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The **V** Winkler Morden

oice

Merry Christmas

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Santa's on his way

PHOTO BY ASHLEIGH VIVEIROS/VOICE

Eight-year-old Judy Friesen chats with Santa Claus at the Southland Mall earlier this month. Before he headed back to the North Pole in preparation for tonight's global deliveries, the Voice sat down with St. Nick to get the low-down on his Christmas magic. See Pg. 5 for the full story.

Morden Cheer distributes 220 care hampers

By Lorne Stelmach

An army of volunteers took over the large hall of the Morden Mennonite Church for four days last week.

Assembling and then delivering upwards of 220 hampers within that time frame is quite a feat for the Morden Christmas Cheer Board.

As always, though, the community really came through for the cause, said Cheer Board chair Carolyn Schellenberg.

"Everybody on the board has a responsibility, does their share, and it all works well," she commented as volunteers got to work putting together the hundreds of food hampers, which were delivered on Dec. 16.

"It's well organized and we have committed board members ... and we have great volunteers," Schellenberg said.

The Cheer Board's mission is to provide support for families and individuals who need a bit of help during the Christmas season.

The effort is supported primarily with cash donations that are used to purchase food and toiletry items for the hampers, but the board also gratefully receives both food and toy donations as well.

Continued on page 2

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Cheer elves hard at work

From Pg. 1

The hampers are filled with enough food to tide a family over through the holidays and beyond, as well as gifts for the children to open on Christmas.

This year's campaign saw a jump in hamper applications, which Schellenberg relates to a recent spike in unemployment in the area.

"It's an increase of close to 30 [from last year]," she said. "We're thinking there's been a lot of layoffs in the community that's causing it. I think that's the major one."

Even as the need grows, though, the Cheer Board has remained in good financial shape to meet the demand.

"Donations have been great," Schellenberg said, adding the benefit game organized by the Morden Thunder and Guns 'N Hoses on Dec. 13 provided a huge boost of close to \$6,000.

"WE HAVE GREAT VOLUNTEERS."

"They really did well ... lots of toys and lots of food and lots of money, too, that came in. And it was a fun event for the board members who went. They really enjoyed it.

"I think we were down on toys yet, but we were hoping to get some more yet," she said midway through last



PHOTOS BY LORNE STELMACH/VOICE

Volunteers pulled together to deliver over 200 Christmas Cheer hampers throughout Morden last week. Below: Board member Denis Myers came out in full costume for the four-day wrapping/sorting/packing event. Below and above: Some of the many volunteers who made it all possible.

week. "If not, we go and purchase some, too. We make sure every kid will get a toy."

Schellenberg thanked everyone who came out to help pack up and deliver the hampers. Their dedication to the cause is heartening, she said.

"Not only do we start very early in the morning, but we go until about

nine at night ... taking a break for supper.

"We have a lot of new volunteers and we have former volunteers too," Schellenberg said. "It's great to see it happen."



Federal, provincial funding for Spenst Bros.

By Lorne Stelmach

A joint funding initiative of the provincial and federal governments will invest \$250,000 in the expansion of Spenst Brothers Premium Meats in Winkler.

"Business is good and they will out-grow their current production facility. We want to see their business grow," Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Development Minister Ron Kostyshyn said in making the funding announcement Dec. 17.

This funding will help with the purchase of new equipment to help the company scale up their production, and will also allow them "to accommodate increased capacity and meet the food safety product protocols," said Kostyshyn.

The funding will assist the company as it plans a \$2.3 million expansion, including the purchase of more than \$1 million of new packaging systems,

conveyors, ovens, and cooling equipment.

Spenst Brothers currently produces and sells deli meats, pizzas, buns, perogies, custom-cut and wrapped meats, and other related products.

The company was born out of the BSE crisis in 2003, when the United States border was closed to Canadian beef.

Kostyshyn spoke on the importance of the added value aspect of what is a model of a family-run business.

He commented on how it all started with wholesaling of the family's homemade pizzas, which are now being sold in about 50

independent stores and restaurants across southern Manitoba.

"Manitoba is committed to helping family-owned and local businesses grow because we recognize how important their success is to the community and our provincial economy," said Kostyshyn.

Co-owner and manager Paul Spenst

"WE WANT TO SEE THEIR BUSINESS GROW."



PHOTOS BY LORNE STELMACH/VOICE

Manitoba Ag. Minister Ron Kostyshyn toured the Spenst Brothers Premium Meats production facility in Winkler with co-owner and manager Paul Spenst after announcing funding of \$250,000 to help with the purchase of new equipment that will be part of an overall \$2.3 million expansion at the shop.

said the support that the company has continued to receive is overwhelming.

"We appreciate that you've invested in our sector, he said. "When we opened in 2003, we were humbled by the level of support we immediately

received first from the local Winkler area and then all of southern Manitoba. Today, we are again humbled and grateful for this investment in our business."

Continued on page 5



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WCF presents WA+C with donations to date

By Ashleigh Viveiros

Last Thursday marked a turning point in Winkler Arts and Culture's

campaign to transform the former Park St. water treatment plant into Winkler's first arts and cultural centre.



PHOTO BY ASHLEIGH VIVEIROS/VOICE

From left: Winkler Arts and Culture reps Ray Derksen and Don Friesen, Mayor Martin Harder, and the Winkler Community Foundation's Justin Funk and Myra Peters last week as the foundation handed over the WA+C fundraising reins to the City of Winkler.

On Dec. 17, the Winkler Community Foundation presented WA+C with the \$100,685 in donations they had collected on the arts council's behalf since 2014.

"We at the foundation, we appreciate the opportunity to work in partnership with WA+C so that they could start raising funds for this project," said WCF executive director Myra Peters. "We're excited to see that the project is taking off."

The community foundation has been taking in funds and providing receipts for the fundraising campaign since late last year. Those tasks will now officially be taken on by the City of Winkler as of Jan. 1.

"This is a City of Winkler project and we'll be issuing the receipts from here on," said Mayor Martin Harder. "We are delighted to be able play that role."

"The fundraising continues," he added, noting the city will provide interim financing if necessary to ensure work on the initial phases of the project can be completed on schedule.

WA+C president Ray Derksen says they are well on their way to hitting their initial fundraising goal.

"We're about \$50,000 short of completely finishing the Phase 1A," he said, noting that will include a finished gallery space and two studio rooms.

Total donations for the project is in the \$540,000 range right now, which puts them within reach of the

\$675,000 needed to finish both parts of phase one, the second of which includes a second gallery space. Future phases of renovations will be tackled in the years ahead as funding allows, Derksen said.

Work on the site gets underway early next month. Derksen expects it will be open to the public by the summer.

"We're hoping ... it will be an active building by July," he said. "It's been a good two years [of planning]. We're as a committee very satisfied with how it turned out. We really appreciate how the city's been behind us 100 per cent from day one."

The community's response to the project makes it clear this is a facility that is desperately needed in Winkler, Derksen said.

"It says a lot. The community actually wants this to happen. It needs to happen. It's something we haven't had for the 100 years or whatever that this community's been around," he said.

"Winkler's never been looked at as an arts and culture community—it's always been looked at sports or business, industrial," Derksen added. "But it's amazing how many artists are in the basement that now we are going to pull out of the basement and we have this facility to showcase them in. I'm stoked."

A ground-breaking ceremony for the WA+C centre is slated to take place on Dec. 28 at 11 a.m. at 547 Park Street.

Shoppers supports SCCR



PHOTO BY LORNE STELMACH/VOICE

The Tree of Life campaign at Shoppers Drug Mart in Morden supported the South Central Cancer Resource recently with a \$3,135 donation. "Most of the money will be going to our transportation fund because that is our biggest expense," said the SCCR's Deb Thiessen. The Tree of Life campaign has raised over \$26 million nationally for women's health charities over the last 13 years.



