemporary, unique look using a non-traditional color. Violet is typically not considered a festive color, but is a great way to bring your personal style into your holiday decorating. Violet stockings bring attention to the fireplace. Create your own centre piece by placing a variety of purple-hued holiday decorations and balls in a clear bowl.

• **Mystical Evening –** Make your home glow this holiday season with lights. From the outside to the inside, lights are the easy way to create a feeling of warmth. For the outside, pre-lit LED wreaths highlight your front door. In the front hallway, a pre-lit double topiary tree or cashmere pine tree in a sturdy gold pot adds elegance to your home and makes your friends and family feel immediately welcome.

- News Canada



Jessica Van Winden, Age 11, Inkerman Public School



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From the management and staff

Holiday Greetings

from the Management and Staff of

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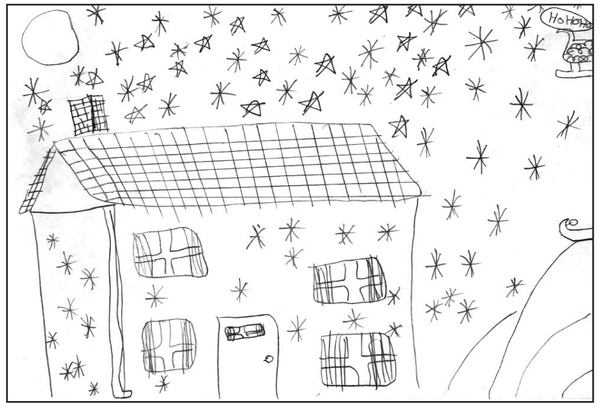

Austin, Grade 4, Elma Public School

Tree test: Tips on selecting and caring for the perfect holiday tree

Decking the halls, buying and decorating a holiday tree is an annual ritual for many Canadians. "Anyone with a keen eye and a good nose can select the perfect tree," says John Mansz, a Canadian gardening expert. Consider the following tips to help you select and care for a tree that is just right for your home:



Freshness First – Look for green colour then pull a few needles, shake the tree and inspect the limbs. "The needles shouldn't pull off or shake off easily and they should be flexible, moist, sticky and fragrant when you crush them in your hand," says Mansz. Limbs should be strong enough to support lights and spaced to lend visual balance. The butt end of the trunk should be cut to promote water absorption and prolong its beauty and life.

Getting it Home – If possible, transport your tree home in the trunk of the car instead of on top to lessen exposure to wind. "If you have to put your tree on top of the car, cover it to help prevent wind or sun damage," says Mansz.

Setting it up and Watering – Once home, place the tree in a sturdy, water reservoir stand, making sure it is appropriate for the size of the tree and that it will hold at least 3 1/2 litres of water. "Some people mistakenly shave the sides of the tree trunk to fit it into the stand," says Mansz. "This is a common mistake that lessens the tree's lifespan."

Use a preservative in the water and keep the stand filled. The average tree will absorb roughly 3 1/2 litres of water during the first 24 hours of being placed in the stand, and between 4 cups and 3 1/2 litres of water each day thereafter. Water consumption is related to the diameter of the tree butt, not to its height, so be sure to check water levels daily even if your tree doesn't seem that large.

- News Canada



The tree is trimmed ...
The gifts are wrapped ...
The lights are lit ...
And now our best wishes are on the way!
Merry Christmas and many thanks.

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Crazy for the crèche

by Bonnie James
Press staff





This nativity scene made out of fabric is one used several times by Knox United Church in Edwards at its annual Christmas concert. Made by a church member, each character has a velcro tag on the back so elements of the scene can be added one by one.
Press Photo — James

Most people with any sort of church background have memories of playing an angel, a shepherd, or even a sheep or a cow in a Christmas nativity pageant. If you were really lucky you had the opportunity to portray Mary or Joseph. Personally, I have recollections of a white choir gown with wings and a tinsel halo.

The nativity scene, or crèche, is an important part of the Christmas season. It is one way that people of the Christian faith remind themselves of the reason for the season.

The word crèche is from the French word for manger. The French word comes from the Italian word Greccio. It is commonly believed that the first living nativity scene was set up by St. Francis of Assisi in the town of Greccio in 1223. St. Francis' nativity took place in a cave and featured people acting out the story of the birth of Christ as animals looked on. Today, Sunday school children across the world take part in Christmas pageants.

Crèches are available in all sorts and sizes. There are small versions that can hang on your Christmas tree and large ones for your front yard.

A nativity scene, especially a smaller one, may be particularly appealing to children. My family actually has a stuffed nativity set, perfect for youngsters to play with — the camel gets a lot of attention.

There's even an online crèche guild for paper crèche enthusiasts. Visit crechemania.com to see many examples of pop-up, fold-out, or table top nativity scene models.

If you are a crèche collector, it's worth a day trip to Montreal to visit the nativity scene display at Saint-Joseph's Oratory Museum. The impressive collection showcases 290 nativity scenes from some 110 countries, including Uganda, Madagascar, and Brazil. The exhibit is open from 10 am to 5 pm until February and is open Christmas Day and New Year's Day. Entry is by donation.

Church of the Nativity

The Church of the Nativity in the heart of Bethlehem marks the birthplace of Christ. Situated on Manger Square, about eight kilometres from Jerusalem, the church is built over a grotto, a small cave, where the Virgin Mary is said to have given birth to Jesus.

• continued on the next page

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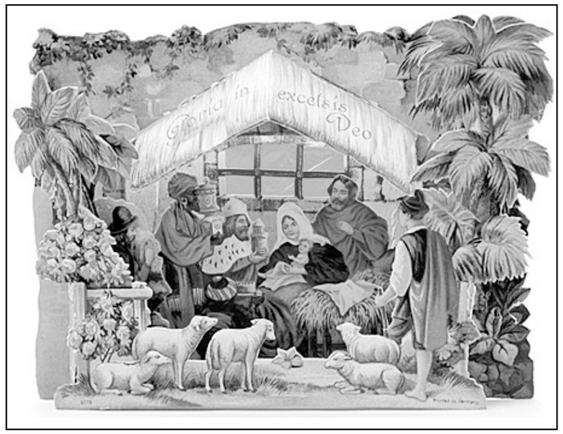
Crazy for the crèche

• continued from previous page

For centuries, it was one of the most fought over holy places. It has been seized and defended by a succession of armies — including Muslim and Crusader forces. It is currently controlled jointly by three Christian denominations — the Armenian Church, the Roman Catholic Church, and the Greek Orthodox Church.

The grotto of the nativity contains the manger that is believed to be the place where Jesus was laid after he was born. The grotto is encased in white marble. The site of the birth is marked by a 14-point star on a marble stone. The site has been venerated by Christians since St. Justin Martyr identified it as the site of Jesus' birth in the second century.

The original basilica, erected in the fourth century by Emperor Constantine, was completely destroyed in the Samaritan Revolt of 529 AD. It was replaced during the reign of Justinian (527 to 65 AD) on the same site, by a larger basilica, slightly different in plan and incorporating different parts of the original building. The site attracts thousands of pilgrims from around the world every year. The main access to the basilica is by the very small "door of humility," which visitors must enter bending over, as if entering a cave. The door is said to have been made during the Ottoman era to prevent mounted horsemen from entering the basilica.



This German paper fold-out crèche is featured on the website crechemania.com. Paper crèches come in many variations and are very collectible.

Over the years, the site has been expanded. The church's compound covers and area of approximately 12,000 square metres and includes, besides the basilica, a Latin convent, a Greek Orthodox convent and an Armenian convent.

Christmas!

Christmas carols sung by the fire
Snuggled up tight, comfy, and tired
Sipping hot cocoa with the lights on the tree
With the presents with bows all tied up with glee
Stocking full of candy all for me.
Christmas!

By Chelsea Romans
Grade 4, Inkerman Public School

My Christmas dream

It was Christmas Eve and I jumped in bed,
Accidentally hitting my head.
The next morning I awoke and jumped for joy,
To know that I would have at least one awesome toy.

I flew down the stairs to see the tree,
And all I found was one present for me.
I ripped it open with all my might,
And was surprised at the sight.

There was a note that said,
Come and meet me in the shed!
I ran as fast as my feet could go,
And there I saw him, Ho! Ho! Ho!

I must have passed out,
Because I heard my sister shout.
Come look at the presents under the tree,
Then I said to me,
"Wow, that was an awesome dream, you see!"

by Dakota Boulanger
Grade 4, Inkerman Public School

A Heartwarming Holiday



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Brighten

By Tia Bakker, Grade 3, Community Christian School, Metcalfe



Jake, 11 years old,
Metcalfe Public School

Ten Little Ornaments

Ten little ornaments hanging on a pine,
one fell off, and then there were nine.

Nine little ornaments decorating the gate,
one fell off, and then there were eight.

Eight little ornaments dancing in heaven,
one fell off, and then there were seven.

Six little ornaments were playing by a hive,
one got stung, and then there were five.

Five little ornaments sitting in the store,
one got bought, and then there were four.

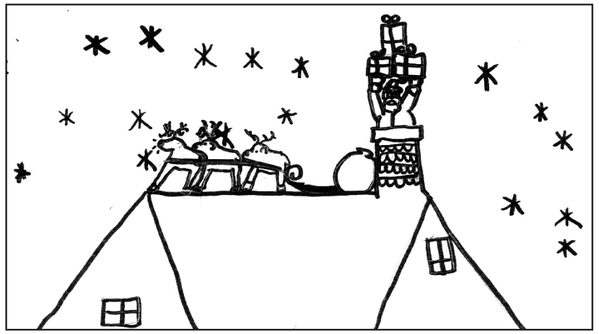
Four little ornaments singing on the tree,
one sang too loud, and then there were three.

Three little ornaments ready to give to you,
one got wrapped up, and then there were two.

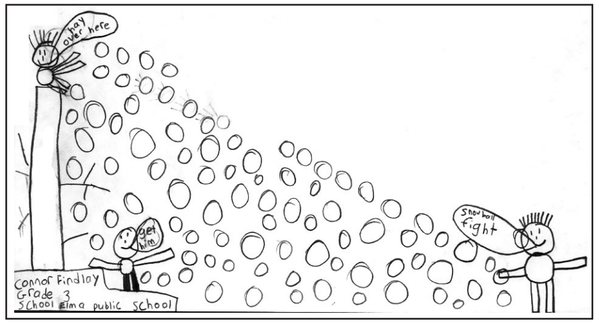
Two little ornaments dancing near the sun,
one got too close, and then there was one.

One little ornament tried to be a hero,
he tried too hard, and then there were zero.

by Steven Gaudet, Grade 5,
St. Mary's Catholic School Chesterville



KerryAnne, Grade 3, Winchester Public School



Connor Findlay, Grade 3, Elma Public School

Thanks

With gratitude at Christmas time to our many fine customers. Hope your holiday suits you to a tee!



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Christmas with Bob and Doug McKenzie

At Christmastime, more than ever, we should be proud of our chilly-toed, red-nosed Canadian roots — even if it does involve a bit of ridicule, eh? The McKenzie brothers, Bob and Doug, have always been good at making people laugh, and their rendition of "The 12 Days of Christmas" is no exception. So here goes, ya hoser! Take off!

Bob: Ok g'day. This is the Christmas part of the album, you can play this at your Christmas parties, eh? Or to yourself on Christmas Eve if there's nothing else to do.

Doug: G'day, eh? in case you thought like I wasn't on this part.

Bob: Oh, I guaranty ya, you'd be on. OK so g'day, this is the Christmas part, and we're gonna tell ya what to get your true love for Christmas.

Doug: Look out the window!

Bob: Where? Whaddya doin'?

Doug: Snow!

Bob: Oh it's the great white north, and it's snowin' cuz it's Christmastime.

Hey, hoser! Here's a quiz... quiz for Doug:

Doug: OK, I got my thinkin' toque on!

Bob: Yeah, right. What are the 12 days of Christmas?

Doug: Um.

Bob: Cuz figure it out, right? Christmas is when?

Doug: The 25th.

Bob: Right, well what's the 24th?Christmas Eve, right?

Doug: That's two.

Bob: Then, what's after that?

Doug: Wrestling day.

Bob: No.

Doug: Boxing Day.

Bob: That's three. Then what's after that? Nothin'.

Doug: New Year's.

Bob: Four.

Doug: New Year's Eve.

Bob: Five. Where da ya get 12?

Doug: Uh... there's two Saturdays and Sundays in there — four. That's nine, and three other days which I believe are the mystery days. OK, this is our Christmas song, in case ya don't know what to get someone for Christmas.



Doug: There's lotsa ideas in here, so listen and don't get stuck. By the way, that's me on the organ.

Bob: OK, geeze.

Doug: OK, you start.

Bob: OK.

On the first day of Christmas, my true love gave to me... beer. On the second day of Christmas, my true love gave to me... Two turtlenecks, and beer. On the third day of Christmas, my true love gave to me... Three french toast, two turtlenecks, and beer. There should be more there, eh?

On the fourth day of Christmas, my true love gave to me... Four pounds of back bacon, three french toast, two turtlenecks, and beer... in a tree. Oh, see? Ya need more.

On the fifth day of Christmas, my true love gave to me... Five golden toques! Four pounds of back bacon, three french toast, two turtlenecks, and beer... in a tree.

On the sixth day of Christmas, my true love gave to me... Six packs of two-four, five golden toques! Four pounds of back bacon, three french toast, two turtlenecks, and beer... in a tree.

OK.

On the seventh day of Christmas, my true love gave to me... seven packs of smokes, six packs of two-four, five golden toques! Four pounds of back bacon, three french toast, two turtlenecks, and beer... in a tree.

Oh, I keep forgettin'. This should be just the two days of Christmas, this is too hard for us!

On the eighth day of Christmas, my true love gave to me... Eight comic books, seven packs of smokes, six packs of two-four, five golden toques! Four pounds of back bacon, three french toast, two turtlenecks, and beer... in a tree.

Wow. That beer's empty.

Bob: Day 12. G'day and welcome to day 12.

Doug: Yeah.

Five golden toques! Four pounds of back bacon, three french toast, two turtlenecks, and beer... in a treeeeeeeeeeeee.

Bob: Boy, so that's our song. Merry Christmas, and g'day.

Doug: G'day everybody. Happy New Year's. OK, ya know what ya left out?

Bob: What?

Doug: Donuts. I told you to get me donuts.

Bob: Oh, no!

Doug: Either on the ninth day, or the 10th day, or the 11th day. I wanted donuts.

Bob: The song is over; Merry Christmas everybody!

Doug: Or the 12th... you coulda gotten me a dozen donuts!

Bob: Go to the stores and get some presents.

Doug: You coulda gone down to the donut shop where you buy a dozen donuts, you get another donut free. Then it coulda been 13 for the 13 days of Christmas!

Bob: Next Christmas, get me a chainsaw.

Doug: Take off! Boy that song was a beauty... it moved me.

Bob: Yeah, it ranks up there with "Stairway to Heaven."

Doug: What?

Beer, sun-dried tomato and olive quick bread

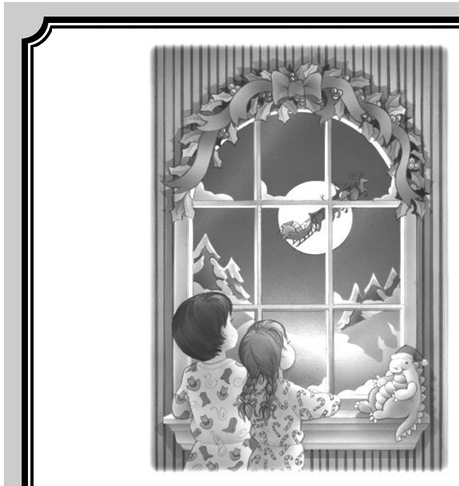
Ingredients

3 ½ cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon baking soda
1 teaspoon double-acting baking powder
1 large egg, beaten lightly
1 12-ounce bottle of Sleeman India Pale Ale
½ cup chopped drained sun-dried tomatoes packed in oil, reserving 1 tablespoon of the oil
½ cup chopped pimento-stuffed olives

Directions

Preheat oven to 350° F. Grease a loaf pan (nine by five by three inches). In a large bowl, whisk together flour, salt, baking soda, baking powder. Add egg, beer, tomatoes and reserved oil, and olives, stirring batter until just mixed. Turn the batter into the pan and bake bread in the middle of the oven for 50 minutes, or until a tester comes out clean. Turn the bread out onto a rack and let cool.