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Your Best Source For Local Community News!

Santa says local kids were 'pretty good' this year

By Ashleigh Viveiros

St. Nicholas is slated to make a few thousand stops in the Winkler-Morden area tonight, and so we here at the *Voice* thought it would be fitting to sit down with the jolly old elf to get the low-down on his operations.

We caught up with Santa at the Southland Mall centre court, where he's been hearing the Christmas wishes of hundreds of kids over the last few weeks.

After decreeing that we had been "mostly nice" this past year, St. Nick agreed to answer a few questions:

Voice: What's the one thing you want to tell Winkler-Morden kids to do this Christmas Eve when it comes

to preparing for your visit?

Santa Claus: Go to bed early! Don't stay up and try to catch me at work, because I know when they're awake and then I'm going to sneak around even better and they're never going to catch me.

V: I know I tried to sneak a glimpse of you on Christmas Eve for years, but was never able to. How do you always manage to evade the kids that stay up?

SC: I can't tell you that! I can't tell you that at all because then the kids will know and they're so smart these days they just might catch me.

V: Okay, okay, so, hypothetically speaking, motion sensor cameras aren't going to work?

SC: Nope, don't even bother. I guess I could maybe do a video if I wanted to, but ... no, no I don't want to start that. If I start doing videos for one kid then they'll all want one and I just don't have time for that. I have to hurry, you know—there's a lot of gifts I need to deliver.

V: With so many homes to visit, do you want kids to leave some cookies out for you to refuel with? Any kind in particular?

SC: You know, any kind of cookie is good. I love them all. Just put anything out there, I'll eat it.

V: Should they put any treats out for Rudolph, too?

SC: Maybe not. Because then he gets to eating and he gets the idea he can just sit around and have a few carrots and it puts everything behind schedule. We've got to get moving.

V: What happens if a child isn't at their regular house on Christmas Eve? Should they be worried you won't know where they are?

SC: No, no, I always know where to leave their presents. They don't have to worry about that.

V: And for the kids who don't have a traditional chimney on their house, how do you get in?

SC: That's no big deal. We use some magic to get in—it's very simple—and then we just drop everything off

and take off.

V: What are the most popular toys kids are asking for this year?

SC: Lego. Lots and lots of Lego. And there's some kids wanting pink ponies, Barbies, dinosaurs ... oh, and Star Wars is very, very big this year.

V: How do the elves keep up with the new toy trends every year?

SC: They're great. No problem at all. They know what they're doing at the North Pole.

V: You've been doing this for a few years now—what do you love most about your job?

SC: The kids. Seeing the smiles here [at the mall] and then I also get to see over top, later, I get to see some of the reactions Christmas morning.

V: Christmas Eve is a pretty busy night for you. How do you recover?

What do you do for Christmas Day, Boxing Day?

SC: Well, first I've got to go home and lie down in a hot bath for at least a day. With Epsom salts and all that. And then it's off to Jamaica with the missus to relax before we start preparing for next year.

V: One last question, Santa: have the kids in our area been good this year?

SC: They've been fantastic. I don't want to say 100 per cent—kids are kids—but, you know what, they've all been pretty good.

"GO TO BED EARLY. DON'T STAY UP AND TRY TO CATCH ME AT WORK."

One-year-old Dawkins Kuhl is all smiles while sitting on Santa's lap at the Southland Mall earlier this month.

PHOTO BY ASHLEIGH VIVEIROS/VOICE



> SPENST, FROM PG. 3

"As a family, we again commit ourselves to making Spenst Bros. Premium Meats a business that pays good returns on this investment, including new job opportunities for our local workforce and continued fundraising support for local schools, sports teams and mission organizations," Spenst said.

Spenst Brothers currently employs 18 full-time staff. With the expansion, they plan to have up to 30 staff within the next three years.

Aside from increasing employment, the company also buys approximately \$345,000 of ingredients from within Manitoba, which they predict could increase to \$1.8 million after the expansion.

The government's funding comes through the Growing Forward initiative and Growing Value program, which provides financial assistance to existing agri-businesses that need to make changes to adapt to market forces and environmental considerations and increase their ability to compete in domestic and international markets.

In a news release, federal Agriculture Minister Lawrence MacAulay commented, "Canadian food processors must continually adapt and upgrade to remain competitive. The Government of Canada is proud to make investments that help Manitoba agri-businesses grow and that create new opportunities for farmers."



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getheard

EDITORIAL > VIEWPOINTS > LETTERS

No shortage of good news here

Having worked in this community for over a decade now, I'm no stranger to seeing first-hand the generosity of the people who live here.

All year long we're invited to cover projects and programs that aim to make a difference in people's lives, not to mention the countless photo ops of the donations that pour in to help ensure those same programs remain viable.

But it's never more evident than at the holidays just how giving the Winkler-Morden area can be.

I was remarking to someone the other day that for the last few weeks the

paper has been bursting with these stories—financial support for Katie's Cottage, the United Way, the Morden Legion; food drives and benefit hockey games for the Cheer Board, not to mention the massive undertakings that are the hamper campaigns themselves; the completion of Donate Love's home renovation project for a family in need ... the list goes on and on.

It can sometimes be a bit of a challenge, actually, to balance all these stories out in the layout, but it's a pretty nice problem to have—a wealth of good news to share.

No, our community isn't perfect. We have crime, we have a startling amount of domestic violence, we have the same societal problems of any small urban centre, really, plus a few others that are unique to our area.

But I firmly believe that the good does outweigh the bad here; that the majority of people generally live up to the basic goodness inside themselves.

One of the greatest compliments I received recently was someone who

thanked me for providing a paper they wanted to read every week because it wasn't all filled with doom and gloom.

The role of a community newspaper is to inform and that does mean some gloomy stories are bound to get in there, but I'm very proud to be in a community that has an overwhelming wealth of positive stories to share.

That is, of course, because of all of you.

All you out there who donated countless hours these past weeks to pack and deliver Cheer Board hampers so that struggling families have food to put on the table and toys to give their kids Christmas morning.

All you individuals and businesses who give financially or in-kind to every good cause that asks for help.

Thank you for making our community such an awesome place to call home, and one we can all be proud of.

As we celebrate the holidays this week, we here at the *Voice* wish you and yours a very merry Christmas. We're looking forward to continuing to share this community's stories in 2016.



By Ashleigh Viveiros

Letters

SCCR sends out a big thank-you for your support

We at South Central Cancer Resource would like to extend a BIG

thank-you to our community for their support over the past year and espe-

cially over this Christmas season.

We have been so blessed by the individuals that have walked through our doors to wish us a Merry Christmas and then present us with a donation either in memory of a loved one, in lieu of a Christmas gift, or because someone they know is on their cancer journey.

They realize all funds given to SCCR stay in our communities that we serve. It is all about passing it forward at this time of year.

THANKS AGAIN from US to YOU!!

Norma Hildebrand and
Deb Thiessen, South
Central Cancer Resource

Letter policy

The *Voice* welcomes letters from readers on local and regional issues and concerns.

Please keep your letters short, on-topic, and respectful.

Letters may be edited for style and length. Letters written with malicious intent or considered to be in poor taste may not be published.

Please include your name, ad-

dress, and phone number so we can confirm your identity (address and phone number will not be printed, but your name will).

Send your letters to us by e-mail at news@winklermordenvoice.ca, or via mail to:

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get informed

NEWS > VIEWS > WINKLER > MORDEN > SURROUNDING AREAS



W.E.S. YIP group hosts winter garage sale

By Ashleigh Viveiros

Winkler Elementary School's Youth in Philanthropy group took over the school gym for a giant charity garage sale on Dec. 17.

"We are selling items that have been donated by students, teachers, and, really, just anybody," explained YIP member Desideria Barga, noting the group had been collecting, sorting, and pricing hundreds of donated items for the last few weeks.



PHOTOS BY ASHLEIGH VIVEIROS/VOICE

The Winkler Elementary School Youth in Philanthropy group (above) hosted a garage sale Dec. 17. The event gave students a chance to purchase some affordable Christmas gifts for their families and also raised funds for YIP to donate to a local charity.

The money that we get from this we're using for the Youth in Philanthropy to donate to a local charity."

Fellow YIP member Adina Klassen

said they'll figure out in the new year which charity will benefit from the proceeds of the sale.

Continued on page 15

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What's *Your* Christmas Story?

We asked kids to share their best themed holiday stories with us for a chance at night-at-the-movies prize packs. Here are the winners and a few other favourites:

GRAND PRIZE WINNER: SAMUEL BAUER, GR. 8, WINKLER

Finias the elf

All the elves were hard at work in Santa's workshop ... all but one that is.

That one was Finias. Finias was a bad elf: he was mean, he was a bully, and he was very, very, strong. All the elves were scared of him. This was because Finias used his brawn against all the other elves. He would hit them and he would kick them, but the thing everyone was scared of was being "wrapped."

Finias had this urge to take other elves and bully them either with words or with physical pain, but nothing was as bad as his famous "wrapping."

He would take an elf and wrap them into a gift package and then throw them into Santa's sleigh. Santa would then deliver them to children. Finias did that when he was in a great mood.

All the elves were scared of Finias, especially Xavier. Finias loved to bully Xavier because he was small and weak. Other elves would comfort Xavier and tell him to be strong.

But they would never stand up for him. If Finias would bully Xavier, all of the elves would just stand there in silence because they were scared that Finias might beat them up if they said anything.

Xavier had tried telling Santa about this, but Santa always had more important things to do than to listen to a small elf. The one time he did tell Santa, Finias got in trouble. But the second Santa left the room Finias beat up Xavier like he never had before.

Xavier didn't have any real friends because if Finias would say something mean to Xavier his friends would laugh because if they wouldn't, Finias would beat them up too.

But one day Santa had to hire another elf from the Northern Elf Village since Finias "wrapped" another elf because he was not willing to give him his cookie money.

But this elf that Santa hired was different.

His name was Felix and his name really fit him. Felix means happy in

Latin, and Felix was really happy. All the time he would tell a joke or laugh or just smile when looking at other people.

And so people liked him. But Finias did not. The other elves became happier because Felix was cheering them up with his laughter or cheering. And some elves lost their fear or at least some of their respect for Finias. Finias was mad.

When Finias saw a big crowd of elves gathering at lunch and laughing at Felix's jokes, he stomped over there and shouted, "HEY!"

Everyone turned around and when they saw that it was Finias, the elves fled.

Everyone except Felix. Felix stood there and was talking to Xavier.

"What are you doing here!?" Finias asked impatiently.

"I'm telling jokes and talking to Xavier!" Felix answered.

"Don't do that. You hear me?"

"No" Felix stubbornly announced "WHAT!?"

"I said no. I will talk to Xavier if I want to."

Finias turned red with anger. He grabbed Felix by the collar and shouted, "STOP IT!"

"NO!" Felix shouted back.

"Stop," a meek cry came from Xavier, who was standing right beside them.

"Stop," another meek voice exclaimed.

"Stop it. Stop it. Stop it" More and more voices came and soon the meek exclamations turned to yells.

Now every elf was yelling stop it.

Finias felt very, very, small. He let go of Felix's collar, which was now stretched out.

Finias stood there, speechless.

"You don't have to bully other elves. You can be our friend and then there is nothing to be afraid of."

"Really?" Finias asked.

"Sure you can," Xavier replied.

Finias looked around the room where other elves were.

"Sure you can!" they all shouted.

Finias felt sorry. He had thought that the other elves hated him. Finias smiled.

"Thank you," he softly said.

The elves cheered and from then on everyone was happy. The whole North Pole had a giant celebration with food and drinks. Even Santa came to the party.

Xavier and Finias, who used to be worst enemies, were now best friends.



RUNNER-UP: MORGAN HIEBERT, 13, MORDEN

Cranberry's important Christmas mission

All the elves were hard at work in Santa's workshop ... all but one.

Cranberry the Spy was on her way to Hollywood. The limo pulled up to a huge office building. Cranberry stepped out of the limo and walked through the front door, whipping off her sunglasses as she entered.

Her trench coat was black, a great contrast against the clean white walls of Secret Inc. In the middle of the large room was a semicircle desk and an old pudgy woman. Cranberry strode up to her and announced who she was, also saying that Santa had sent her for an important mission.

The women replied with, "Ahhhh

yes, Cranberry. Just on time to receive your mission." As she said this a projector turned on and shone a few images of a pizza restaurant on the wall to the far left.

The older woman looked at Cranberry and said, "This man," a thin man with an afro appeared on the screen, "has been stealing elves and now they work in his pizza shop. He also has an army of pizza delivery robots. You need to save all the elves and lock the evil Pizza Man up in jail. Cranberry, you are the best agent we have. If you don't take this mission Christmas might be no more!"

"I'll take it," Cranberry said casually

as she slipped her sunglasses back on and marched out.

Soon the limo pulled up to a pizza shop, the one in the picture. As Cranberry slowly opened the door she heard a strange sound: the sound of machinery and gears grinding.

The streets were totally deserted—not a single person in sight—but there was huge army of robots marching down the wide street. Easily a thousand, each holding a pizza box.

Cranberry knew what to do. With one swift motion she pulled a candy cane grappling hook and shot it straight up. A long chain with a smaller candy cane on the end flew out of

the grappling hook through the air, wrapping around a street light.

With the push of a button Cranberry shot into the air as the chain contracted. Cranberry then whipped out a bubble blower and blew a very large bubble that encased every single robot. The bubble floated away with the robots in it. Cranberry jumped down and strode into the pizza restaurant.

The inside was crowded with people and the scent of baking bread and marinara filled the air. Cranberry got a couple strange looks but continued to the kitchen. She kicked open the

Continued on page 9

What's *Your* Christmas Story?

RUNNERS-UP

RUNNER-UP: LUKE MARTENS, 12, PLUM COULEE

A not-so-hard-working elf

All the elves were hard at work in Santa's workshop ... all but one that is. Let me tell you this amazing story. I'm going to start with a question. All elves work for Santa, correct?

Nope!

There are actually huge elf communities, much like our own! Now, this story is mainly about one elf family, the Jingles. Yeah, sounds familiar, doesn't it? This is an elf family that had a boy that would come to save Christmas. His name was Oliver Jingles. He was twelve years, normal height for his age, had dark brown hair, and wore clothes that look like what you and I would wear on a casual day. Oliver lived with his family in an elf town called Frosted Plum.

It was supertime in the Jingles' home when Oliver's mother asked him about his day.

"How was your school day, Oliver?" asked Mama-Mia.

"It was okay," replied Oliver. "I had another run-in with the class bullies again today."

"What did they do this time?" asked Mama-Mia.

"Pushed me and called me names, the usual," said Oliver. "But the good news is that Santa Claus was our substitute teacher today and he stopped them!"

"Why, that's nice," said Papa Chew-

bacca, his face hidden behind a newspaper.

"Wooaaaaaaaahhhh!" said Oliver's little brother, Slade.

All elves have to go to college at the age of fifteen. Mama-Mia asked what Oliver what he was planning to go to college for.

"I want to go into mechanics so I can become the mechanic for Santa's sleigh," replied Oliver. "I've read 87 books about how the sleigh ticks!"