Eggnog #1

Recipe from *Chatelaine*

6 eggs
1/2 cup maple syrup
1/8 teaspoon salt (optional)
4 cups milk
1/2 teaspoon vanilla
Whisk together eggs, syrup, and salt. Mix in two cups of the milk. Place in top of double boiler over, but not touching, gently boiling water. Cook, stirring continuously, until mixture thickens enough to thinly coat a metal spoon or to 160° F – about 15 minutes. Do not boil! Remove pot immediately from heat. Whisk in remaining milk and vanilla. Strain through a fine sieve. Cover and chill. Consume within 24 hours.

Eggnog #2

Recipe from staff reporter Meghan Duncan's mom, Sue

3 eggs
1 can Carnation evaporated milk
1/4 cup of sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla
Up to 1 and 1/2 cups milk (optional – to stretch recipe)
Nutmeg to taste
Use a blender to mix all ingredients. Consume immediately.

Eggnog eggstravaganza

Dare to compare

by Press Staff
Taste-Testing Department



Eggnog #1

This recipe took us two tries. (Alright, it took Bonnie two tries.) It calls for a double boiler — who has a double boiler anymore? Not us. The first attempt with a makeshift double boiler ended in disaster. The egg cooked, creating yucky lumps. "The chunks are getting stuck in my teeth," reported one taste-tester. We're also suspicious that some of the water from the "double boiler" got into the eggnog as it was pretty watery.



The second attempt was much improved — we used the microwave. Technology rules! Using the microwave, this recipe is about as easy as making the diet eggnog (#3). The maple taste is very subtle, but it's quite sweet. It's definitely eggy-tasting, which some people don't like.

If you don't screw it up, it's pretty good.

Eggnog #2

Meg's mom's recipe tops our eggnog list. It's a breeze to make — who can't work a blender? And it is the most delicious of the four eggnogs we tested. It's creamy and just the right texture. We used two per cent Carnation and only added half a cup of extra milk.

The eggs are raw, so use eggs that are as fresh as possible and make sure this eggnog is consumed shortly after it is made.

• continued on next page

Eggnog #3

Recipe from www.dietbites.com

1 cup Egg Beaters (or comparable product)
6 cups skim milk
2 teaspoons vanilla
2 teaspoons rum extract
Sweetener to taste
Nutmeg
Cinnamon
Heat the milk, Egg Beaters, and sweetener in the microwave on high until thickened, stirring every minute or so. (Use stove if you prefer.) Remove from microwave or stovetop and stir in remaining ingredients. Cover mixture and chill. Sprinkle with additional nutmeg and cinnamon if desired.

Eggnog #4

Store bought, Compliments brand

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And wherever you may roam
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Eggnog eggstravaganza

Eggnog #3

This diet eggnog was surprisingly thick and tasty. Considering it uses skim milk, we weren't expecting much. There's a slight bland and pasty aftertaste that reminded us of when you use too much cornstarch to thicken a sauce and it seems to suck all the flavor out of it. But that's a minor detail that may be corrected with more sweetener — we used Equal. The recipe sort of leaves you hanging with the "sweeten to taste" instruction. We suggest adding the sweetener last, as the heating process can dull the sweetness of some sweeteners. The rum extract flavoring wasn't overpowering, but provided a nice undertone.

If you're counting calories, you can have this eggnog and feel like you are indulging.

Eggnog #4

The store bought eggnog hit most of the right 'nog notes for us, though it was a bit too yellow in color for our taste.



The ingredients list included some wonky sounding things. The Compliments variety isn't too thick -- a plus for some of our tasters. We found it wasn't quite as flavorful as the homemade recipes we tried. One could always add extra nutmeg to the store 'nog to spice it up a bit more. It's certainly easy and not a whole lot different than the homemade types we tried.

How do they score?

We've rated these 'nogs on a scale of five eggs, with five being the best score.

	#1 Maple	#2 Blender	#3 Diet	#4 Store
Ease	2	4	3	5
Taste	4	5	3	3
Thickness	3	4	3	2

Illustrious history of eggnog

With help from the Encyclopedia of Christmas by Tanya Gulevich and Wikipedia.com

You know Christmas is coming when you see the eggnog appear in the grocery store cooler. There are countless recipes for making your own, too. But who had the brilliant idea to mix eggs and milk (and booze!) into a beverage in the first place?



Eggnog dates back to the colonial era. Rum was sometimes referred to as grog, leading some people to speculate that the original name of the holiday drink may have been "egg and grog," which was later shortened to "eggnog." Another possibility is that it comes from the word "noggin," meaning small mug or cup.

Though eggnog as we know it has a long American history, the drink is similar to a number of traditional European recipes that mix eggs with alcohol, including the English "lamb's wool," the Dutch "advocaat," and the Norwegian "eggedosis."

In America, George Washington was known to serve eggnog following a recipe which called for cream, milk, eggs, brandy, rye, rum, and sherry.

An interesting historical eggnog story took place at West Point Military Academy in New York State in 1826, when 70 cadets risked their careers for a taste of the alcoholic treat. In direct disobedience of Superintendent Thayer's order that the academy observe a dry Christmas, they hosted a secret eggnog party in their barracks. Cadets snuck in the necessary ingredients. They blackened the windows and posted lookouts. They were discovered at 4:30 am. The fracas that followed left one cadet charged with attempted murder.

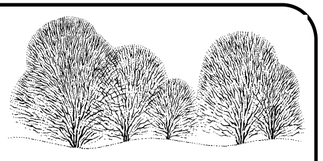
The "Eggnog Riot" as it was called, resulted in six cadets resigning voluntarily and the court martial of 19 others – 11 of whom were dismissed. Among those who took part in the eggnog caper was Jefferson Davis, future president of the Confederate States of America. He was arrested by school authorities and confined to his quarters until the following February.

Since the 1960s, eggnog has been served cold and without alcohol, both of which are significant departures from its historical origins.

Whether you like it warm or cold, with alcohol or without, eggnog is a Christmas tradition for many people and chances are you'll be offered a glass sometime over the holiday season. Go ahead and indulge, but try to avoid any eggnog riots.

Over The River And Through The Woods...

We'd go the distance to say, "Merry Christmas and many thanks!"



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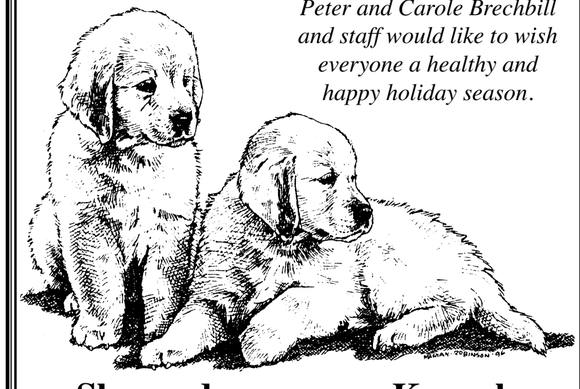

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The Winter Solstice: optimism and beauty

by Wendy James, owner of Luvdragons in Metcalfe

Winter Solstice, also known as the holiday of Yule, is one of the most joyous and anticipated holidays of the year and has been for millenniums. It is a time for celebration, noted by the shortest day and longest night in our hemisphere. On this darkest night, there is a promise of hope. This special day the sun begins to strengthen once again. At Yule, the sun itself is reborn. We celebrate with this as the focus, a time of rejuvenated brightness and beauty.

Light is what this holiday is all about, especially in the northern hemisphere where the long, cold, dark nights begin to lessen in duration.

Candles and lights are an important symbol for so many this holiday. Candles have long been associated with the celebration of Winter Solstice; they cast a soft warm light, whilst reminding us of the central theme of this peaceful holiday.

The Winter Solstice is a celebration of all the things that brighten our lives. We share this optimism and beauty with our friends, families and loved ones. It is the perfect time of year to invite those closest to you into your home and share with them positive exchanges often expressing our gratitude and appreciation with small tokens of our affection and love.

These gifts are meant to be small, thoughtful gestures. Gracious gifting is a practice that can expand our hearts and deepen our connections with others. In many Pagan and earth-based celebrations, instead of exchanging presents, there is an exchange of wishes. Written down, the wishes are exchanged and then burned to facilitate the wish manifesting.



The Winter Solstice is a solar holiday. Since the Summer Solstice we have watched the sun set earlier and earlier each evening.

Enjoy this shortest day by possibly going for a walk, taking in the beauty of the stark trees and icicle-laden eves. Breathe in the fresh, crisp air, which energizes and refreshes our systems. As the sun sinks behind the horizon on Dec. 21, take time to pause and reflect on the season. It is a quiet time of our spirit and a time to reflect on the cycles and seasons of your own life.

It is a time to lovingly affect someone else's life in a positive way, even a stranger. Yule is a time of giving without needing to receive. Appreciating this cycle of the sun and beauty of the season is healing for our minds, bodies and souls in more ways than we can fathom.

Yule is a celebration of coming together and reaffirming our faith in each other. Bless others with love and happiness in the Old Pagan tradition as our ancestors did while huddled in their sod huts thousands of years ago. They spent their energy during this holiday centered on song, drink, merriment, health, and fruitfulness.

It is a long tradition for greenery to be brought indoors during the Winter Solstice as a remembrance that even when it seems the world is dead and lifeless, life does indeed persist. Customary greens include holly with its berries, hawthorn, mistletoe, and other evergreens, which were made into garlands, ropes and wreaths, and other decorations. Evergreens are a symbol of life in winter and harken the eventual return of the sun. In many cultures, bringing evergreens indoors has been a documented tradition for as long as there have been written records.

There is hope all round us. Find it within yourself, too, for life is meant to be celebrated and lived to its fullest. Nature gently reminds us with her sparkles twinkling on the snow, the complex yet simple hibernation of her trees, the miracle of individuality within each snowflake and so much more. Revel in your place within the cycle of life and skip through the circular dance of the wheel of the year. Winter Solstice has been since the beginning of time, and deserves to be a holiday rung in with optimism and joy.

I wish you all a blessed Yule. May you find your dreams and know the important roll you have in the quilt of life. I, the eternal optimist, believe that miracles happen every day. Let's have some world peace, food for the hungry, comfort for the fearful, abundance for all and forgiveness and compassion for those we do not agree with nor understand this holiday season! (Feel free to cut this wish out and burn it for me, folks. It can't hurt.)

Let It Snow... Let It Snow... Let It Snow!

Wishing you and your family a one-of-a-kind holiday season.

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Holiday Greetings To All Of You

With best wishes and gratitude at this special time of year

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Cloverdale Meadows

May you enjoy this special time of year with the ones you love, and may the days ahead bring good fortune to your doorstep, just as you have brought good luck to us. Merry Christmas!

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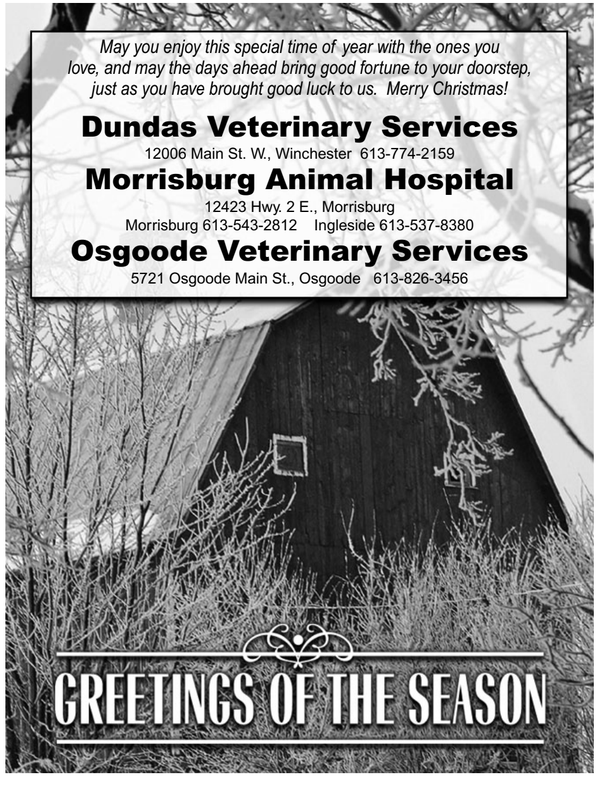


GREETINGS OF THE SEASON

Conservation gifts make for merry Christmas

Once again this Christmas season, South Nation Conservation is providing watershed residents the opportunity to deliver gifts that keep on giving: trees, and a good read.

Before Dec. 23, with a minimum order of 50 seedlings for $40 ($50 for orders outside the watershed), SNC will prepare attractive gift certificates, which are good for tree pickup next spring at a specified place, date and time. The varieties include white spruce, white pine, red pine and jack pine.

And, for the general reader, local history buff, and conservationist in the family, how about a copy of Reflections of the South Nation Watershed, a 134-page collection of vintage photographs depicting life along and near the 180-kilometre South Nation River going back more than 100 years.

Selling for $24.95, the bilingual book contains chapters describing local geology, the First Nations' contribution to the area, original settlement, farming, communities, natural environment, and South Nation Conservation's impact over more than 50 years.

"These are two great gifts being offered at a very reasonable price," said SNC's Elizabeth Baxter. "You can never go wrong with a book, especially one with local content. And everyone loves trees which give so much back in terms of habitat, erosion control, shade and wind breaks."

SNC's Ed Kupczyk pointed out that tree orders can be much larger than the 50-tree minimum. For acreages, 1,000 or more saplings can be reserved. SNC planting services are available at an additional cost.

"It's an ideal, economical way to create a productive forest on idle land," Kupczyk said. "And it's a way of improving our rural landscape while passing on the value of environmental stewardship to family and friends. What could be more in keeping with the spirit of the season?"

Every year, some 1.7 million Christmas trees are cut and purchased in Canada. Help reforest the land. For more information, call Ed Kupczyk, at 1-877-984-2948, ext. 249.



What would you like for Christmas?

Three-year-old Olivia Drouin had her chance to chat with Santa Claus at the Royal Bank in Winchester on Sat., Dec. 3 before the annual Country Christmas Parade of Lights. What would she like to see under the tree on Christmas morning? A dollhouse. *Press Photo — Duncan*

Warm Wishes

All the best to you and yours this happy time of year.
We send our thanks out to all and wish you much good cheer!

Monast Backhoe & Haulage Service Ltd.
Chesterville 448-2856

Happy Holidays

Our family would like to wish you all a safe, happy an "egg-citing" holiday season.

Wouters Poultry Farm

Tony, Trish and the Chicks



Happy Holidays

from

A & T Service
Vernon 821-1946

A little cheer goes a long way!

Thanks for your continued support and Merry Christmas



Yuletide Greetings



We're pleased and proud to have such wonderful neighbors, and wish all the best to all of you this holiday season. Thank you for your loyal support.

HAWLEY'S CORNERS
GIFTS & ACCESSORIES

Christmas Room Open Year 'Round
Open Wednesday to Sunday, 10 am-5 pm
OPEN THURSDAY 10 AM-8 PM
Open every day in December
Victoria St., Metcalfe • 821-1332

The *Press* asks:

What is your favorite Christmas tradition?



Helen Guy, Winchester

"Buying gifts for my family. I usually get started in September, I'm just finishing up today (Dec. 8). I'm hoping this will be my last trip."



Scott Smail, Winchester

"Family dinner. I just like having everyone around."



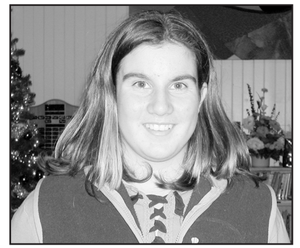
Lyle Van Allen (South Dundas Mayor) Williamsburg

"Family — children and grandchildren. And Church on Christmas Eve. For the last few years, I've put on a red suit and visted the homes of Easter Seal kids. That is a fabulous experience."



Brenda Mead, Winchester

"Even though four of five of my kids are gone away to university and moved out, on Christmas Eve when they come home, they all sleep in the same beds they slept in as kids, and they get up individually in the night to open their stockings. They still all pile on our bed Christmas morning."



Kristi Sloane, Winchester

"Decorating for Christmas and watching my favorite Christmas movie — *White Christmas*."



Paul Lefebvre, Morewood

"Putting up the Christmas tree. The first week of December we get the kids to do it and we all do it together."

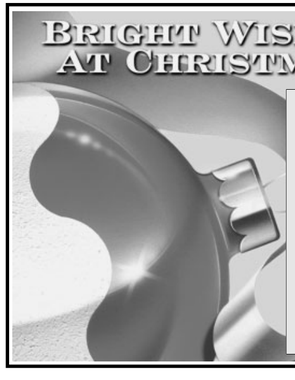


Trimmed With Our Thanks

... And our best wishes, too, to each and every one of you! Happy Holidays!