"I was the mechanic once," said Grandpa Joe.

"Really?" asked Oliver.

"Really, really. Who do you think paid for all those books?" replied Grandpa Joe proudly.

"I thought it was Mama-Mia..." said Oliver.

The family smiled and continued to eat their supper.

The weeks passed and Oliver tried his best at school. On Christmas Eve, however, something amazing happened.

Oliver was being chased around town by the class bullies, Jason and Steve. In addition to the pushing and calling Oliver names, this time they had snow balls! He was chased into the dead of night.

"Eat this, queeney!" shouted Steve. Steve threw a snow ball at Oliver, but it completely missed and went flying



into the air.

At the same time that this was happening, Santa was taking to the skies in his sleigh to deliver gifts to every person on the planet! As Santa was flying by, Rudolph was hit by the snow ball Steve had thrown and was knocked out cold! Literally! Santa, sleigh, reindeer and all went flying into the nearby forest. Jason and Steve fainted with shock! Oliver, on the other hand, went running as fast as he could into the forest where Santa had crashed.

"Ho, ho, help me!" Santa said.

Oliver helped Santa out from under the overturned sleigh. Once Santa was up on his feet, he helped Oliver turn the sleigh right-side up again.

"How can I help?" asked Oliver.

"Well," replied Santa. "If you can fix my sleigh in under two minutes while

I wake the reindeer that would really save Christmas!"

"I'll do my best, sir!" said Oliver and he got to work!

"Christmas is ruined!" hollered Santa. "It's been 27 minutes now! No one is getting any presents this year!"

"Sir, I understand that it's been 27 minutes, but I took a chance and upgraded your sleigh with the latest Rocket Booster 2000! You'll be able to reach any house in under five seconds now!" said Oliver excitedly.

"Ho, ho, ho my goodness! That must be a new record, sonny! Here, take this ..."

Santa pulled out from his sack what Oliver had asked for Christmas: a dark green tool box containing some of the most expensive tools in the world!

"Thank you, sir!" said Oliver happily, staring at the shiny box.

"No, thank you, Oliver," said Santa, flying away in his sleigh faster than ever before.

Oliver left with Christmas spirit flowing through his veins, and also with a question to ask himself:

"Wait a minute ... how in the elf world did he know my name?" thought Oliver.

Oliver now had a plan. He would work really hard at school so he could make it to college and study mechanics.

One day he would work for Santa and he would be the best mechanic in Frosted Plum!

He saved Christmas this year and realized he could do great things if he believed in himself!

> CRANBERRY'S MISSION, FROM PG. 8

door and walked into the kitchen, bubble blower in hand, staring at every person, looking for the afro. No one fit the man in the picture.

So Cranberry started to look for a door to the back room. Maybe she could find and save all the poor elves first.

A door labeled DO NOT ENTER caught Cranberry's attention. She pulled the heavy metal door open.

Cranberry's jaw dropped and her sunglasses fell right off her pale face as she stared at the elves having a dance party while mushroom pizzas were cooling on a long table near an oven.

Cranberry didn't know what to do, so she said, "Hey, I'm Cranberry, a former elf. I have come to rescue you and bring you back to Santa's workshop so that you can continue to make toys and save Christmas!"

The elves yelled, "No!"

Then the smallest little elf stepped up to Cranberry and said, "We love it here. We don't want to go back to Santa's workshop. It's boring and not fun. Here in this pizza restaurant we can party and have a good time!"

"Think about the children that won't get Christmas," Cranberry argued.

"You still have half your elves," they replied.

Cranberry couldn't bear to force the elves into something they didn't want to do. So, sad and defeated, Cranberry walked out without arresting the afro man.

But she realized that the little elf was right: they did still have half their elves! If they worked together and tried their best, Christmas could still come on time.

And that is exactly what happened. Christmas was right on time!

What's *Your* Christmas Story?

HONOURABLE MENTIONS

Santa's unselfish helper

All of the elves were hard at work in Santa's workshop... all but one, that is.

This elf was sleeping at his hammering station. He was dreaming of the great reveal of the gift he had made for Santa this Christmas. Everyone was chanting, "Reveal!"

"Santa is in for a surprise," this elf thought. "He has probably never received a Christmas present before. Well, here it goes."

His fingers grasped the cloth draped over the gift. He pulled the cloth, anticipating what Santa was going to say...

"No-o-o-rphen!" I jolted awake. "Get to work! Why on Rudolph's red nose are you sleeping on the job? That's outrageous!"

I could tell Santa was cross. From the moment he bellowed my name to the moment he took a breath I had hammered eight nails, making two more jack-in-the-boxes ready for painting. He was not impressed.

"Norphen, we only have three more days left to build the rest of the gifts." Santa spoke through clenched teeth.

I wished I could be Jack, who was in the box.

"The next time I catch you snoozing at your station, you're out of here!"

Everyone gasped. I was shivering with fright. I hoped I was dreaming, even if it was on the job ... but I wasn't.

"What is everyone staring at?! Get to work!" Santa was furious.

All the elves hastily got to work, including me. Santa towered over me, watching every move I made.

I went home feeling sorry for myself.

"Shouldn't Santa be jolly, perhaps friendly?" I pondered this thought.

Eureka! My dream! Maybe he wasn't jolly or friendly because he never got presents!

"Yes! I'll make the best present ever for Santa! That might get Ol' St. Nicholas to smile."

I was so enthused about my idea that I began without delay.

In the morning I stumbled toward the workshop, exhausted after a night of frantic frenzy. I was worn-out, but Santa's present was half-way completed. One more nail to hammer.



This is it!

"Norphen! You're fired!"

I had fallen asleep once again at my station.

I hung my head and shuffled my feet toward the door. I took one last look around the workshop, which meant the world to me.

I was so angry; I wondered how I could have ever thought about making a present for Santa. But then it all fell into place: I could make the present for Santa and he would become jolly once again.

I snuck into Santa's workshop in the dead of the night. I slid the gift for Santa out of my coat pocket and began painting. It was drying when my elbow hit the paint bucket and it toppled to the ground with a crash.

"Oh no! Santa must have heard that!"

I anxiously grabbed my gift and sprinted toward the door when Santa appeared.

"I told you that you were fired! What are you doing here?" His voice was very demanding.

Santa spotted the gift. I held it out to him. There was a moment of silence and then Santa's face softened.

In my hands I held a snow globe that had a statue of him sitting in his sleigh with a jolly smile on his face.

"Norphen, I have an apology to make. I'm sorry I yelled at you, fired you, and wasn't jolly or friendly for weeks. But there is one more thing: I'm not actually the real Santa. You see, Nicholas went on a vacation and I said I would take his place. I didn't realize how hard this job would be. I am stressed out. I'm sorry. My name is Nick. I think you should keep the globe for Nicholas, my brother."

My mouth was wide open in shock. I finally spoke. "No, I think you should have it. It takes a lot of work to manage this place. Here, take it."

"Thank you, Norphen. I will treasure this gift forever. Please accept my apology and come work again."

Back in the workshop, Santa had returned and Christmas was over. I was tired from working overtime but I was determined not to sleep. However, my eyes felt so heavy, and my head began to nod. Before I knew it, I was sleeping again ...

"No-o-o-rphen!!!!"

—Serena Peters, 12, Chortitz

Leonardo the hippo

All the reindeer were hard training, except for Rudolph. He was packing for his trip to Colorado. He was leaving in his private jet at 2:30 and it was 2:20. So he quickly packed and waited for the jet outside.

When he was flying, his ears were popping so he ate five packs of gum.

Once he arrived he went to his hotel. He had nothing to do so he decided to visit the Colorado Zoo. When he was there he saw crocodiles, monkeys, giraffes.

He decided to visit the hippos. There was one unusual hippo. It had a bright red glowing nose.

"Leonardo!" Rudolph shrieked.

"I haven't seen you since you started working for Santa," sang Leo. He really likes to sing.

"Do you want to have dinner tonight at 5:00?" said Rudolph.

"I can't," sang Leo.

"Why not?"

"They won't let me out of here."

"That's too bad," said Rudolph. And he galloped away and tripped and

broke his hoof.

"Are you okay?"

"I'm okay, but I don't think I can fly this year!"

"I'll call Santa and let him know."

So Leo called Santa and sang him the whole story.

"Oh," said Santa, "you're Rudolph's cousin who loves to sing."

"That I am."

"I'll be right there," said Santa.

After three hours of waiting, Santa finally arrived.

"Oh no," he said, "Who will guide my sleigh?"

"I shall do it," sang Leo.

"But you're a hippo. You can't fly!"

"Yes I can. I might be a bit rusty, but I can do it."

So on Christmas Eve Rudolph stayed back at the North Pole while Leo and all the reindeer delivered all the presents.

When they got back, Leo decided to stay at the North Pole and they lived happily ever after!

—Molly Clyde, 10, Morden

My Christmas facts

In the Ukraine you celebrate New Year not Christmas. Actually, you celebrate New Year like Christmas. We still have New Year on December 31st.

What about Christmas? Actually, you don't celebrate it as cool as in Canada. It's in January on the 6th and 7th.

We have our special Christmas song called "God is Born."

We have another name for a Christ-

mas tree: it is Yalunka.

We have another name for Santa or St. Nicholas: it is Grandfather Cold.

Now you know that Canadian Christmas and Ukrainian Christmas are not the same.

I think the Canadian ones are better!

—Bogdan Shymanovski, Gr. 3, Morden

What's *Your* Christmas Story?

HONOURABLE MENTIONS

The reindeer who liked to sing

It was nearly Christmas and word spread from reindeer to reindeer that, yet again, Santa was sick.

Some said that Santa had the flu. Others said that he was just plain sick. Finally, a reindeer told a reindeer who nobody knew about.

His name was Cooper. Cooper wasn't any regular reindeer. He was a reindeer who liked to sing. Cooper liked singing Christmas and country songs.

He lived on top of Canada with his owner, Todd. Todd was not only Cooper's owner, he was a cowboy. He wore dark clothes because it is freezing at the top of Canada and dark clothes take in the sunlight and help keep you warm.

When Cooper heard that Santa was sick, he didn't worry about it. He knew that one of the elves would take over. Cooper started worrying when no elves wanted to do the job. Todd was worried about it as well.

One morning Todd said, "Well, Cooper, we have a job to do. I think we should bring presents to

children for Santa. What do you say?"

"Well, I would love to, but I can't fly," answered Cooper.

"I think I saw you flying while you were singing something this morning," said Todd, confused.

"I was?" asked Cooper.

"Why don't you start singing and see what happens," suggested Todd.

"Okay then. I'll try."

Cooper started singing and suddenly began to rise! He kept singing and started steering himself around in the sky. When he sang faster he flew faster. So they left Canada, singing until they reached the North Pole.

"Hello, Santa. I'm Todd and this is my reindeer, Cooper. We would be glad to deliver the presents for you," said Todd.

"Why, aaaaachooooo ... thank-you, Todd," said Santa.

So Cooper and Todd got ready. They ate supper, loaded the sleigh, and then started their long journey.



Away they went, singing happily and delivering presents all over the world.

They had to stop a few times because Cooper got tired of singing a few times.

Once they reached Santa they told him about their adventures. Later Santa gave Cooper carrots and gave Todd a nerd's shotgun. They went back to Canada and went back to normal living.

Later some people said that they heard somebody singing on Christmas Eve.

—Peter Krahn, 11, Plum Coulee

Building the world's biggest and bestest snow fort

One of the only days that I was in charge of the biggest snow fort factory in the world, I decided that I was going to make the Biggest and Bestest snow fort of all time.

So I went outside to start building this big fort, but as I took a step out-

side I was blown back with a gust of wind that was trampling by the door of the factory.

I knew it wouldn't be easy in this weather, but I still travelled against the wind. I kept on moving against the wind until I came to a nice ditch

where there was not so much wind and it was a bit warmer.

I quickly started to make the snow fort that I had been dreaming of making. I gathered a whole whack of snow and just smacked it straight onto the ground and began the wall.

This snow fort would take weeks to finish by hand! I thought for a moment and just decided that I would keep working on it by hand. This work that I was doing by hand would look very sloppy, but when I sprayed warm water on it the snow fort would freeze into shape.

So by the time the fort wall was three feet high I was exhausted, but I kept working.

I wouldn't give up on the soon-to-be biggest snow fort ever, so I worked and worked and worked and worked and worked until the snow fort was eight feet tall. I was so tired and sweating that I fell asleep.

I dreamed that I made the biggest snow fort ever and that it fell down on top of me!

Just then I woke up and saw the wall of the snow fort fall on top of me! I squirmed and wiggled my way out of the snow. It was exhausting, but at least I had made the biggest fort wall that I had ever seen and that was good enough for me!

—Johnny Krahn, 12, Winkler

My family's Christmas

Every Christmas my family puts all of our names in a little container and one by one we close our eyes and pull out a name. But, if we get our own name, we do it all over again.

And every year my mom wraps books or movies. But first, my mom makes stars and there is writing on it. And whatever it says you have to do. Like, for example, the star might say,

"Open present number one."

And we always act out the story of Jesus. We use a doll as Jesus.

Then we decorate our ladder (we use it as a Christmas tree) with ornaments and ribbons!

And we have a spectacular Christmas!

—Janika Friesen, 8, Hochfeld School

Santa's tired elf

All the elves were hard at work in Santa's workshop ... all but one that is sleeping because he was tired. He was so tired because he started so

early that he went up a tree and ate candy canes. What a funny elf!

—Bryce Neufeld, 6, Schanzenfeld

The best snow fort

If I was in charge of building the best snow fort, mine would be made out of candy canes and gingerbread. The windows would be edible stained glass.

Then there needs to be MY room! My room would be made out of candy! The floor would be ice and you could go skating anytime you wanted.

The kitchen would be packed with the four main food groups: syrup, candy, candy canes, and sugar!

The family room would have a TV that could only play Christmas movies.

This is the BEST snow fort!

—Ana Wall, Maple Leaf School

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and visit a senior

Visiting seniors at Christmas

For seniors who are lucky enough to have regular visits from family and friends, the holiday season is synonymous with happy moments in good company. However, far too many seniors feel very lonely on Christmas day and on many other days over the course of a year. If you'd like to have a truly rewarding human experience, you could visit the lonely seniors you know and offer them some company.

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A senior who lives alone needs regular human contact to stay healthy and happy, whether it's your grandfather, your aunt or your neighbour. However, to make a noticeable difference in the life of a senior, one visit over the holiday season isn't enough. So why not plan regular visits throughout the year, and mark them on your calendar?

During your visit, take the time to listen to your friend; have a good talk with him or her and laugh a bit. Do some activities that you both enjoy, such as singing, walking or playing cards. During your Christmas visit, share memories and some sweet treats with this person who is sure to love you all the more.