Aura Spa
BEAUTY & WELLNESS
484 Main St. Winchester
774-6000

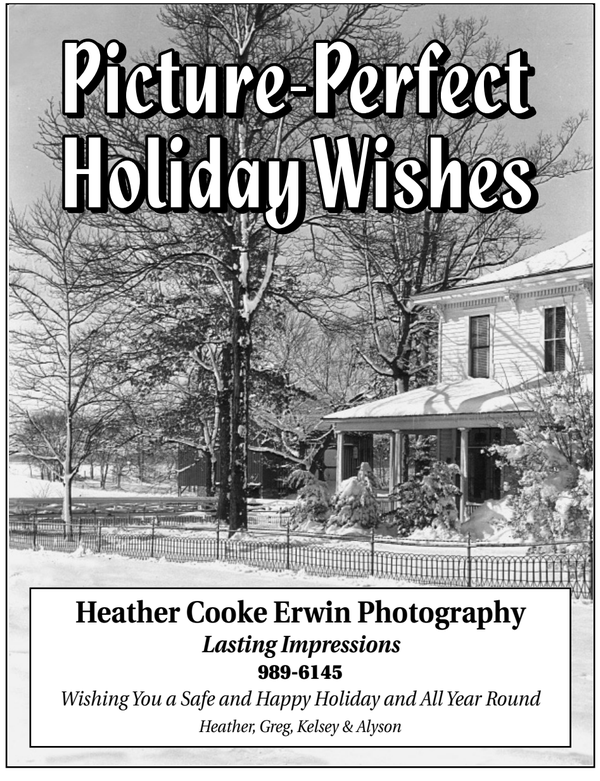
BRIGHT WISHES AT CHRISTMAS



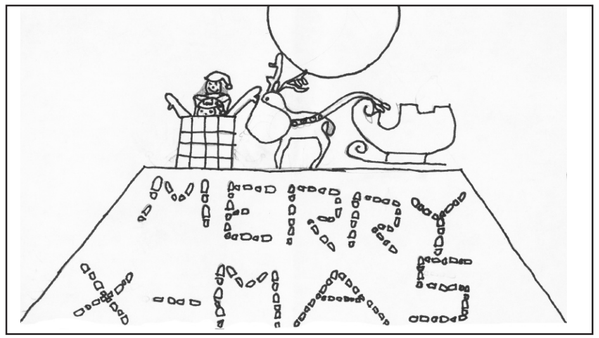
At the close of another year,
We wish you joy, we wish you cheer
So please accept our thanks, today
And have a happy holiday!

Kevin Barkley
CARPENTRY SERVICES
RR#1, Inkerman
613-989-3637

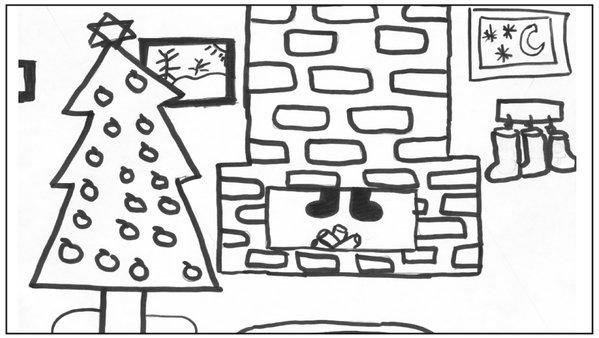
Picture-Perfect Holiday Wishes



Heather Cooke Erwin Photography
Lasting Impressions
989-6145
Wishing You a Safe and Happy Holiday and All Year Round
Heather, Greg, Kelsey & Alyson



Lisa Scheuner, Grade 5, Morewood Public School



Kaitlyn Hodgson, Grade 5, Dixon's Corners Public School

HOPE IT'S UPBEAT!

With a measure of gratitude, we'd like to wish you and yours a very merry holiday season.

Dundas Machine

12205 Gypsy Lane, Winchester
613-774-1672

With Thanks & Best Wishes

With joy in our hearts we wish you all a most delightful season. It's been a pleasure doing business with you and we look forward to your continued patronage. Happy Holidays!

THE VILLAGE BIN
498 Main St., Winchester
774-2783

Season's Greetings

Wishing you a festive season filled with good friends, good times and good tidings.

JMP Business Services Ltd.
Jose Poole 821-3436

A Beautiful Season

Here's hoping it's a beautiful season for you and your family this holiday. We feel privileged to have your support and honored by your friendship. Merry Christmas!

ANDRE MENARD & SONS
GRAIN ELEVATORS
12650 Ormond Rd., Winchester (Marionville) 774-4246

SEASON'S GREETINGS
from all of us

Here's hoping your holiday season leaves you laughing all the way. Your friendship makes it all worthwhile.

The NEW HARVESTORE
BACK ON THE HORIZON!

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For All Your Parts, Service & Sales of Rovibec Products

Harvestore 20x30
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Structure built in 2004 -
Call for details



At M&M MEAT SHOPS We're Cookin' Up Great Things This Season

So you can, too!

Happy holidays!

from the staff at M&M MEAT SHOPS

123 MAIN ST., MORRISBURG 543-3249



Brayden Cochrane, Grade 2, Winchester Public School

Home for the holidays:
Coping with the festive chaos

It's the most wonderful time of the year – that's what the song tells us, anyway. But for many – whether celebrating Christmas, Hanukah or Kwanzaa – 'tis the season to be stressed. A mother-in-law moving in is the least of your worries; there's also a six-foot-long shopping list, a house to be cleaned, meals to be made, parties to be thrown and, oh yeah, kids to be entertained. Your to-do list has come to resemble an epic movie.

We will survive-and have fun doing it. Here are a few ideas to make managing holiday mayhem a whole lot easier.

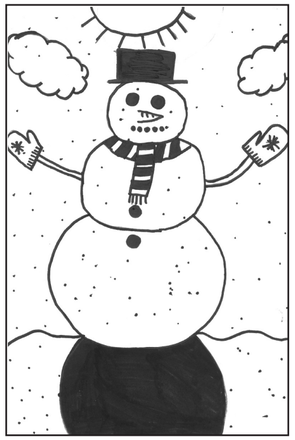
• Keep kids occupied and out from under-foot. An early present is a good idea – especially if it's a new game that will have half-pints happily entertained for hours.

• Stay well-stocked. Pack the pantry with nibbles in advance of the onslaught. Salted nuts, fruit cake, crackers and assorted cheeses serve as sophisticated cocktail fare while cookies and cakes will satisfy younger sweet tooths.

• Make ahead, bake ahead. Most holiday stress is created by leaving tasks to the last minute. Before the holidays are in full swing (and while the kids are still in school) take some time to bake treats, storing them in the freezer for unexpected visits.

• Buy a few extra gifts – board games and bottles of wine are presents most anyone would love-and have them wrapped and ready, should anyone surprise you with an unanticipated little-something.

- News Canada



Tyler, Grade 5/6,
Dixon's Corners Public School

Hope Your Christmas Is All It 'Auto' Be!

It's been a pleasure to be of service to you.

from Bill and Bev Smith and the staff at

LMS MOTOR SALES LTD.
Williamsburg 535-2298



At the Holiday Season, our thoughts turn gratefully to those who have made our progress possible. It is in this spirit we say...

Thank You
and Best Wishes for the Holidays
and a Happy New Year

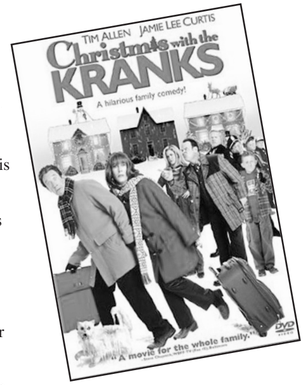
Special thanks to my building contractors:

A&H Racine Construction - South Mountain *(Allan & Heather)*
Vriend Construction - Osgoode *(Chris & Marilyn)*
Byers Carpentry - Crysler *(David, Donna, Kevin & Ken)*
Mark's Quality Carpentry - Kemptville *(Mark & Mimi)*
Vandemheen Construction - South Mountain *(Lubbert & Wanda)*
Kevin Barkley Carpentry Services - Inkerman *(Kevin & Carolyn)*
Klatt Masonry - Osgoode *(Steven)*
Ian Drew Enterprises - Manotick *(Ian)*

Movie review

Christmas with the Kranks not all it's kranked up to be

by Amanda Smith-Millar



More than a few couples could identify with the Kranks. Tired, stressed, and aware of the financial drain of Christmas, the pair want a break. But as they discover … is it worth it?

The film opens with a peek into the life of Luther Krank (Tim Allen), who is suffering from the bah-humbugs. He's tired of the carolling, the fuss, and the same routine every December. With his daughter in the Peace Corps, Luther decides to skip Christmas, save about $6,000, and spend his savings on a cruise.

He convinces his wife, Nora (Jamie Lee Curtis), to accept his plan. The pair buy airplane tickets for Dec. 25 and Luther decides to skip Christmas — totally. This means no cards, no tree, no giving or accepting gifts. Most disappointing to their neighborhood, there will be no annual Christmas Eve bash at the Kranks' house.

However, the Kranks don't get off easily. The community finds their plan abominable. Neighbors stage protests in front of their house. When that doesn't work, the Kranks are ostracized. Carollers sing songs outside the Krank residence, terrifying the couple as they cower inside.

Most surprisingly, the movie is based on Skipping Christmas, a novel by acclaimed thriller author John Grisham. The story is meant to give deep insight into the chaos, frenzy, and consumerism that defines a modern Christmas.

Alas, *Christmas with the Kranks* was reformatted into a mildly entertaining screenplay. Tim Allen plays a good, gruff character (but we already knew that). Acclaimed actress Jamie Lee Curtis plays a hyperactive mother –- critics pointed out that her performance is a little over-the-top, but then again, so is her character.

Overall, the actors churn out decent performances, working with a mediocre script. The movie is mildly humorous.

There are a few good, touching moments that make *Christmas with the Kranks* worthwhile, but feel free to fast-forward to the end.

HO HO HO
HERE'S HOPING ALL OUR FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS HAVE A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS!
FLOWERS
DURANT'S
507 St. Lawrence St., Winchester
774-3825
173 Queen St. W., Chesterville
448-2354
1-800-263-5459



Mitchell Fournier, Grade 4, Inkerman Public School

Happy Holidays



In the rush of events, we tend to overlook the important friendships that are the true basis of business relationships.
One of the great pleasures of the Holiday Season is the opportunity to exchange greetings with those whose friendship and goodwill are valued so highly.
In this spirit it is a pleasure to say 'Thank you' and extend sincere appreciation for the very pleasant association enjoyed with you.
May a bright and prosperous New Year bring happiness to you and yours.

Black Lumber Co. Ltd.
Morrisburg 543-3777



SEASON'S GREETINGS & BEST WISHES FOR THE HOLIDAYS

Scotiabank™
Life. Money. Balance both.™
™ Trademarks of The Bank of Nova Scotia.

South Mountain Branch
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South Mountain
Ontario
K0E 1W0



Welcome Christmas!

Let the spirit of Christmas into your heart and be filled with the magic of this special time of year. We know we're filled with joy when we think of all the good friends we've made and wish you a very happy and memorable Christmas and New Year.

Holm-El Hairstyling
Elsie & Ray Holmes
Winchester 774-3734

Elf cute but misses potential for magic

by Amanda Smith-Millar

Movie review

The trailers alone promised a Christmas classic. Never mind Will Ferrell's reputation for outrageous humor, or the fact that he's willing to prance about the screen in yellow tights and a green fur-trimmed jacket. *Elf,* the 2003 family flick, is now available on DVD, but has missed its chance to snag a spot in Christmas comedy history beside *Home Alone* and the *Muppets' Christmas Carol*.

Elf is the story of a human boy raised as one of Santa's helpers. The tale begins when a mischievous young baby named Buddy (Will Ferrell) sneaks into Santa's sack on Christmas Eve.

Later, at the North Pole, an astounded group of elves discover the bundle of joy in Santa's bag. They decide to adopt him. Buddy is taken under the wing of "Papa Elf" (comedian Bob Newhart), who becomes dwarfed by his ever-growing adopted son, soon three times his size. Buddy quickly outgrows the miniature elf world, barely able to squeeze into his seat at school.

Eventually, Buddy can no longer keep up with the other elves on the toy manufacturing line. He soon begins to hear rumors that he may not, in fact, be an elf at all. So Papa Elf decides to tell Buddy the secret: he's a human.

Buddy, now 33, decides to find Walter, his estranged father (James Caan), living in New York City. He wants to find out why his mother tragically died, and why his father and mother separated.

Before Buddy makes the southbound trek, the man-elf learns a few secrets: One, New York City is suffering from a lagging Christmas spirit — many don't believe in Santa Claus. Two, New York City won't be like the North Pole (fewer things are edible — you can't eat chewing gum off the streets). And three, the most terrible of all: Buddy's father is on the naughty list.

What unfolds is the story of an elf who prances about the Big Apple, bringing Christmas spirit to a dejected shopping mall Santa team, and ultimately changing one family for the better.

But did *Elf* reach its full potential?

Aesthetically, the movie is a bright, sugar-coated success. Director John Favreau helps to make Santa's workshop live up to the fairytale dream.

Unfortunately, the most promising relationship kernel never receives enough attention to pop — the long-lost relationship between Buddy and his father.

Instead, the movie wastes hours over Buddy's initially amusing, but ultimately worn-out, antics in New York City. Granted, he does slowly build a relationship with department store elf hottie, Jovie (Zooey Deschanel).

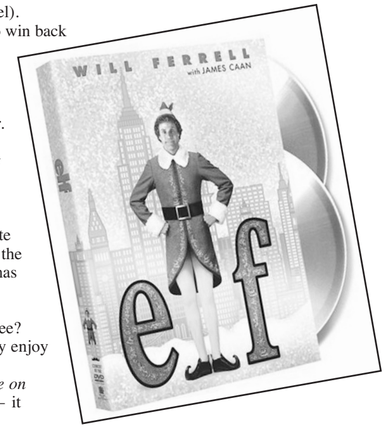
But the point, for Buddy to win back his papa, was delayed and pushed to the end.

In *Elf,* there's the build-up for a touching relationship between Buddy and his father. But they connect at the last minute (the moment seriously lasts about 10 seconds). Will Walter change his grumpy Scrooge-like ways?

Overall, *Elf* is a decent, cute film, but one that squandered the potential to become a Christmas classic and settled instead for Yultide mediocrity.

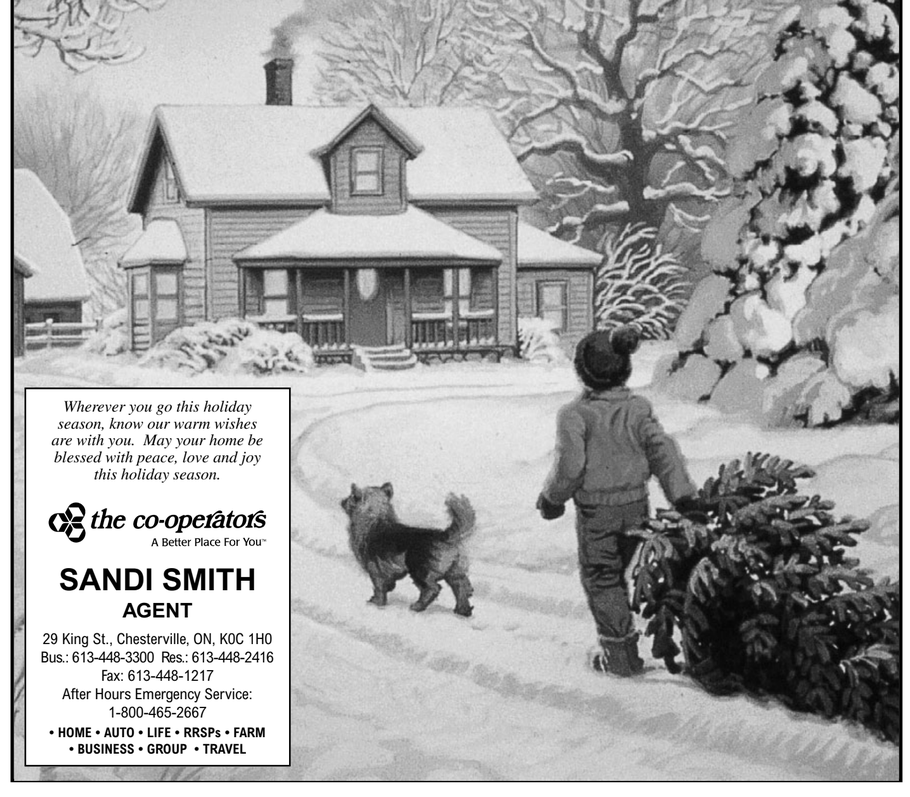
So is *Elf* worth the rental fee? You bet. Can the whole family enjoy it? Certainly.