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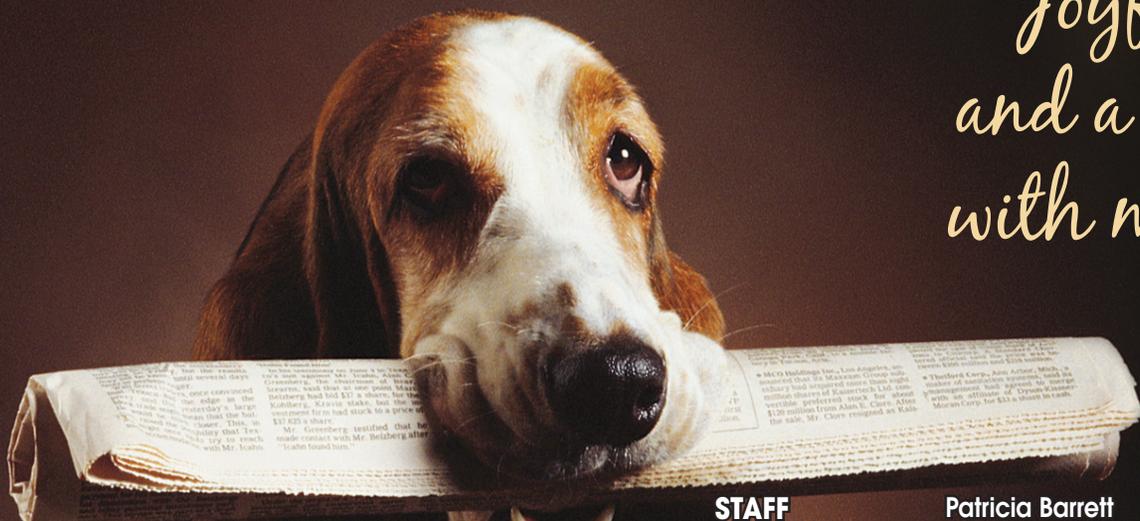
Dear loyal readers,

We work very hard throughout the year to keep you informed with the news that matters most to you. Local information is of significant importance because it concerns the various subjects that affect you as well as the projects of the people we have elected, our school, town and municipal council, the local economy and the businesses in our area.

As your local newspaper, it is our mission to connect people through stories to build stronger communities. We will keep you informed and we are very proud to be the local resource for news and information in this community. We sincerely thank you for making our newspaper what it is today. Your loyalty means the world to us.



We wish you a
Joyful Christmas
and a New Year filled
with much happiness!



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What's *Your* Christmas Story?

HONOURABLE MENTIONS

The unknown reindeer

It was a week before Christmas and at the North Pole Santa and his elves were hard at work.

Jolly, Holly, and Molly were grooming the reindeer. Sparkle, Twinkle, and Candy were giving Santa's sleigh a new shiny coat of paint. Maire, Cookie, McSprinkles, McJingles, and Mrs. Claus were baking cookies. Elf-in, Jingles, Peppermint, and a bunch of other elves were working the high-tech present making and wrapping machine. And Santa, of course, was reading over the nice and naughty

list on his computer.

While Jolly, Holly, and Molly were grooming the reindeer they heard lovely singing coming from somewhere.

"What's that?" they exclaimed in unison.

"We should go find out who's singing," said Molly.

"We would have to ask Santa," said Jolly unevenly.

"Then let's go, go, GO!" shouted Holly.

When they arrived in Santa's office

they asked him if they could follow the WONDERFUL singing they had overheard while grooming the reindeer. They eagerly wanted to find out who had been singing.

"I guess you elves have been working really hard, so you may leave tomorrow morning on one of the old sleds with an older reindeer," Santa said.

"Awww, why can't we take Rudolph?" they whined in unison.

"All right, if you promise, and I mean PROMISE, to be back by Christmas Eve morning!" Santa said cautiously.

"We promise! Thank you!" they said together.

So the next morning they were off! Holly, Jolly, and Molly and Rudolph were going to find the lovely singer. While they were bounding across the snowy drifts, they heard the singing again.

"It's coming from there," Molly said, pointing left.

When they got to the top of a hill, they looked down into a valley and saw a reindeer.

"Let's go see who that is!" exclaimed Holly.

As soon as the unknown reindeer heard them coming, it started to run away.

"That's strange," said Rudolph. Why is it running away?"

"We don't know yet, but we're going to find out," said Jolly in a suspicious sounding voice.

"Follow it, Rudolph!" they all shouted.

They spent a couple of days looking for the unknown reindeer. Finally, three days before Christmas, they heard the singing again.

"In that cave over there—that's where the singing is coming from!" exclaimed Jolly.

As they entered the cave, the singing

started to echo off of the walls.

"Who's there?" asked Rudolph nervously.

"Me," came the reply.

"Who is me?" Rudolph asked again.

"I-I-I'm Clarice," the voice answered.

"Where are you?" asked Rudolph.

"I-I-In the corner," said the strange voice.

"Can you come out?" asked Holly.

As she came out, Clarice mumbled something. Something that sounded like part of a song. "Sorry. I sing when I get nervous. Actually, I sing a lot!"

"You know, we could use a reindeer like you on the team at the North Pole," Molly said. "Would that be something you would like?"

Clarice gasped. "I'd be honoured!"

"Speaking of the North Pole," Holly interjected, "we won't have enough time to get there if we use the sled. Rudolph, we have to use your flying magic!"

"Flying magic? I have flying magic. See?" said Clarice.

"Great! Now we better get going. Come on," said Holly.

They got back to the North Pole two days later. They were all surprised when the whole story unfolded. All the elves and reindeer welcomed them back with cheers and Santa greeted them with a huge smile on his face.

"Santa, we brought back a friend and her name is Clarice!" said Jolly, Holly, and Molly.

"Oh, and I'm Rudolph's cousin!" said Clarice.

"Really?" said Rudolph in disbelief.

"YES!" exclaimed Clarice.

"Well, there's only one thing to say to that," said Santa. "HO, HO, HO and a Merry Christmas!"

—Sierra Fast, 10, Reinfeld

A snow fort in Hawaii

Once there lived a boy. He lived in Hawaii where it never snowed. That was, until May 2, 1919 when it snowed for nine days and nights straight. After that, the boy went outside to build a snow fort.

The boy rolled a huge snow ball bigger and bigger and BIGGER. Then he dug a hole in it and in that hole there

were 10 bedrooms, nine bathrooms, eight kitchens, seven dungeons, six castles, five cities, four craft rooms, three closets, two people, one dog, zero cats.

And that was the best snow fort ever.

—Seth Reimer, 10, Blumenfeld School

The elf who played hockey

Once upon a time there lived a lot of elves. They worked hard—all but one, of course. His name was Darby. Well, I guess that he was special. He loved hockey and he took about 38 days off of work to play hockey.

One day he ran into the workshop and yelled, "I am in the NHL!!!"

They all cheered. People said, "Yay! Good job! But whose team are you on?"

"No one's yet. I am going to have to make my own team so I think that all of us should be able to be on the same team."

"Good idea—as long as you make 2,000 toys a day," said Santa.

"Plus we are automatically in the playoffs."

"Cool! Let's make a team name. How about the North Toys?" said Santa Claus.

"Now we have a little game to win against the Ducks," said Darby. "We have an easy match."

Darby woke up early in the morning, made the 2,000 toys, and packed

for hockey.

They had a game against the Ducks. It was a close game but the North Toys won by two goals. The Ducks had been winning 1-0 but Darby came back with a good two goals, so then they were going to the semi-finals against the Boston Bruins.

The next day they made their 2,000 toys, went to their game, and defeated the Bruins 5-1. Then they did it again. They made 2,000 toys and went to another game against the Bruins. The Bruins were forced to forfeit because they were losing 24-0, so the North Toys were in the finals!

The finals were held on Dec. 23 against the New Jersey Devils. It was 2-0 Devils, but the North Toys came back and won 5-2! It was a close game, but they still won.

The next day was Christmas Eve. They gave away all the toys, won the Stanley Cup, and it turned out to be a successful Christmas!!

—Darby Olson, 10, Morden

Best snow castle ever

If I were to make the best snow fort ever it would be a huge snow castle.