But is *Elf* a peer to *Miracle on 34th Street?* Not even close — it missed its chance.



A Very Merry Christmas
With best wishes and gratitude from all of us to all of you.
SHADBOLT'S
Stedmans V&S
501 St. Lawrence St., Winchester 774-2008

Holiday Greetings From Our Home To Yours



Wherever you go this holiday season, know our warm wishes are with you. May your home be blessed with peace, love and joy this holiday season.

the co-operators
A Better Place For You™

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AGENT
29 King St., Chesterville, ON, K0C 1H0
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Fax: 613-448-1217
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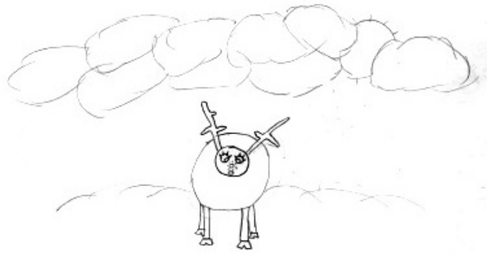

Samantha Dignard, Grade 4, Elma Public School

Create a priceless holiday gift

What parent or grandparent hasn't labored lovingly over their holiday shopping list, deciding on the perfect gift for family members and friends? You wander the aisles of the toy or clothing store, but nothing seems quite right. Finding the right presents for loved ones — especially babies and children — can be challenging.

Trends and interests often change frequently, but you can give a gift that will last throughout the years and be a token of your love. The holiday season is about creating and sharing memories, and an easy way to do so is through a journal or scrapbook. By piecing together your thoughts, experiences, photographs and words of wisdom, you can create a keepsake that's perfect to share with youngsters who have only begun to create their own memories. Here are some ways to get this project started:



A journal of your experiences or a family scrapbook makes a thoughtful and lasting gift for younger members of the family.

• Consider a theme to help you focus your thoughts. If the youngster is a budding athlete, share stories of your sports experiences. Include trading cards or news clips from your youth and photos of you in uniform.

• Share family secrets. Create a cookbook with favorite foods that you can make together. Or include tried-and-true instructions on how to build a treehouse or dollhouse. These insider tips can be saved and shared with future generations.

• Create a photo collage of family, baby and childhood pictures. You can laugh over the images as the child grows older and mention how clothing styles have come and gone. Children often love to look at older photos, especially those of close relatives. Many neighborhood photo centers can duplicate old prints or touch-up imperfections inexpensively.

• Seek other media to journal your experiences. You may wish to pass along your life experiences but aren't comfortable writing your stories down — or perhaps you can't write due to illness or incapacity. Video diaries or audio resources can help you share your story effortlessly — in your own voice and words.

Getting to know their parents, grandparents and other relatives helps children not only see their family in a new light, but also to gain a greater sense of self. They can marvel at where and who they came from. Isn't that a delightful holiday gift?

WISHING YOU THE
Happiest of Holidays



You've helped make this past year everything we wished it would be. Thank you for your generous support.

from Glen & Heather Whitteker and the staff at:
Whitteker Meat Market Ltd.
Williamsburg 535-2310

Festive Tidings At Christmas



Here's hoping your holiday contains all the trimmings that make Christmas such a special time of year.

With thanks from all of us to all of you.

Mayor, Council and Staff
TOWNSHIP OF SOUTH DUNDAS
535-2673

A Sleigh Full Of Thanks!

We're loading up the sleigh to wish you all a great holiday!
Hope it delivers lots of joy and happiness.



TOPLINE TRAILER & EQUIPMENT SALES
DIVISION OF WEAGANT FARM SUPPLIES LIMITED
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1226 County Rd. 31, north of Winchester
(at Harmony Corner)
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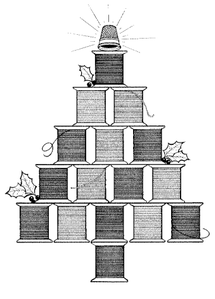


trimmed-with-a-wish
Before we sew up another year, we'd like to wish you a holiday season that's made to order. We couldn't have asked for better customers than you. Thanks!
Merry Christmas & Happy New Year
Gini's Sewing Shop
Winchester 774-6260

MERRY CHRISTMAS!
We're filled with warm wishes and lots of good cheer For all the kind people we've served this past year. Thanks, friends!



ZOLLINGER'S
CUSTOM BALING
WINCHESTER
774-0015

Celebrate the season creatively

Running out of ideas to keep your kids actively involved in holiday celebrations?

Here are a few ways from Suite101.com to inspire their creativity and celebrate the season together.

1. Create a time capsule. Have each child write a short paragraph on what he will be doing in the next year, what his favorite toys and activities were this year, and what he thinks was the most important event of the year. You can write a letter to your children about the past or upcoming year. Roll these up and slip them inside a decorated paper towel roll. Place this "time capsule" in the box with the holiday decorations so that it will be there to open next year.

2. Write an ongoing holiday letter to your child. Write a letter in a journal to your child every year. In it, describe the past year and your hopes and dreams for the new year. Send it to your child during his first year of college.

3. Create a New Year's tree. When you dismantle the Christmas tree, take off the ornaments and decorations but leave the tree standing with lights only. Have your kids re-decorate it with the favors, noisemakers, hats and confetti that will be used for your New Year's celebration.



Kurtis Mclean, Grade 2, Morewood

Where did Santa's reindeer come from?

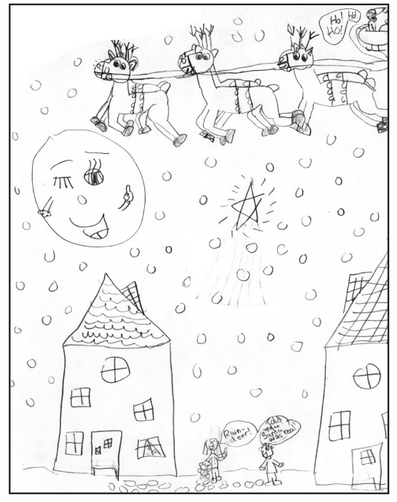
It remains unclear as to why reindeer became associated with Santa Claus but they were first introduced in 1821 in a poem by William Gilley, a New York printer, which began with "Old Santeclaus with much delight, His reindeer drives this frosty night". In 1882, Clement Clarke Moore, one of Gilley's friends, embroidered the new addition to Christmas lore in another and more magical poem. In his poem "The Night Before Christmas" Moore immortalized eight tiny reindeer by name.

When, what to my wondering eyes should appear,
But a miniature sleigh, and eight tiny rein-deer,
With a little old driver so lively and quick,
I knew in a moment it must be St. Nick.
More rapid than eagles his coursers they came,
And he whistled, and shouted, and called them by name;
Now, Dasher! now, Dancer! now, Prancer and Vixen!
On, Comet! on, Cupid! on, Donder and Blitzen!
To the top of the porch! to the top of the wall!
Now dash away! dash away! dash away all!

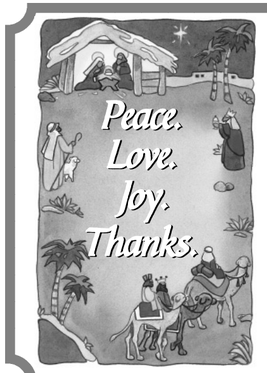
Since that time reindeer have become an integral part of the Christmas story with children leaving treats for them and the introduction of perhaps the most famous of them all - Rudolph the Red-nosed Reindeer.

The Coca-Cola Company. Dream of Santa: Haddon Sundblom's Vision (Staples & Charles Ltd., 1992).

- News Canada



Cassandra Ann Thompson, Grade 3, Elma



With our most sincere gratitude and best wishes to all of you. Have a happy and joyous holiday season.
DERKS ELEVATOR INC.
Gary Derks & Family
RR2, 3063 Forward Rd. S.
Chesterville, 613-448-2522

with our thanks
May good times come naturally this holiday season. It's been our joy serving you this year.
Peter Ross Auction Service and Staff
Ingleside 613-537-8862



KEEP YOUR TREE FIRE FREE
Keep all candles away from the Christmas tree.
Make sure the base of the tree is immersed in water at all times.
FIRE MARSHALS PUBLIC FIRE SAFETY COUNCIL
NORTH DUNDAS FIRE SERVICES
Season's Greetings
from the
North Dundas Fire Services

Christmas specials

• continued from previous page

The 1995 45-minute special came out at the height of these boys' popularity, and the teenage terrors parody two classic Christmas stories in their version of holiday entertainment. In "Huh Huh Humbug," the Ghosts of Christmas Past, Present, and Future try to teach Beavis the meaning of Christmas (predictably, he'd rather be left alone to watch porn videos), while "It's a Miserable Life" has Charlie the Guardian Angel showing Butt-Head how much better off the world would be if he had the common decency to do away with himself. The rest of the time the two watch music videos and read letters from viewers. Scrooge you!

Beavis claims that "The Nutcracker Suite" sounds like Ozzy, if you listen right. He may have a point, but I wouldn't try headbanging the next time you hear it.

OZZTACULAR WASTE OF TIME

Which brings along the next stop on our list: "The Osbourne's Christmas Special." Guests on the old-fashioned-variety-show inspired episode include Britney Spears, Mandy Moore, Carmen Electra, Dave Navarro, Adam Corolla, Tracey Morgan, Triumph the Insult Dog, and more. Sharon decorates for the holidays with carolers, ice-skating elves, miniature reindeer, and snow. Also, Ozzy and Jessica Simpson sing "Winter Wonderland."

Actually, this wasn't the first Christmas special the family created.

In "A Very Ozzy Christmas," the Osbournes celebrate as only they can — Sharon, Ozzy, and Jack are in New York on tour when they receive word that their security guard has been arrested for attempted burglary forcing them to return home. When the family sits down for Christmas dinner, the meal is filled with feuding words. Jack then receives a knife as a gift and Ozzy confiscates it. Happy Holidays!

WHO CARES IF IT'S COLD OUTSIDE?

And if you're into the family-oriented celebrations, there's always "Nick and Jessica's Family Christmas" (though we're not sure how much influence these two should have on the concept of family.) ABC promotes the special with the tagline "America's favorite young married couple, Nick Lachey and Jessica Simpson." Apparently they need to update their website. Anyway, the special is what's called a "fun-filled family Christmas variety hour of comedy and music." In a series of sketches and musical performances, all of Nick and Jessica's wishes come true in their magical cabin where snow can fall at the flip of a switch and presents can appear under the tree in an instant. Barf. "Baby It's Cold Outside," will never be the same.



Karen Thurler, Grade 6, Winchester Public School

GIFTS of the Season

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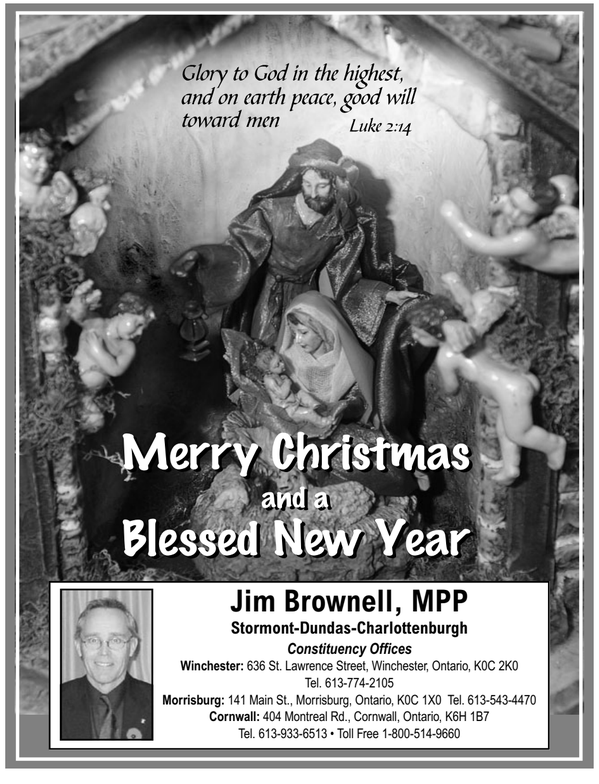

Wishing you a safe and happy Holiday Season!
Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

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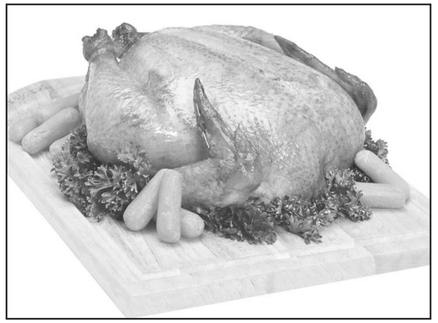
Holiday Help: Safety tips for the turkey



Turkey is often the first choice for holiday dinners, so it is important to get a refresher on using the proper techniques when buying, preparing and cooking the bird. The risk of foodborne illness, or "food poisoning" can be reduced, says the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA), if you follow a few food safety rules. Here is a sampling of the food safety tips available on the CFIA Web site:

• If buying fresh turkey, purchase it no more than two days before cooking. It should be cold when purchased, then immediately refrigerated at 4º C (40º F) or lower. Check the "best before" date to get one that is as fresh as possible.

• If buying a frozen turkey, allow enough time for thawing in the refrigerator. Allow 24 hours of defrosting time for each 2.5 g (5 pounds) of turkey.

• Never thaw turkey on the kitchen counter. Place it in the refrigerator in a large container so juices don't leak onto other foods. Place it on the bottom shelf.

• If thawing in the microwave, cook immediately once thawing is complete.

• Thoroughly clean and sanitize your hands, the counter, and all utensils before and after preparing the turkey. For sinks, counters and utensils, use a store-bought kitchen cleanser or mix a mild bleach solution (1 tsp/5 mL bleach to 3 cups/750 mL water). Rinse thoroughly.

• Never slowcook turkey. Set the oven no lower than 177º C (350º F) and use a food thermometer to check that the turkey reaches a minimum internal temperature of 85º C (185º F). The stuffing, which should be cooked in a separate container and not in the turkey, should reach a minimum internal temperature of 74º C (165º F).

• Serve turkey and stuffing immediately. Keep the rest hot at a minimum of 60º C (140º F) in the oven, or cool it within 2 hours.

• Remove meat from the bone. Store meat, stuffing and gravy separately in shallow containers to cool them quickly.

• Refrigerate leftovers promptly. Once food is cooled, cover.

• Use leftovers within two to three days and reheat to 74º C (165º F).

More information on safe food handling practices is available on the CFIA Web site at www.inspection.gc.ca and click on Consumer Centre.

- News Canada

Cranberry brie appetizer bites

INGREDIENTS:

3/4 cup Ocean Spray Whole Berry Cranberry Sauce
1 tsp lemon juice
1/2 tsp finely shredded lemon peel
24 wonton wrappers
1 8 ounce brie round



DIRECTIONS:

Place cranberry sauce in a saucepan. Cook over medium heat until hot, stirring occasionally. Remove from heat; stir in lemon juice and lemon peel.

Meanwhile, heat oven to 350°F (180°C). Spray 24 miniature muffin cups with nonstick cooking spray. Press 1 wonton wrapper gently into each sprayed cup, allowing ends to extend above cups. Spray edges of wonton wrappers with nonstick cooking spray. Bake for 12 to 14 minutes.

Cut brie into 24 cubes, about 3/4-inch each. Place 1 cube in each cup; place sheet of aluminum foil over each pan to prevent excessive browning. Return to oven. Bake 3 to 5 minutes longer or until brie is soft. Remove from oven; top each with about 1 teaspoon (5 mL) cranberry mixture.

Makes 24 appetizers.

- News Canada



Season's Greetings To All

As we enjoy the symbols of the season, the tree, the decorations, the music and more, we would like to add our best wishes for a joyous holiday.

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Low-tech toys offer value and creativity

Kids are spending more time than ever before in front of computer and television screens; so it is no surprise that this year's letters to Santa likely include requests for that "hot" new video or computer game.

Parents are right to be concerned about this trend -- childhood development experts say the increase in "screen media" time leaves less time for active and creative play, which is crucial for development of problem-solving, social and other important life skills. Recent studies have even linked screen media time with body weight and other health indicators.

Toys, like kids, also are becoming increasingly sophisticated, and pre-programmed and electronic gadgets are now the norm. While some of these may have educational value, kids are responding to a scenario created by someone else rather than using their own imagination, experts say.

Joan Almon, a longtime kindergarten teacher and U.S. coordinator of the Alliance for Childhood, says a good toy requires effort on the part of the child. "The more the toy determines the play, the less the child can do with it. That's why children tire of elaborate toys so quickly."

Alliance for Childhood, a group that supports healthy childhood development, says the best kinds of toys for children are still the simplest. They recommend toys such as building blocks, board games and art supplies, which build hand-eye coordination and motor skills, as well as encourage creativity, imagination and sharing.

In addition to health and development concerns, parents cite cost as another drawback to electronic toys. One video game easily can cost upwards of $100 – a significant chunk of most families' holiday spending budget. Toy building sets offer a meaningful, creative play experience at a price much easier on the wallet.

Despite the media hype to the contrary, parents *and* kids are seeing value in low-tech toys this holiday season. More than just fun and games, these toys boost intellectual, emotional and physical development – a holiday gift that truly does keep on giving!

Experts offer advice on avoiding holiday debt

There's no reason that making merry during the holiday season should leave you with a financial hangover. There are many ways you can stay out of debt – and even save – this season. The experts at Novadebt, a national nonprofit social service agency dedicated to helping consumers regain financial stability, suggest the following tips:

* Purchase gifts with cash rather than on credit so you are not trapped into six more months of bills.

* Give gifts of your time/talent. These are worth more than anything that can be bought. Consider a certificate of free babysitting for someone with small children, or driving or cooking for the elderly.

* Decide in advance how much you can spend and stick to it. Make a list of who you need to buy gifts for and how much you will spend on each gift.

* Homemade gifts such as baked goods or knitted items make unique gifts that cost little and are something that money can't buy.

* Plan to pay off all holiday credit card purchases by April 30 of the following year.

* Go to wholesale stores for food items for holiday parties.

* Have your children make simple holiday decorations (string popcorn, cut out snowflakes) rather than buying expensive ones.

* If you overspent in past years, write down how you felt in January when the bills came. Post it on the fridge, and look at it before you go shopping.

* Use unique, cost-effective material such as sheets and tablecloths to make beautiful, reusable gift bags.

* Buy next year's wrapping paper, cards and decorations after the holidays when they go on sale. Make gift tags out of last year's cards.

* If money is tight and you will be spending less, explain it to your children. They will be more likely to understand than you might imagine.

Ring In The Joy!

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And celebration is everywhere
But we're so glad to be right here
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RING IN THE SEASON!

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TV Christmas specials gone wrong

by Meghan Duncan
Press staff

WINCHESTER — Christmas TV specials? There are some that will stay with us forever — Like *A Muppet Family Christmas* and the Swedish chef wanting to cook Big Bird, otherwise referred to as: "Gobbley, gobbley humongo!!" And if you don't get a lump in your throat when Linus tells Charlie Brown that he knows the real meaning of Christmas, well, then you might be a not-so-distant relative of Mr. Scrooge himself. Most Christmas specials, however, are better off forgotten. Lost in the storage room of the network where they once, and only once, aired. Here are some of those we thought were worth mentioning — only watch them if you've had a suitable amount of spiked eggnog, otherwise your evening may become pretty depressing.


Nick and Jessica's Family Christmas

A STAR WARS CHRISTMAS

On the top of our list is the "Star Wars Holiday Special," which aired one time only on Nov. 17, 1978. Never heard of it? That's because after its ill-fated premiere, George Lucas banished it forever from the realm of existence.

The plot, or lack thereof, centered around Chewie's arrival for his family's Life Day celebration — but Chewie and Han had run into two Imperial Star Destroyers on the way, and the Empire was not feeling very friendly that day. Meanwhile, in Chewbacca's treehouse home on Kashyyyk, Chewie's wife Malla was working in the kitchen while his father Itchy carved an X-Wing Fighter toy for little Lumpy. That's right. Itchy and Lumpy.

Including appearances by Luke Skywalker, R2-D2, Saun Dann, Darth Vader, C-3PO, and Princess Leia performing a musical number with the Wookies, this special was later regretted by its producers and many members of the cast.

Anthony Daniels, who played C-3PO, was one such cast member. "You could be terminated for even suggesting such a thing," he said to an interviewer who asked if a second holiday special would ever be created. "Mind you, I had fun working on the original, but as a safety measure I didn't actually watch it."

Strangely enough, there's a website dedicated to it. If you have some spare time this holiday season, check out www.starwarsholidayspecial.com. Have yourself a little yuletide giggle.

CHRISTMAS PAC-ING

"Christmas comes to Pacland." The Cartoon Network is airing this one, though I can't say that the plot of Pac-man, Ms. Pac-man, and Baby Pac meeting Santa Claus is all too enthralling.

A VERY PEE-WEE SPECIAL

"Pee-Wee's Playhouse Christmas Special" is the campiest holiday program to ever come out. Pee-wee Herman and pals are celebrating Christmas in the Playhouse. Along with the regular Playhouse gang (including Lawrence Fishburne), a dizzying array of stars (Frankie Avalon and Annette Funicello, Cher, Oprah Winfrey, Little Richard, Magic Johnson, and more) make guest appearances. Musical guests include Dinah Shore, k.d. lang, and the Del Rubio Triplets, among others. How all this was crammed into a one-hour broadcast in 1988 is a mystery. And how all those stars agreed to be involved is another mystery — one that will likely never be solved. If your kids (or your significant others) have attention deficit disorder, this video is for you. It's colorful, fast-moving and full of jokes — or maybe it is the joke. Seeing Little Richard continually falling while trying to ice skate, Annette Funicello with green teeth, and Whoopie Goldberg begging for work doesn't exactly reek of "Christmas." Sorry. And Pee-Wee's dance number with a group of Marines, for most of us, is no more than sarcasm inducing.

TWO MISERABLE PARODIES AND A COUCH

"Beavis and Butt-Head Do Christmas." Who better symbolizes the joy and warmth of the holiday season than Beavis and Butt-Head?

• See CHRISTMAS SPECIALS on next page

Merry Christmas



May you experience the season and all the joy, warmth and happiness it holds in store. Our warmest thoughts are with you on this holiday occasion, along with our thanks for your valued business.

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Christmas tree lights have long history

by Matt Barbour

WINCHESTER — It's not likely that very many people can imagine decorating a Christmas tree without adding at least one string of lights.

Lighting up a Christmas tree in the home is a tradition that started hundreds of years ago, long before electricity was discovered. References to Christmas trees date back to the seventh century and it is believed that Martin Luther, a German monk, was the first to light up a Christmas tree with candles in the 1500s.

Later, other ornaments were added and the decorated Christmas tree became a custom in Germany. But the idea did not travel far beyond the borders of that country until the mid 1800s, when it became known that Queen Victoria favored the practice. Queen Victoria was a well-liked monarch and many of her customs found popularity amongst her subjects. Thus, appreciation of the decorated and lit Christmas tree spread quickly throughout the English speaking world.

Initially, trees were lit with candles that were attached with melted wax or pins. Later, holders made of wood, glass and metal were used. Those who found candle wax too expensive decorated their trees with miniature oil lamps, often made of walnut shell halves. Because of the added danger of explosions, experiments with gas lights in the late 1800s did not go very far.

The trick of keeping the cut end of a tree trunk in water to maintain freshness was generally unknown in those days, so the trees would dry out rapidly. Needless to say, open flames sitting on dry boughs presented a serious fire hazard and that is why a bucket of water was usually kept nearby. Often, a family member would be stationed at the tree to keep watch while it was lit.

The very first tree decorated with electric lights appeared in 1882, even though electric light had been around for more than fifty years and Thomas Edison had made vast improvements in lighting a few years earlier. The tree, with strings of flashing lights, was set up in the New York City home of Edward Johnson, an employee of Edison's company. Today, most would consider this a significant historical occasion, but at the time, local New York City newspapers carried no mention of the event, perhaps suspecting that it was a publicity stunt.

In the late 1890s, electric Christmas tree lights were gaining popularity among the more affluent homeowners. Average working people could not afford this luxury yet, because the cost of lighting one tree was at least $300, the equivalent of more than $2,000 in today's currency. This included the cost of a generator and a wiring specialist, because full electrical service was not widely available.

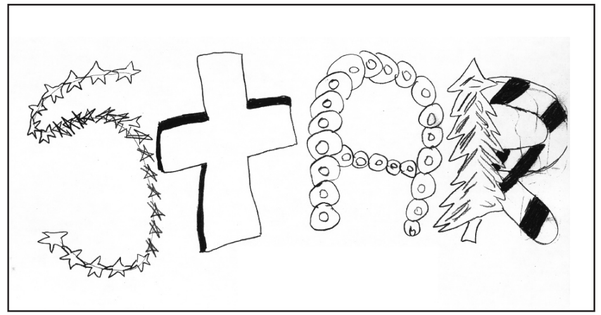
For handy people, at least one publication offered instructions on how to fabricate home-made, battery powered Christmas tree lights. This captured the interest of some who did not yet have electrical wires in their area.

In 1903, General Electric, Thomas Edison's company, began selling strings of lights and the price had come down substantially to $12. However, they were still not within the budget of the average person, who had to work a full week for that kind of money and in those days, a work week was six days long. A few years later, the American Eveready Company, now known for its batteries, began manufacturing Christmas tree lights as well and as a result of the competition, the cost fell further.

Almost two decades passed before a third major company entered the market place to specialize in the manufacture of Christmas tree lights. The Noma Electric Company was born and it went on to become a multimillion dollar business. In fact, until 1965, it was the largest company of its kind in the world. Noma is widely credited for popularizing the use of Christmas tree lights.

As with most consumer products, increased production and competition brought lower prices.

Today, Christmas lighting is a major industry in the western world — and it all started some 500 years ago, when a monk placed some candles on a Christmas tree.



Victoria Sheldrick, Grade 6, Community Christian School

HAPPY HOLIDAYS
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In The Spirit Of The Season
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Dealing with loneliness during the holidays

by Lucy MacDonald

For most of us, feeling down during the holidays is often the result of too much to do, not enough time, fatigue, and financial stress. While some of us don't have enough quiet, alone time, others have too much. Some folks face a special challenge during the holidays — loneliness. Sometimes people are alone because a loved one has died; sometimes people are alone because of fractured relationships. Whatever the reason, feeling alone is an even heavier burden at this time of the year.

What can you do to combat loneliness this holiday season? The first thing to be aware of is self-talk. Self-talk is an on-going series of inner messages about yourself, others and the world around you. What are you telling yourself about being alone and lonely during the holidays? Do you blame yourself? Do you blame others? Be aware that your negative self-talk is a self-fulfilling prophecy.

One way to change your negative self-talk is to shift the focus away from yourself and onto others. Reach out to someone like yourself and invite them to join you for a meal or a cup of coffee. There are many people who would welcome the invitation to spend some time socializing.

Volunteer your time. Opportunities to volunteer are endless. They range from reading stories to children at your local school, driving seniors to doctor appointments, getting involved with Meals on Wheels, to preparing food baskets. The need for volunteers is especially great at this time of year.

This is the perfect time of year to re-connect with friends. Send them a card, an email, or give them a call. Offer to meet for a coffee or go to a movie.

Get involved in a hobby that you can do in a group. Singing or painting or stain glass — find something that you've been meaning to do and give yourself the gift of time and enjoyment.

Read your local newspaper for community events that would be of interest to you. Often your local library will invited speakers to discuss a wide range of topics. Get on the mailing list of book stores so you will receive announcements of author readings.

Join the gym, a running group, or take up a team sport like curling that will give you all kinds of opportunities to get together with likeminded people and make new friends.

If you are housebound you can still reach out to others, especially others who are housebound, by phone or by mail. Organize a small network of people and take turns checking in with each other.

You need not be alone during the holidays if you are willing to reach out to others in your community. Take a chance, get involved. Who knows — the holidays might not be so lonely after all.

Lucy MacDonald, M.Ed. is a Canadian certified counsellor and is the owner of Confidential Telephone Counselling. She can be reached at 1-866-441-8909 or lucy@lucymacdonald.com. Visit her website at www.lucymacdonald.com.



Jordan Mark, age 9, Ste-Thérèse D'avila

Open Up To Christmas!
Because it's what's on the inside that counts, we'd like to thank you from the bottom of our hearts. May all your dreams come true for you this holiday season.
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Top can't-miss holiday flicks

What would the Christmas season be without the endless stream of movies and specials that focus on the heartfelt spirit and meaning of the holidays? You probably have your own list of favorites, but in case you need some inspiration on what to rent from the video store or what to watch as you are channel surfing, here are some good suggestions.

* ***National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation*** *(1989)* — Those zany Griswolds are up to their antics again! Led by an all-star cast including Chevy Chase and Beverly D'Angelo, the Griswold family Christmas should be merry, but naturally turns into a hilarious disaster. Look for appearances by Julia Louis-Dreyfus (formerly of "Seinfeld") and Doris Roberts (of "Everybody Loves Raymond").

* ***A Christmas Story*** *(1983)* — You won't want to miss this classic of 1940s Americana. Young Ralphie has his heart set on a Red Rider BB gun for Christmas, but it seems like Mom, teacher and even Santa are certain he'll "shoot his eye out" with such a gift. Will Ralphie find his heart's desire under the tree? Watch to find out.

* ***It's a Wonderful Life*** *(1946)* — Many versions of this movie have been made throughout the years, but the original outshines them all. When distraught George Baily (Jimmy Stewart) meets a compassionate angel, he learns what life would have been like if he'd never existed. Holiday magic wins out in the end.

* ***Miracle on 34th Street*** *(1947)* — Another classic that can't be missed! When a man claiming to be Santa Claus is deemed insane, a young lawyer and a headstrong young girl come to his rescue.

* ***A Christmas Carol*** *(1951)* — Yet another movie that has spawned a series of more recent remakes. This one stars Alastair Sim as Mr. Scrooge, a bitter, miserly man who doesn't give a bah humbug about the holiday season. But will a haunting by three ghosts change his mind and ill will?

* ***A Charlie Brown Christmas*** *(1965)* — Charlie Brown is depressed and can't find the Christmas spirit. When he is put in charge of the school's holiday pageant and comes in with a meager Christmas tree, the schoolkids ultimately learn about the true meaning of Christmas.

* ***The Nightmare Before Christmas*** *(1993)* — Halloweentown resident Jack Skellington stumbles upon an alternate universe called Christmastown one day. It inspires him to organize a Christmas celebration in his town. The worlds of creepy Halloween characters and bubbly Christmas spirit meet in this stop-action animated flick. Some of the characters may be too scary for younger children, but older ones may enjoy the humor of this PG-rated movie.

Now, grab that popcorn or holiday cookies and enjoy a night of Christmas cheer.



At left:
Brianna Stewart,
Grade 8,
Nationview Public School

Below:
Pamela Sevigny,
Grade 7/8,
Nationview Public School



GIFTS of the Season



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Achieve simple, stress-free holidays

Holidays are a time for fun, family and friends, but they can also result in stress, overeating and taking on more than we can handle. With a little thought and planning, it's possible to take much of the worry out of the holiday season.

"Family celebrations have changed," explains Dottie Enrico, director of Better Homes and Gardens online, at www.BHG.com/celebrate. "Most women are looking for simple holiday solutions that are healthy, casual, and easy to plan. They want to savor the time they have to spend with family and friends, not fretting and fussing."

Enrico offers these suggestions for keeping your holiday events simple and healthy:

CREATE SIMPLE GATHERINGS

* When planning holiday dinners and parties, delegate tasks to friends and family. Ask guests to bring side dishes so you can concentrate on the main entree. Since the holidays put us in a giving mood, ask for help in the kitchen. Chances are dinner guests will be more than willing to mash potatoes or refill drinks.

* Keep your event casual so the focus stays on the people, not the place settings. We are often tempted, and even expected, to take our good china and silverware out of storage for holiday dinners, but this only adds the extra step of delicately washing them by hand. Make it easy on yourself and use dishwasher-safe plates and flatware. Your guests will be too busy savoring the good food and conversation to notice, and you'll have more time to enjoy their company!

* Finally, don't go overboard planning your holiday menu. Although you might be tempted to make each guest's favorite dish, keep it simple and stick to the standard favorites. You can never go wrong with traditional holiday fare.

STRESS-LESS HOLIDAYS

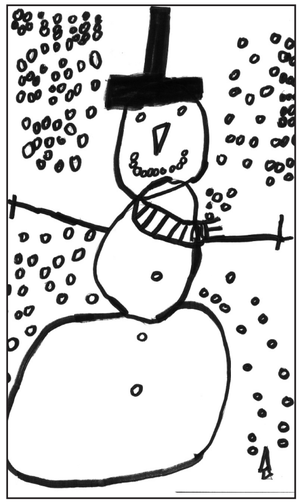
* Set your priorities and stick to them. Don't try to be everything to everyone during the holidays. You can keep much of the inevitable stress at bay by scaling back on your promises. Don't forget to take time for yourself.