It would have a huge gate and the floor would be snow, the walls would be snow and ice, and it would have canon that shot huge snow balls. There would be four watchtowers on each side.

It would have a huge guest room and a study room. In one room there would be a huge safe made of snow and a map of the world. The map

would be made of snow.

I'd have a factory that would make snow money and snow blocks.

I'd have an army of snowmen that would throw snowballs at you. I would have snow pressure plates that if you step on it, a bunch of snow would fall on you.

That would be my snow fort.

—James Fehr, 10, Blumenfeld School



A multicultural Christmas at the library



The annual Multicultural Christmas party took place at the Winkler Library Dec. 17, hosted by the library and Regional Connections. Winkler natives and newcomers alike packed into the meeting room to enjoy music from around the world, a dessert potluck, and a visit from Santa Claus. Left: Faustine Ntangano sang a holiday carol from the Congo. Above: From Israel, Natalia Yoffe (left) and the Only Life band (right) performed. Right: Sisters Elina and Anna Pfaffenrot shared a German carol and poem.

PHOTOS BY ASHLEIGH VIVEIROS/VOICE



> AN ARTIST'S LIFE

The story behind 'O Come O Come Emmanuel'

The text from *O Come O Come Emmanuel* is in fact one of the oldest texts currently part of the common Christmas song repertoire.

Its origins date back as far as the eighth century, when the text was extensively quoted by the English poet Cynewulf.

The first documented instance of

the hymn's text in its modern form comes much later, however, dating to 1710 when it was published in the seventh edition of *Psalterium Canticum Catholicarum*.

From that first printing, the hymn was expanded upon and polished, but kept the original strophe and meter (strophe and meter refers to the rhythm of the text's speech and the way in



By Candace Hamm

which the text is organized).

The music most commonly associated with the carol comes from a 15th century manuscript now located in the National Library of France.

The music fits with the hymn in both the original Latin and English, but evidence suggests the two were first paired using the English text. Other tunes have been used, but the current music gained popularity from the moment of publishing. By 1895, three quarters of all English churches were using the hymn in its current form.

Today, "O Come O Come Emmanuel" appeals to many in the modern crossover music movement, being

recorded by vocalists such as Loreena McKennitt, Enya, Pentatonix, and Celtic Woman.

The easily singable melody and accessible vocal range combine with an arresting text and a unique focus on the advent season, making the hymn a favorite for both performing artists and church use.

"O Come O Come Emmanuel" links early church and the modern advent season with as much meaning today as it had in its origins twelve hundred years ago.

Reach Candace Hamm at ibcnu@mts.net

Farm Credit Canada spreads holiday cheer



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

Farm Credit Canada presented the Cheer Boards in Winkler, Morden, and Altona with donations of \$250 each this month. The funds came from the company's community investment fund. Above: FCC reps Shawn Roulette and Neil Cook made the presentation to the Morden Christmas Cheer Board last week. Right: Cook presented Winkler Christmas Cheer Board president Francis Fehr with the donation during their packing days earlier this month.



Students raise funds for local, global causes

From Pg. 7

"We've narrowed it down to a few, but haven't decided yet," she said.

Though the sale was open to the public, W.E.S. students had first crack at the items, giving kids a chance to get some Christmas shopping done on their own.

The sale is held every other year, said YIP advisor Hayley Friesen, and it's always a big hit with the students.

"This is my first year doing it, but I think it's been pretty successful, which is why they always bring it back," she said, noting midway through the event that they had surpassed the \$500 mark and were hoping to hit closer to \$600 once the proceeds from the furniture silent auction came in.

The garage sale is the latest in a long line of YIP activities this fall. The group also recently organized a hot chocolate and cookie sale, raising just over \$150

"IF EVERYBODY DOES JUST A LITTLE BIT TO HELP MAKE SOMEBODY ELSE'S SITUATION A LITTLE BETTER, IT CAN MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE ALTOGETHER."

for charity. In October they collected food for a family in need at Thanksgiving, and, earlier this month, they helped out with the Christmas Cheer Board food drive.

The YIP program gives kids a chance to make a difference in the world both locally and abroad, Friesen said. "All of the things we've done leading up to Christmas is going locally

and then after Christmas we'll be looking for global causes we can support," she said. "If everybody does just a little bit to help make somebody else's situation a little better, it can make a big difference altogether."

A chance to make a difference is exactly what got Barga and Klassen involved.

"It just seems like a good way to do-

nate to your community, and it's fun," Barga said.

"Last year I had a friend who did Youth in Philanthropy and she was always saying how much fun it was ... I was like, 'It does sound fun. I should give it a try,'" said Klassen. "And I'm loving it."

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INSIDE > OUTSIDE > UPSIDE DOWN



Flyers crush Terriers

PHOTO BY RICK HIEBERT

Flyers defenseman Tyler Jubenvill pokes the puck off the stick of the Terriers' Adam Wowryk in the Dec. 15 defeat Winkler handed Portage. The Flyers took the game 6-1 in front of a hometown crowd. The fact it was their fourth game in five days didn't slow Winkler down, with Kayden Jarvis contributing a hat trick, Tristan Keck scoring two, and a single coming from Cam Whyte. Nathan Warren made 32 saves to boost his record to 3-1 since joining the team earlier this month. The win brought the Flyers within just five points of the top spot in the league with two games in hand over Portage. The Flyers return from the holidays to play a rematch against the Terriers in Portage Dec. 31.

Winkler's Cali Hamm provincials-bound

The Pembina Valley is going to be well-represented at the 2016 Canola Junior Curling Provincial Championships in Rivers Jan. 5-10.

In addition to Winkler's Team Friesen—made up of Holly Friesen, Kelsey Sagert, Katelyn Derksen, and Brook Friesen—and Altona's Team Zacharias—Mackenzie Zacharias, Morgan Reimer, Emily Zacharias, and Jennessa Rutter—Winkler's Cali Hamm

(second from left in photo at right) has also earned a provincial berth with her Fort Rouge team.

Team Brown includes Hamm as lead alongside skip Hannah Brown, third Brittany Hancox, second Stephanie Schweitz, and coach Heather Hancox.

This will be Hamm's fourth provincial championship.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

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COMING EVENTS

Come and join us for our **Christmas Services**

Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite Church
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December 24, Christmas Eve Candlelight Service at 7:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Enjoy carols, together with a choir (Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite & Pathway Community Churches combined), Biblical account of the Christmas story, and candle lighting. **Donations will be accepted for the Winkler Food Cupboard.**

December 25, Christmas Day Service at 10:00 a.m.

Enjoy a service filled with music, carols, scripture readings and meditation.



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take a break > GAMES

SUDOKU

	6	9		2	5			
			1				2	
2				9		5		8
	9			3	2			5
			6					
		7				1		
4								
	7	3		5				
	8	1	9					6

Fun By The Numbers

Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test!