* Don't strive for perfection. You will lose sight of what the holidays are truly about, and will create unnecessary anxiety for both you and your family. Try to remember that the little mishaps that happen along the way will make great stories and fun memories for years to come.

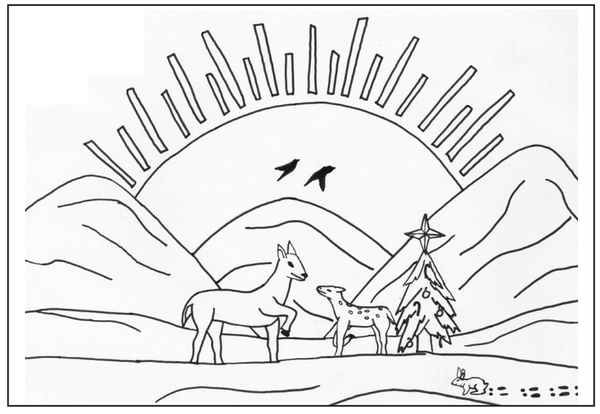
* Although it might seem impossible, avoid creating a "To Do" list. It could prevent you from enjoying all that each holiday has to offer. Instead, enlist the help of your entire family. Bond over decorating, baking, and other tasks and you'll be surprised how quickly you will be ready for the big day!

* And finally, the best stress-buster is exercise. A simple walking program will give you some much needed time away from the hustle and bustle, plus you will feel better about indulging when the big day arrives!

For more tips on creating holidays the entire family can enjoy, as well as crafts, menus and other ideas, visit www.BHG.com/celebrate from Better Homes and Gardens online.



Mackenzie Beaudry,
Grade 1,
Inkerman Public School



Amy, age 12, Metcalfe Public School

'Tis The Season...

to say "thank you" to all our supporters.
We wish you all a very merry and bright Christmas holiday and look forward to seeing you again soon.

Hamilton Custom Cabinets
10480 PLEASANT VALLEY RD., SOUTH MOUNTAIN
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HOPE IT'S A Hit!

Wishing you a Christmas that's a perfect '10'.
This past year has been great fun, thanks to you!

Chesterville Bowling Inc.
Main Street, Chesterville 448-3535
Ron & Shari



CHRISTMAS
Is In The Air!

It's just days before Christmas and all through the town,
We see happy people; not even one frown.
It's great to see folks who show so much care
For their friends and their neighbors - today it's so rare.
So we'd like to thank you this time of the year
For all of the memories we hold so dear.
As customers, as neighbors, you all mean so much
To us, your community and all whom you touch.

Have a wonderful holiday!
From the staff and management of
Kemptville Building Centre Ltd.
and
Kemptville Home Furniture
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Home furniture 258-9333
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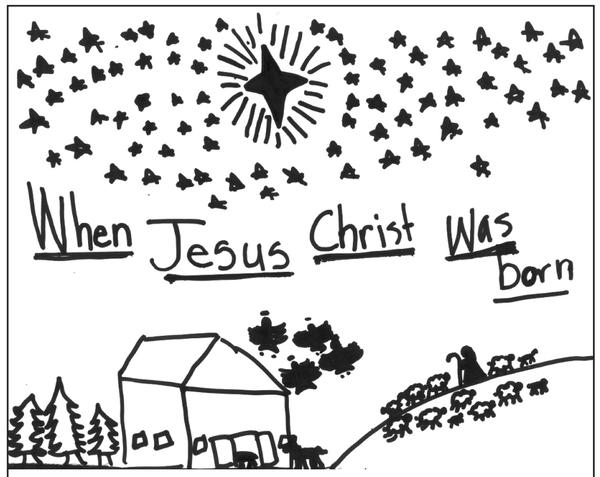
Home building centre 258-6000



Sarah Kaldeway, Grade 4, Timothy Christian School

Where do I write to Santa Claus?

No one knows when children began writing letters to Santa, but certainly the practice was common by the 1870s. Apart from the North Pole, children's letters were sometimes addressed to nearby cities, Heaven or simply to Santa Claus. In 1869 the McLaughlin Brothers published Santa Claus and His Works and in it was a poem written by George P. Webster establishing that Santa lived in the North Pole.

"In a nice little city called Santa Clausville,
With its houses and church at the foot of the hill
Lives jolly old Santa Claus…
His home through the long summer months, you must know,
Is near the North Pole, in the ice and snow..."

In 1982, to help ensure that Santa Claus received all of his letters, Canada Post established a formal mailing address for him and invited children from around the world to send Santa their holiday wishes.

He can be reached at:

Santa Claus
North Pole
HOH OHO
Canada

In 2002, Santa Claus received over one million letters from children around the world, in more than 26 languages including braille.

— News Canada



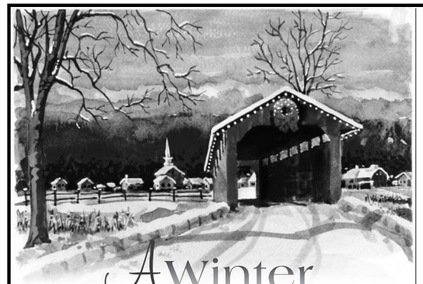
Resounding Christmas Wishes

May the spirit of Christmas ring in your heart and echo throughout the New Year. Please accept our best wishes at Christmas time and our sincere thanks for your loyal patronage.

Carol and Dwaine

Armstrong Burner Service

Winchester 774-3522



A Winter Wonderland

May you enjoy the beauty and splendor of this special time of year with loved ones and friends. Merry Christmas!

Byers Funeral Home

South Mountain
989-3836

Glad Tidings Are On The Way!

North, south, east or west... We're sending you our very best,
Because one thing that we know is true, we wouldn't be here without friends like you!
Merry Christmas and many thanks from all of us

North Pole

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FEED & FARM DEPOT LTD.
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JOY

We wish you much happiness and good fortune through the holiday season and beyond. Thanks for doing business with us.

Cannamore Farm Equipment
SALES AND SERVICE
Philippe Robert
RR 3, Crysler 448-3694



PEACE and JOY

...And many thanks from us!

Locke's Rentals & Welding
11029 Cook Road, Dixons Corners
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Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

Wishing a season merry and bright to all our patrons



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		Fax: 613-652-1367	Fax: 613-836-0865	Fax: 613-741-6040

'Twas the Night before Christmas . . . in Winchester

by Bonnie James and Meghan Duncan
Staff poets

'Twas the night before Christmas, when all through the town,
Not a creature was stirring, there was no one around;
The Hawks won their game against Kemptville that night,
Two more points in the books, they were doing all right;

Marcellus and Smith mightn't have to make payoffs,
just to get the squad into the Junior "B" playoffs;
Trenholm had scored nearly as many as Paas,
The whole team was waiting for old Santa Claus;

Andy Hamel had sold all the turkeys in his store,
He was home in his bed, and starting to snore;
Louise Arsenault, too, had closed up the Bin,
It was empty of sugarplums sweeter than sin;

When out on St. Lawrence Street, there arose such a clatter,
People sprang from their beds to see what was the matter;
From the windows above could be seen a strange sight,
something so odd on a cold winter's night;

The moon on the breast of the new-fallen snow,
Gave the lustre of mid-day to objects below;
When what to all wondering eyes should appear,
But a festive green tractor — it was a John Deere;

It pulled a red gravity box, brimming with toys,
Something for all the town's good girls and boys;
With a little old driver, so lively and quick,
Everyone knew it must be Saint Nick;

Bumping and clamoring up the street he came,
And he whistled, and shouted, and called out some names;
"Now, Dasher! now, Dancer! now, Prancer, and Vixen!
Oh, Comet! oh, Cupid! oh, Donder, and Blitzen!

Where have you gone with my beautiful sleigh?
This tractor is nice, but I stole it today;
Green Tech might be wondering where it has gone,
and to deliver these gifts will take twice as long!"

As he drove through the town, he looked at his list,
wondering if there was someone he'd missed;
First up was Keith D., the town's Country Boy,
Next up was a Fawcett, the piano man Roy;

Farmer John from Cloverdale was on the well-behaved crew,
Paul Allen was also — Santa likes a good Boo!;
Sandie Puddephatt was nice, for she'd arranged the parade,
And so was Jamie Shadbolt for all the music he'd made;

Just down St. Lawrence Street, the township staff,
were all on the good list for clearing Santa's path;
There was JoAnne and Howard who kept council in line,
and Mayor Runnalls whose chain of office did shine;

Public School principal Dave Corney was good,
and Principal Ramsey'd done everything she should;
Trustee Greg Pietersma was also well-behaved,
His tinsel decorations made him Santa's fave;

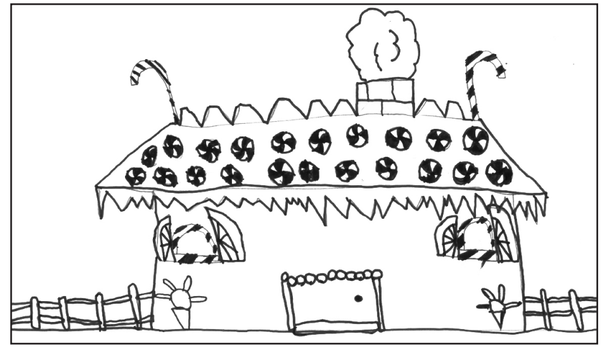
The SDLA bunch, though a riotous lot,
were liked by the Claus for the rights they had fought;
On the list to get rocks was Janine Stevenson,
for she likes to curl, and had made Dairyfest fun;

Those to get coal were only a few,
They knew they'd been bad — it was nothing new;
Chris Guy's Elvis impression was the best one in town,
but he missed the parade and that made Santa frown;

For Lolafest Larry Michaud forgot to invite,
the old man in red — a big oversight;
Owen Shortt had left town, to work on his tan,
the agent was with Ambush in Jamaica, mon!

The Press staff had worked hard to put out the paper,
they were too tired to care about Santa's big caper;
The Claus got his job done, but not for the glory,
He wanted nothing to do with a front page story;

Back in the tractor Santa put it in gear,
And off he drove wiping away his tears;
All heard him exclaim, as he drove out of sight,
"HAPPY CHRISTMAS, I'll find my sleigh
sometime tonight!"



Joshua, age 9, Metcalfe Public School



Home For The Holidays

There's no place we'd rather be for the holidays, than right here with our neighbors and friends.
Merry Christmas!

GUILDCREST HOMES®

Morewood
613-448-1190



On This Joyous Occasion

We'd like to display our best wishes and appreciation for the many good people we've had the privilege to meet and serve this past year.

Here's hoping your holiday is merry and bright in every way.

Thanks!

Located minutes south of Winchester on Hwy. 31
774-3353

CASS BRIDGE CHEESE HOUSE

GREETINGS OF THE Season



May nature's peace and joy flow into your heart this holiday season, and stay with you throughout the coming year.

FRANK AULT EXCAVATING LTD.
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Top 10 tips for holiday parties

The holiday season is a time of year when you spend your evenings hopping from one party to the next. When it's your turn to host, here are 10 tips to fuel the fun:

1. Create a theme. Get guests excited by creating a theme that promises fun and excitement. Have friends and family dress around "your favorite holiday movie" or decorate your home as "a winter wonderland in Paris." Theme the party around your favorite local charity, and ask guests to bring a small item for donation.

2. Give beverages a boost. Stock your bar with wine, beer, and spirits. Keep the offering simple yet with enough variety to satisfy non-drinkers as well. In addition, add some fun by creating personalized name tags or charms for your guests' wine glasses.

3. Set the mood with twinkling lights and music. Use candles and strings of lights to help set the mood. Make a CD or tape of classic holiday music and have your guests guess who's singing their favorite holiday tune.

4. Make decorating part of the party. Let your guests play with holly, mistletoe, and Styrofoam balls and have them craft some holiday decorations to place around the house.

5. Generate conversation starters. Write down questions or interesting holiday facts on 3-by-5 index cards and place them at different locations. You can also borrow trivia cards from games like the Top 10 game and leave them in conspicuous locations.

6. Cook up some entertaining munchies. Theme your munchies to look like holiday decorations, or add strips of red or green peppers and sliced green or black olives on top of cheese and crackers to make them look like tick-tack-toe squares.

7. Have a gift exchange. Have guests buy $10 gifts to exchange. You can also award little prizes for the winners of games you play throughout the evening.

8. Plan an activity. Give a themed goodie (like a candy cane or lollipop) with a guest's name on it to each person upon arrival. In order to eat or open the goodie, each guest must find the person named on the treat and introduce him or herself. This a fun away for people to mingle and get to know each other.

9. Play dessert chef. Get guests involved in making their own desserts. Set out an ice cream sundae station, chocolate fondue, or let guests apply their own finishing touches to cupcakes and sugar cookies.

10. Play a game. Pick a game that is an icebreaker! One that is designed to create conversation. A trivia game is a good choice.

Following some of these tips will ensure a memorable holiday evening filled with laughter and good times for family and friends.

Top 25 holiday songs

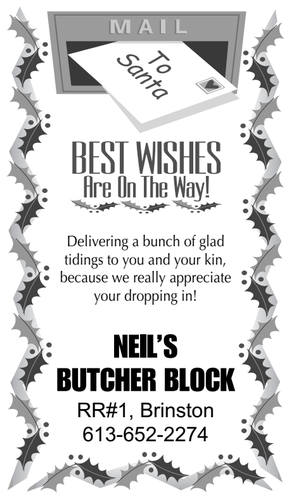
1. Santa Claus is Coming to Town
2. The Christmas Song (Chestnuts Roasting on an Open Fire)
3. Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas
4. Winter Wonderland
5. White Christmas
6. Let It Snow, Let It Snow, Let It Snow
7. I'll Be Home for Christmas
8. Jingle Bell Rock
9. Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer
10. Little Drummer Boy
11. Sleigh Ride
12. Silver Bells
13. It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year
14. Feliz Navidad
15. Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree
16. Blue Christmas
17. Frosty the Snow Man
18. A Holly Jolly Christmas
19. I Saw Mommy Kissing Santa Claus
20. Here Comes Santa Claus (Right Down Santa Claus Lane)
21. (There's No Place Like) Home For the Holidays
22. Santa Baby
23. It's Beginning to Look a Lot Like Christmas
24. Carol of the Bells
25. Wonderful Christmastime



Source: American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers



Kyle Batten, Grade 2, Morewood Public School



BEST WISHES Are On The Way!

Delivering a bunch of glad tidings to you and your kin, because we really appreciate your dropping in!

NEIL'S BUTCHER BLOCK
RR#1, Brinston
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Stuffed with Best Wishes



Thank you for the gift of your friendship.
Happy Holidays!
We look forward to your continued patronage.

Love Your Pet

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Trimmed With Gratitude

As we prepare for the holiday season,
We're filled with joy, and you're the reason!
All the very best to our loyal friends and neighbors

AJ'S INC. CATERING
CATERING SERVICES
Al & Judy Graham
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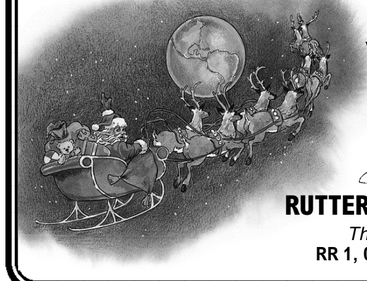
...''And To All A Good Night!''



In this season of wonder, we wish you lots of harmony and joy at every turn.

Merry Christmas!



RUTTERS ELEVATORS INC.
The Rutters Family
RR 1, Chesterville 448-2153

Fun facts about fruitcake

Humor columnist Dave Barry once wrote, "Fruitcakes make ideal gifts because the Postal Service has been unable to find a way to damage them."

Indeed, the fruitcake has been the brunt of many a joke. But actually, it's a cake that's loaded with more than just fruit — it boasts a lot of history, too.

The oldest reference regarding fruitcakes dates back to Roman times. Ancient crusaders and hunters ate fruitcake made with honey, spices, preserved fruits, pomegranate seeds, pine nuts and raisins. Fruitcake would last during their long times away from home and be a good source of energy, too. Today, hikers, hunters and skiers follow the same practice.

In the 1700s, Europeans baked a ceremonial fruitcake at the end of the nut harvest. It was saved and eaten at the next year's harvest, hoping it would spur another successful harvest.

In the 1800s, fruitcake was served with tea. Rumor has it that Queen Victoria waited a year to eat a fruitcake she received for her birthday as a show of restraint and moderation.

Most fruitcakes will last 8 to 12 months tightly wrapped in plastic wrap and stored in an airtight container, or they can be frozen. Give a gift from the heart by making those on your gift list a regular or light fruitcake, courtesy of *Making Beautiful Christmas Cakes* (Merehurst).

FRUITCAKE

3	cups sultanas (golden raisins)
2 1/2	cups raisins, chopped
1 1/2	cups currants
2	cups chopped glace cherries
1	cup brandy or rum
1	cup butter
1	cup soft, dark brown sugar
2	tablespoons apricot jam (jelly)
2	tablespoons molasses
1	tablespoon grated lemon or orange rind
4	eggs
2 3/4	cups plain (all-purpose) flour
1	teaspoon ginger
1	teaspoon mixed spice
1	teaspoon cinnamon

1. Put the fruit in a bowl with the brandy and soak overnight. Preheat the oven to 300 F. Line a 9-inch round cake pan with melted butter or a mild-flavored vegetable oil. To wrap the pan, cut a double layer of greaseproof parchment paper into a strip long enough to fit around the outside of the pan and tall enough to come about 2 inches above the edge of the pan. Fold down a cuff about 3/4 inch deep along the length of the strip along the folded edges. Make diagonal cuts up to the fold line on each strip, about 1/2 inch apart. Fit the strip around the inside of the pan, with the cuts on the base, pressing the cuts out at right angles so they sit flat around the base. Place the pan on a doubled piece of parchment paper, and trace the edge. Cut the shape and place on the base of the pan, over the cuts.

2. Beat the butter and sugar. Beat in the jam, molasses and rind. Add the eggs, beating after each addition. Stir in the fruit and the sifted flour and spices.

3. Spoon the mixture into the pan, ensuring it is pushed well into the corners and edges. Smooth the surface with fingers dipped in water. Tap the pan to remove any air bubbles. Adjust oven shelves accordingly. Cakes are usually cooked on the third shelf. Place on layers of newspapers in the oven (the oven temperature is low enough to use paper safely), and bake for 3 to 31/2 hours, or until a skewer comes out clean. Brush with brandy. Cover with greaseproof (parchment) paper and wrap in a kitchen towel. Let cool in the pan, and remove when the cake is cold.

LIGHT FRUITCAKE

3/4	cup unsalted butter
1/2	cup caster (superfine) sugar
3	eggs
1	cup sultanas (golden raisins)
2/3	cup currants
1/4	cup chopped glace apricots
1/4	cup chopped glace figs
2	cups chopped glace cherries
1/2	cup coarsely chopped macadamia nuts
1 1/2	cups plain (all-purpose) flour
1/2	cup self-raising flour
1/2	cup milk
1	tablespoon sweet sherry
	Nuts or glace cherries



1. Preheat the oven to 315 F. Line a deep 8-inch round cake pan (follow instructions for fruit cake). Cream the softened butter and sugar in a bowl until just combined. Add the eggs, beating well after each addition.

2. Transfer to a large bowl, and stir in the fruit and nuts. Stir in half the flours and milk, and stir. Stir in the remaining flours, milk and the sherry. Spoon into the pan and tap to remove air bubbles. Smooth the surface with wet fingers and decorate with nuts or cherries. Wrap the outside of the pan (see instructions for fruitcake). Place on layers of newspaper in the oven and bake for 13/4 to 2 hours or until a skewer comes out clean.

3. Remove from the oven, and wrap in a kitchen towel until cool. Remove the pan's lining, and wrap the cake in foil or store in an airtight container.

Christmas... It's Uplifting!

Here's hoping everything runs smoothly for you this holiday season.

We appreciate your choosing us and thank you for your continued business.

Rob's Automotive Services Inc.
8624 Bank St., Vernon
Rob Mockett
821-5050



Merry Christmas

A world of thanks and best wishes to our neighbors, customers and friends. We feel fortunate to serve great folk like you!



Tile Drainage Ltd.
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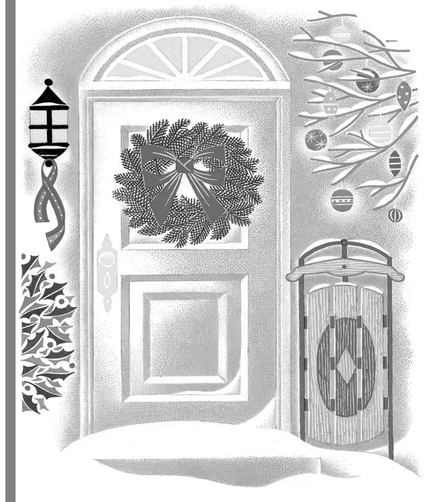
Henry Doornwaard

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS



Through this door pass the nicest people. Thank you for your support.

Gilles, Fern and Francine

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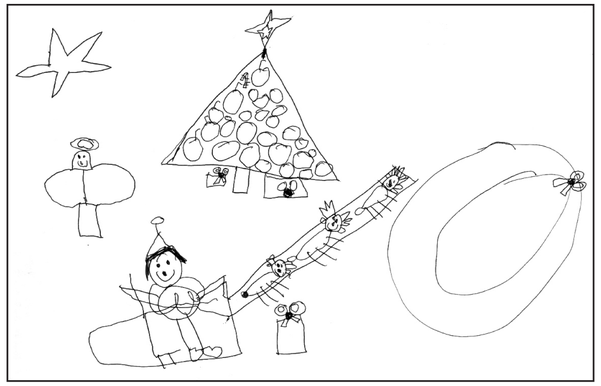
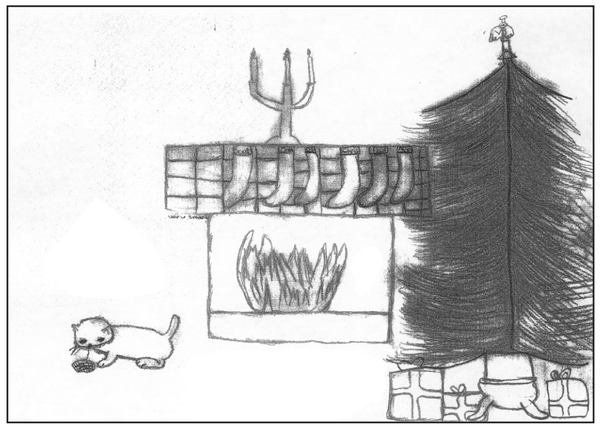


Ashley Harper, Grade 1, Winchester Public School

A wonderful time of year

Christmas is a wonderful time of year,
A time of laughter, and a time of cheer.
A time for happiness and a time for love.
Outside it's white, like a pretty dove.
God sent His only Son to save us.
Jesus obeyed without a fuss.
He died on the cross to pay for our sin.
When he was born there was no room at the inn.
Jesus was wise and He was very smart.
Jesus had love and a pure heart.

By Matthew Dirk Johnson
Grade 6
Community Christian School, Metcalfe



Matthew Johnson, Grade 6, Community Christian School

'TIS THE SEASON, TO SAY, "THANKS!"

It's the holiday season and we're all aglow
As we recall all the good folks that we've come to know.
Merry Christmas!

Loughlin's Country Store
1738 County Rd. 1, Hallville 989-1323
Loughlin's Motors
RR#2, Mountain 989-3839



TO OUR CHERISHED CUSTOMERS

We wish you tidings of comfort and joy
Merry Christmas!

506 Main Street
Winchester
774-2727

MILANO PIZZERIA
GREAT FOOD SINCE 1967



HOLIDAY *Peace*

The warmth and compassion of those who care make the difference.
Winchester/Chesterville Funeral Homes
Season's Greetings
Wishing you all the love, laughter and memories, to last throughout the year.

WINCHESTER & CHESTERVILLE FUNERAL HOMES
1283217 Ont. Inc.

Frank X. Curry
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and Staff

505 Church St., Winchester 613-774-2120 Fax 774-4059
62 Queen St., Chesterville 613-448-2120 Fax 774-4059

Proudly Canadian and Independent

Wishing You Every Happiness This Holiday Season

May your home be blessed with happiness and good fortune, and your family with good health this holiday season. We consider it a privilege and honor to serve you, and thank you sincerely for choosing us.

O'FARRELL FINANCIAL SERVICES INC.
4 Industrial Road, Unit 1, Kemptville
Office: 613-258-1997 Toll Free: 1-877-989-1997
E-mail: future@ofarrellfinancial.com

Old Fashioned Christmas

From ***Hee Homestead***
by Margaret Roff (Hee)
Submitted by the Osgoode Township Historical Society

It was a far cry from the Christmas of today, with no wish list and no visiting stores to see all the enticing things on display. We knew Santa would come; it just didn't occur to us that we should put in our order first. Santa knew where to find us and he never came empty-handed.

We didn't hang up our handknitted stockings; there wasn't always an extra pair. Nor did we put up a Christmas tree in the early days. It wasn't that we couldn't find a suitable one in the woods, but rather, with a family of 11, where would we find a corner to put it? As older brothers and sisters married and moved away, there came to be room for a nice spruce tree. Since there was no money for shiny tinsel and glass balls, we made many ornaments from the tinfoil that came on a one-pound package of tea. We always had popcorn and threaded it into lovely white garlands.

We had a custom that our Mother brought us. Before going to bed, we placed a plate on the table and very carefully wrote our names on a card. We always put hard candy out and apples from the cellar, perhaps an orange.

I recall one Christmas Eve (I don't know how old I would have been), when Mother, two younger brothers and I were keeping the home fires burning. Our church always had a concert on Christmas Eve, but as it was a long way to go by sleigh, we younger ones had to stay home. Mother was a great storyteller and she was spinning her yarns, when suddenly she stopped and with a shhhh! told us to listen. Of course we couldn't hear anything. She told us to be quiet as she was sure she heard someone in the summer kitchen. She slipped out and came back with a parcel. Santa was out there, she said, and as we were too young to go to the concert, he had brought our Christmas present early. I don't remember what the boys received, but mine was a little green felt hat with a feather in it for my doll. As I think back, I wonder where Mother got the felt, as we didn't buy anything unnecessarily. The boys would get a homemade article too. Dad was great with a piece of cedar and a jackknife. Many a little sleigh he would whittle after we were in bed.

Christmas Day, weather permitting, we enjoyed outside activities such as playing and sliding on the ice; some had skates, but not everyone did. If the weather was unbearably cold, we played indoor games such as cards and the bean bag throw. The meal was always sumptuous, though never turkey, which we could have had since we did raise them, but instead, a nice crate-fattened rooster with homemade buns, bread, and home churned butter. For dessert we had pies: apple and tomato mincemeat.



RING IN THE SEASON

Ring is peace and joy and love
Ring in blessings from the Lord above
Ring in hope and ring in cheer
Ring in our best wishes for a joyous year!
Merry Christmas and many thanks

MOREWOOD KITCHENS
CUSTOM DESIGNED CABINETS
REJ POMAINVILLE
13650 CTY. RD. 13, MOREWOOD
448-2739



MERRY CHRISTMAS, EVERYONE!

... And many thanks for your continued loyal patronage. Thank you for bringing us so much joy this year.

12054 Main St. W. WINCHESTER 613-774-6854
216 Van Buren St. KEMPTVILLE 613-258-5222

R&S Glass Shop
Auto, Commercial and Home Glass Specialists

WITH OUR SINCERE THANKS

We're filled with joy as we count our blessings, and your kind friendship is among them.
Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

MOUNTAIN STATION Pizza
989-2330
1065 CLARK ROAD

Thank you for your kindness and your support.
To all we wish a very merry Christmas season.
Marcel, Lise and the staff

Russell Slaughter House Inc.
Russell, Ontario
Tel.: 445-2005, Fax: 445-3518

Fa...la...la...la...la

... And a round of thanks to you, our kind and loyal customers. We are very grateful for your business this past year and wish you all the best this holiday season.

Merry Christmas!

Vitality Health & Fitness
www.vitality-pace.com
4 Industrial Dr., South Gower Industrial Park
258-4001
For women only

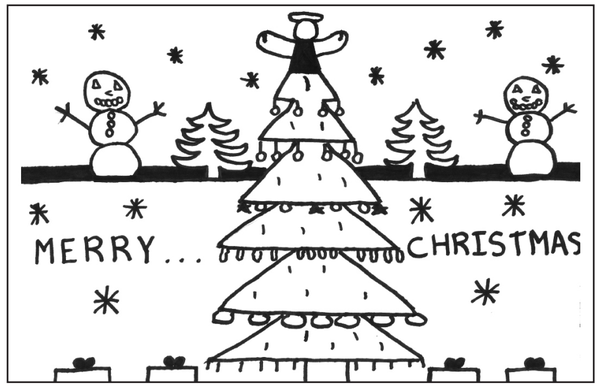


To All Our Friends And Neighbors At Christmas

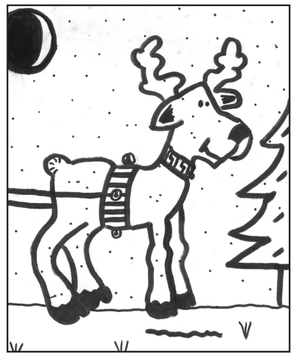
We're Making A List ...

Friends and neighbors near and dear
And customers who've stopped by here
Associates and vendors, too
We couldn't have done it without ALL of you
And if there's anyone we've missed
On our special "thank you" list
Please know you're in our hearts and minds
At this joyous Christmastime
So please accept without delay
Our very best wishes for a great holiday!

Byers Farm Equipment
Chesterville • 448-2185



Sarah Dickey, Grade 5, Morewood Public School

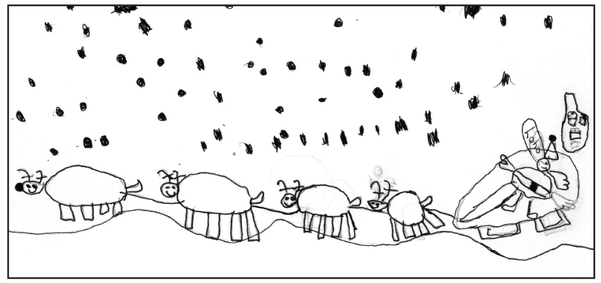


Brodie Geurkink, Grade 6, Dixon's Corners Public School

Jesus' birthday

Christmas time is Jesus' birthday
Hurray! Hurray!
Remember Jesus' birth
I love Jesus
Saviour of all
Tell the world
Merry Christmas
Angels singing!
Shepherds watching

By Elsbeth Carpenter
Grade 3
Community Christian School, Metcalfe



Joshua Turchetti, Grade 3, St. Mary's Chesterville

A Christmas Wish

Bundles of
HOLIDAY WISHES

Wishing you a bundle of holiday joy, tied up with a string of good tidings! Please know how much we appreciate your friendship and patronage.

Mary's Restaurant
513 St. Lawrence Street
Winchester
774-3733
Mon.-Thurs. 6 am-10 pm;
Fri. & Sat. 6 am-11 pm;
Sun. 8 am-10 pm

Have a jolly holiday!



Wishing you a holiday
Filled with merriment and mirth –
Plus lots of love and laughter,
With joy and peace on earth!

With our thanks for your valued patronage.

Seasons greetings from Bill, Audrey and sons

Dillabough's Garage
Domestic and Import Parts and Repairs and Welding
Morewood 448-3171

Joy Is In The Air

With gratitude and anticipation,
We'd like to join the celebration
With good cheer and best wishes too,
For each and every one of you!
Happy Holidays!

BYERS LIMOUSINE SERVICE



Visit our website: www.byerslimo.com
652-1084 or 1-800-787-LIMO (5466)

NOEL

Hope the holidays bring joy and love to you and yours.
Many thanks for your kind support and friendship.

Have a wonderful Christmas and we look forward to seeing you in the New Year.

WINCHESTER HOME HARDWARE
Home hardware
774-2700
THE SOURCE BY CIRCUIT CITY
774-1567
Hwy. 31 at Hwy. 43 South of Winchester

Winter travel: not what it used to be

by Matthew Barbour

Come on, it's lovely weather for a sleigh ride together with you....

Those words are heard quite frequently this time of year — and many may find themselves singing along.

Thinking about the verse, people these days conjure up an image of a light snow falling and a gracefully trotting horse pulling a cutter that carries two sweethearts. The sound of the horse's hooves is muffled on the snow-covered road and over the jingle of the bells on the animal's harness, the couple can be heard laughing gaily.

Are the words just part of a seasonal song and the image a fanciful idea of how things might have been in years gone by? A romantic notion of something magical perhaps? Was life acctually like that? Just ask Michael Daley of Enniskerry.

"That happened in my time — I did most of my courting in a buggy and a cutter," he said, clearly remembering the winter of 1949. In 1950, he married the lady he courted and the couple still lives on a farm just north of Snake Island Road that has been in the Daley family since 1831. Perhaps magic can be found in a sleigh ride together for two.

"It was cold, but I suppose it was romantic," said his wife, Betty. "I didn't mind the cold though, because I was used to it." She explained that she hails from Maniwaki, north of Hull, Que. and during her childhood, electricity had not yet reached the area. She suggested there was not much difference between riding in a cutter and traveling by car at the time.

"In those days, cars didn't have heaters," she said. "Or if they did have heat, it didn't work very well."

Michael said a team and sleigh, or a horse and cutter were the preferred modes of transportation in winter well into the 1940s, describing how he would put his car into storage in November and leave it there for the winter.

"The main roads were always plowed — Highway 16 and Highway 31 from Ottawa, through Greely and down past Winchester," he said. However the back roads were another matter. "It wasn't until the 1950s that the township started plowing all of the roads," he added, relating how the mail was delivered by horse and cutter and how sometimes, after a storm, people would wait for the mailman to go by before they ventured past their driveways. "Once there was a track, everybody would get out on the road," he said.



The two men in the centre of this picture, Tom Daley (left) and his brother Jim, were hauling lumber on these sleighs in the 1920s when they paused for this photo with other family members.

Doris Scharf of South Mountain has a similar memory from the 1930s and 1940s, except that it was her father who broke the road in the morning after a fresh snowfall. Her family owned a dairy farm near Chesterville and every morning, her father would load his full milk cans onto a flatbed sleigh, hitch up a team of horses and make the two mile trip to the Nestlé plant. After a particularly heavy snow storm, neighbors were happy to be able to follow his tracks.

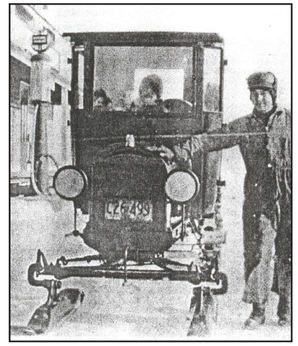
Scharf also has fond memories of travelling by sleigh to Sunday evening hymn sings at church in Chesterville. "We would have two or three seats on the sleigh — it had a flat bed and we would gather up neighbors along the way and we'd have a wonderful time. Those trips were great fun," she said.

Horses were needed for farm work — they were treasured animals and it was rare that anyone would take a sleigh ride just for pleasure. Up until the late 1940s, horses and sleighs were used for commerce as well.

Bruce Straby of Greely recalled how he was able to earn 25 cents a day helping to deliver bread on the back roads during the winter. He worked for Andrew Shields of Greely, who would travel the countryside with his team of horses hitched to a flatbed sleigh that was loaded with boxes of bread.

"Most people had boxes near the road that we would put the bread in," Straby said. "He liked having me come along, because I was small enough to run across the crust of the snow, whereas he would fall right through."

It seems that few people ever complained about the cold, because there were always plenty of blankets and buffalo robes handy to keep everyone warm. Straby remembers riding in the sleigh with his parents when they visited relatives and friends. "A few hours before we were due to leave, the lady of the house would put stones or bricks into the oven and just before we left, the stones or bricks would be placed into sacks and we would use them to keep our feet warm," he said. " Sometimes, we children would take our shoes off under the blanket, because the heat felt so good. We weren't supposed to take our shoes off, but we did."



In 1927, this unknown traveler stopped at Hupe's General Store in Greely. An uncommon novelty in the area at the time, this Ford Model T was equipped with skis in place of the front wheels. This road was Highway 31 until the 1950s, and is now Meadow Drive.

Best Wishes All Around!

On behalf of Tibben Equipment Limited, we would like to take this opportunity to wish you a very Merry Christmas. It is our greatest wish that you and your family have a wonderful and prosperous New Year.

We sincerely thank you for your business and we look forward to growing together with you in 2006 and beyond.

Doug & Darlene Tibben
and Staff of Tibben Equipment Limited

EQUIPMENT LTD.
Tibben



4124 County Rd. #16 / Brinston Road
Brinston, Ont., K0E 1C0
613-652-4881
www.tibbenequipment.com



Our stockings are hung, the tree's all aglow;
We're sending glad tidings to the people we know;
So before all the festivities begin, we'd like to thank you for your dropping in!

COTTAGE COVE

LADIES' CASUAL CLOTHING AT AFFORDABLE PRICES
NOW TWO LOCATIONS!
505 Main St., Winchester 774-4383
Next to the IDA Pharmacy
Kemptville Mall, Kemptville 258-9055
Next to Human Resources Centre

Help your kids say 'thank-you'

Why not spend time with your children this holiday season by teaching them to write thank-you notes? It's one of the most important etiquette skills you can teach them. While Grandma may excuse a missing acknowledgement from the grandchild she loves, the person that interviewed your adult child for a job may not be so forgiving. Use these handy tips from the experts at Hallmark—your children will thank you for it later in life.

• Make it a family activity. Kids want to act like adults so when they see Mom or Dad taking the time to write a note, they'll be more interested in joining in.

• Encourage your kids to suggest a list of people to thank (including Santa).

• Use kid-friendly notes. Letting your little ones select their own notes will increase their enthusiasm for sending them. There are plenty of styles available, from individual thank-you cards to boxed note cards, including those designed for children to complete.

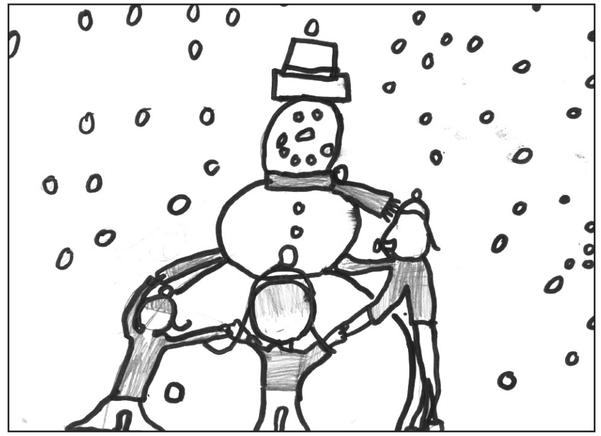
• Offer as much help as your kids need—but no more. Some children are stuck for words and they'll appreciate some suggestions. Others have no trouble expressing themselves so for them writing a thank-you note is one more way to stretch their creativity.

• Praise your child's effort and let him or her know how special Uncle Billy or Mrs. Jones will feel to read this note.

• Take a photo and send a picture of the child using the holiday gift they received.

For additional holiday tips visit www.hallmark.com or call 1-800-268-3230.

- News Canada



Ginette Hartell, Grade 2, Ste-Thérèse-d'Avila

This holiday season

GM Canada

RING&WIN
YEAR-END EVENT

OnStar

EVERYONE'S A WINNER!
YOU COULD WIN YOUR NEW CHEVROLET
OR GET UP TO $10,000 OFF
YOUR PURCHASE OR LEASE ON MOST
2005 AND 2006 MODELS

HOLIDAY HOURS
SALES: *Closed* Saturday, Dec. 24, Monday & Tuesday Dec. 26 & 27 and Saturday, Dec. 31
Open Friday, Dec. 23 and Wednesday, Thursday & Friday, Dec. 28-29-30
Open Monday, Jan. 2, 2006
SERVICE, BODY SHOP & PARTS: *Closed* Monday & Tuesday Dec. 26 & 27 and Monday, Jan. 2, 2006
Open Friday, Dec. 23 and Wednesday, Thursday & Friday Dec. 28-29-30

WE'RE TRIMMING RATES!
We've trimmed our tree and our rates to keep things moving through the holiday season.

2006 Impala

Choose from 50
USED CARS & TRUCKS 2002 AND NEWER
- In Stock -
LOW FINANCING

2006 Silverado

0% PURCHASE FINANCING* on selected '05 models
*See dealer for details

NOW WE GIVE THANKS...
We extend a heartfelt thanks to our customers past and present. It's a pleasure serving you. We hope you and your family enjoy a wonderful Christmas, and health and happiness in the New Year.
– From Management & Staff

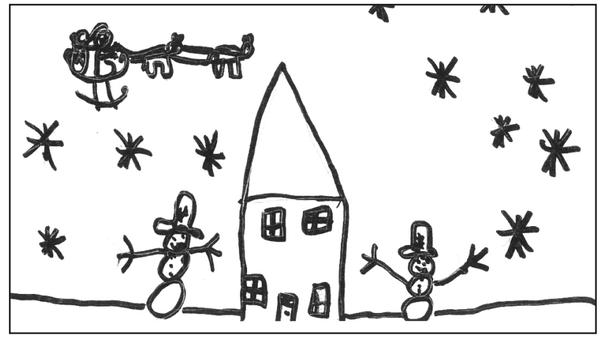
SALESMEN
Barry McMillan
Darryl McDonnell
Kirk McMillan
Richard Zandbergen

UPPER CANADA MOTOR SALES LTD.
CORNER HWY. 2 & 31, MORRISBURG 543-2925

CHEVROLET
Parts GM Service



Conner Bogart, Grade 7, Nationview Public School



Jessica Harper, Grade 3, Winchester Public School

Celebration

Christmas time
Is so fine!
Celebration!

Jesus birth
Peace on earth
Celebration!

Angels sing
To the King
Celebration!

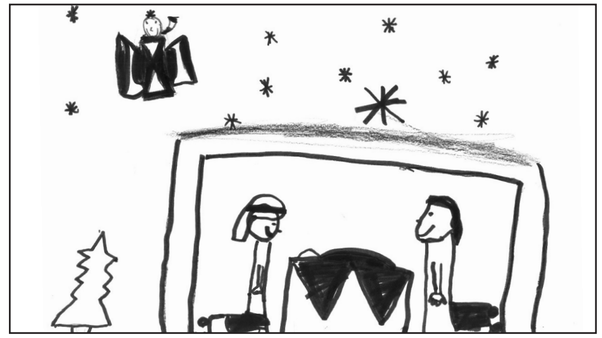
Hear the rhyme
Of the chime
Celebration!

Men traveled far
To see the star
Celebration!

God was there
He's everywhere
Celebration!

The baby boy
Brought lots of Joy
Celebration!

By Vivian Vandewint, Grade 3, Community Christian School



Emily, Grade 1, Timothy Christian School

C-H-R-I-S-T-M-A-S T-I-M-E

Carolers
Happiness
Ringing bells
Icicles
Sleigh
Toys
Mistletoe
Apple pie
Santa

Time of joy
Ice skating
Merry
Eggnog

by Nicolle Kilfoyle Grade 4, Inkerman Public School

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

We'd like to take a moment to wish all of our friends and customers the most wonderful Christmas yet!
Your visits this past year have meant so much to us, and we thank you for your continued business.

ARCAND'S
Party Tents
Corey Arcand
258-9444
or Cel. 229-5037

Tidings Of Comfort & Joy
We've got much to celebrate this season,
And your kind patronage is one reason,
That we're filled with joy and cheer;
At this special time of year.
And now without further delay,
We wish you all a great holiday!
First Stop Tool & Equipment Rentals Ltd.
2678 Hwy. 43, Kemptville (Cornerstone Mall)
1-877-245-3296 • 258-4152

SENDING OUR BEST
Please accept this load of good cheer, along with our thanks for your business this year! Have a great holiday!
JED Express Ltd.
RR 1, South Mountain
E-mail: edwin@jedexpress.com
Web site: www.jedexpress.com
High Cube Air Ride 53' Vans & Flat Beds
Offering Full Load & LTL Service
Satellite Tracking & Comunications Equipped
Canada & USA Customs Bonded Carrier
Quality Hay Dealer
Serving ON - PQ - PA - WV - VA - NC -SC - GA - AL - TN - IL - WI - OH on a regular basis
Tel. 613-989-2838 800-387-0504
Fax 613-989-3216 800-980-2295
Cell.: 613-791-6133
JED EXPRESS LTD.



Wishing you all the beauty of the holiday season and the best in the year to come.
We appreciate your patronage and look forward to serving you in the future.
Happy holidays and thank you from all of us at
Glen Robinson and Sons
Plumbing and Heating
RR2, Chesterville **448-2894**

Letters to Santa Claus

Dear Santa,
Hi! How are you? I was good this year. Are the reendeer ready? Did the elves catch the flu? What are the elves' names? Can I get some of the things I wish for: lightbright, a Barbie, a Glam girl and a princess costume. I helped put up the Christmas scene and mow the grass.
Brooke Mackett
St. Mary's Catholic School, Chesterville

❄

Dear Santa,
Is it cold in the north pole? Did you shave your beard? How are the reindeer? Hi! How are you? I was good this year. I worked all summer with my grandpa. I also helped put Christmas lights up and worked on the combine. I would like a new pair of coveralls and a new bike.
Josh
St. Mary's Catholic School, Chesterville

❄

Dear Santa,
How are you? I am fine. I have been a good boy this year. I would like a Pokemon GameBoy game, a skate board, and a snow board. How are the elves? Is your sled ready? Do your reindeers laugh a Rudolph?
Chase Vanwylick
St. Mary's Catholic School, Chesterville

Dear Santa,
Hi, how are you? I am fine. Did you have a very good year? I was very good. Perhaps I could get a shell sucker, Mario Party 7 and a karate set with the batteries and video set. I helped my dad set the table and helped my mom vacuum.
Tristan
St. Mary's Catholic School, Chesterville

❄

Dear Santa,
Hi! How are you? Does it rain there? How are the elves? I am very excited. I hope that I get the presents that I want. I am wishing for a Sens ballcap, Sens pants, a hokey stick and a Star Wars lego set. I mad my bed. I hope I get a pictuer of Rudolph.
Spencer Kelly
St. Mary's Catholic School, Chesterville

❄

Dear Santa,
Hi! How are you? I like you and Mrs. Claus. Are your reindeer behaving? Did you have a good vacation? Are you getting lots of letters? I would like a big brat baby, cups serving things, and a baby bed. I hope you get this letter.
Justine
St. Mary's Catholic School, Chesterville



Double the fun

Five-year-old Joshua Armstrong (left) thinks hard about what he'd like for Christmas while his twin brother, Eric, waits his turn to speak with Santa. The two were part of a steady line of children wanting to see the jolly man in red at the Royal Bank in Winchester on Sat., Dec. 3 before the Parade of Lights.

Press Photo — Duncan

❄

Dear Santa,
Hi! My name is Cole Reynolds and I am four years old. I go to Rothwell-Osnabruck school in Ingleside and I live in Finch. Thank you for all of the special presents you brought for me last year. I loved them all.
I have been a good boy this year. For Christmas, could you please bring me a transport with a truck and a car, a brown tractor, a GameBoy, computer games, SpongeBob slippers, and a snow tube. Could you also bring my mom a new digital camera? I will leave some milk and cookies for you and carrots for Rudolph and the rest of the reindeer. I love you Santa. Have a safe trip on Christmas Eve!
Cole Reynolds



Corrin Harbers, Grade 6
Timothy Christian School


Christmas Bells Are Ringing!
As sounds of joy fill the air, we'd like to ring out our best wishes for a very happy holiday season! Thanks for your support throughout the year.
Sandy Row Golf Club
10660 Sandy Row Rd., South Mountain
613-989-2588



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Alight at night









Above, 10-year-old Christophe Assi (left) and his brother Alexandre, 10, and Georges-Antoine, 12, were helping the Cadbury elf hand out chocolate at Upper Canada Village's Alight at Night festival opening on Thurs., Dec. 1. Alight at Night is in it's fifth year, and runs through Jan. 6. The park is open every night from 5 to 9 pm except Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. For more information, check out www.uppercanadavillage.com/night.htm.
Press Photos — Duncan




At This Season Of Wishes
We thank you deeply for the privilege and pleasure of serving you, our friends and neighbors, and look forward to your continued business.
Keep It Colourful Inc.
KEMPTVILLE MALL
258-6789
Benjamin Moore The Colour Experts

Denise & Cary

FESTIVE *Greetings*
We hope the holidays bring much laughter, warmth and good fortune for all those you hold dear.
Happy holidays to all our friends and neighbors!
Winchester Grain Elevator
Division of Parrish & Heimbecker Limited
Winchester 774-2720


Straight From The Hearth
... And from the heart, too, Go our very best wishes To each one of you!
Wishing you a Merry Christmas and a safe and happy holiday.
"Keeping You Warm Is Our Business!"
HARBERS
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Store hours: Tues.-Fri. 8 am-4 pm; Sat. 8 am-12 noon
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