Level: Intermediate

Here's How It Works:

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

6	7	2	3	4	9	1	8	5
1	8	4	9	5	2	3	7	6
9	5	3	1	7	8	9	4	2
2	3	1	9	8	5	7	4	6
7	6	8	4	1	9	2	5	3
4	5	9	2	3	7	8	6	1
8	9	5	7	3	9	4	2	1
7	3	5	1	9	8	6	2	4
3	1	3	7	1	3	7	1	3

Sudoku Answer

N	E	K	A	V	T	U	O	S	S	E	D	I
E	L	V	R	I	A	T	I	T	V	E	R	N
E	F	I	N	K	H	E	R	E	D	N	O	G
O	T	A	V	T	S	V	K	N	O	T	P	L
				H	V	A						
	S	N	V	S		R	O	M	V	N	E	
T	V	E	T		M	E	N	V		I	O	
U	B	E	O		S	E	O	M		S	B	V
C	P	A		S	A	R	E		S	V	A	V
				D	E	E	H		S	D	O	S
				E	S	I	M		L	V	L	
	S	T	N	V	R	W	O	R		T	E	T
L	H	O	T	R	E	K	W	S	B	V	M	
				T	R	E	T		V	L	U	L
A	R	A	V									B

Crossword Answer

X CROSSWORD

CLUES ACROSS

- Elephant's name
- Support
- Mures River city
- Bastard wing
- One was named Desire
- PGA Tournament prize
- A way to leave unchanged
- Unchangeable computer memory
- Harangues
- 6th Hebrew letter
- Well informed
- Turfs
- In a way, obeyed
- Lawyers group
- Increases motor speed
- Political action committee
- Light pokes
- Struck down
- Central Philippine Island
- Japanese sash
- Afresh
- Bluish green
- Inspire with love
- Without (French)
- Counterbalance container to obtain net weight
- Express pleasure
- Cheap wine (Br.)
- Signing
- ___ compilation, compiling computer language
- Have surgery
- Being trompe-l'oeil
- Extremely mad
- Day
- Small coin (French)
- Snatched

CLUES DOWN

- Cry
- Wings
- Baseball play
- Flower petals

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
14					15			16					
17					18								
19					20			21					
					22			23					
		24	25					26			27	28	
29	30							31			32	33	
34					35	36				37			
38					39					40			
	41		42						43	44			
					45				46				
	47	48						49			50	51	52
53							54			55	56		
57										58			
59							60			61			

- Drive against
- Velikaya River city
- A single unit in a collection
- Stray
- Bring back
- Repented
- Receipt (abbr.)
- Expresses pleasure
- Not wet
- In a way, takes off
- Macaws genus
- "Fast Five" star's initials
- Sharpen a knife
- Oral polio vaccine developer
- Former CIA
- Fencing swords
- Aba ___ Honeymoon
- Bustle
- Minor
- Propel a boat
- Passage with access only at one end
- Underwater airways
- Small, slight
- Box (abbr.)
- ___ Blake, actress
- Repents
- Merchandising
- Exclamation of surprise
- With fireplace residue
- A small lake
- Bait
- Tip of Aleutian Islands
- K ___: watercraft (alt. sp.)
- Norse variant of "often"
- Adolescent
- Visual metaphor (Computers)
- River in Spanish
- Cowboy Carson
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OBITUARY



Heinrich (Henry) Wiebe 1949 – 2015

On Wednesday, December 16, 2015 at Bethesda Regional Health Centre in Steinbach, Henry Wiebe, aged 66 years formerly of Blumenort and Gladstone, MB went to his eternal rest.

He leaves to mourn his passing his sister, Tina Banman, nieces nephews and a large extended family.

Funeral service was held at 2:00 p.m. on Monday, December 21, 2015 at the German Old Colony Mennonite Church with interment at the Church Cemetery.

Wiebe Funeral Home, Winkler
In care of arrangements,
wiebefuneralhomes.com



OBITUARY



Mary Wood Fehr (nee Wiebe) 1934 - 2015

Mary Wood Fehr of Morden, MB formerly of Roland, went to her eternal home on Saturday, November 12th 2015 at Boundary Trails Health Centre following a struggle with heart failure and cancer. Her nine children and sister were by her side. She was predeceased by her parents, John and Mary Wiebe, her first husband of 42 years, Arthur Wood, her second husband of 18 years, Jake Fehr, grandson, Bradley Wood, stepson, John Fehr and sister-in-law, Helen Wiebe.

She leaves to mourn, son, Dennis Wood and his wife, Rosalyn of Arborg, daughter, Sharon Kole of Morden, daughter, Debbie Miller and her husband, Ben of Grand Pointe, son, Larry Wood and his

wife Kim of Libau, son, Brian Wood and his wife Cheryl of Osoyoos, BC, daughter, Barbara Wood and her partner, Mike Rashidi of Calgary, daughter, Myrna Unrau and her husband, Ron of Morden, son, Murray Wood and his wife, Helen of Niverville, son, Stephen Wood and his partner, Donna Harde of Roland as well as her siblings, Pete Wiebe of Winkler, John and Jeanette Wiebe of Niverville, Ben and Jan Wiebe of Stonewall, Abe and Justina Wiebe of Niverville, Henry and Marilyn Wiebe of Darlingford, Marge and Dave Wall of Reinland, stepchildren, Susan and Nick Pharaoh of La Riviere, Lena and John Friesen of Winkler, Marge Purves of Edmonton, Mary Anne and Ross Bursey of Carman, Jake and Elaine Fehr of Winkler. She also leaves 13 grandchildren, Jeff Wood, Lisa O'Neil, Paul Miller, Melanie Morrisette, Karen Golas, Tanis Wood, Ryan Brodenhagen-Wood, Jason Wood, Michael Wood, Nicole Schroeder, Matthew Wood, Krista Unrau, and Amy Unrau and many great grandchildren and stepgrandchildren.

The funeral service was held at 1:00 p.m. on Thursday, December 17, 2015 at the Sommerfeld Church in Winkler with Pastor John Friesen presiding and interment at the Fairview Cemetery in Roland. Morden Sommerfeld ladies served the lunch. Thank you for looking after so many details for us. Also thank you to the pianist, ushers and caretaking.

The family would also like to express their gratitude to the many who touched Mary's life in a special way this past year.

- Her friends at Buhler Building.
- Homestead for trying to make it work for her there.
- Rana for the many deliveries of oxygen and for your kind words.
- The drivers at Morden Handi-Van – it was the only way she travelled in her last months and their kindness and is so much appreciated.
- Home Care workers – they came faithfully to care for her needs and she couldn't have managed at home without them. Your many acts of kindness were a blessing to her.
- Dr. Woelk at BTHC Cancer Care
- Dr. Kevin Earl of Agassiz Medical Centre – thank you for walking with her through this final journey. Your words were always kind and compassionate.
- Wiebe Funeral Home for their efficient and compassionate handling of final arrangements.
- BTHC – the many nurses, aides and staff who cared for Mary at various times this year and especially during her last week. Thank you for doing that so well and with such kindness and caring.
- Thank you to friends and family for your caring expressions of condolence.

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CAREERS

City Manager – City of Winkler

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BOXING BARGAIN BLOWOUT

The history and traditions of Boxing Day

Many countries celebrate Boxing Day on December 26. Those outside of these countries may be unaware as to the meaning behind the holiday and how its traditions originated.

Boxing Day is celebrated by those in countries that were once part of the British empire, which includes Canada. As a federal holiday, post offices and banks are closed. Schools also are closed as part of winter vacations. Despite being a federal holiday, Boxing Day is not observed in the same way in all provinces and territories. Also, it is not an official holiday in Quebec. Depending on the area, stores may be open or closed. Some people use the opportunity to take part in post-Christmas sales or make returns. Many stores run Boxing Week sales the full week through New Year's Day. Some shoppers have been known to camp outside of stores to take advantage of these price cuts, much in the way Americans might wait in the wee hours of the morning for Black Friday deals.

The etymology of the name Boxing Day is unclear, but some historians surmise that it is tied

to the European tradition of giving gifts to the needy and those in service positions, as was the case during the Middle Ages. In the United Kingdom, it also became tradition that the day after Christmas employers would gift their servants with boxes of food leftovers from the holidays or present monetary gifts. The servants were allowed to take the day off to spend it with their families after having worked Christmas. Other ideas tie the tradition to the Feast of Saint Stephen, which also takes place on December 26. Metal boxes, into which people could put donations for the needy, were left outside of churches.

Despite what the name may suggest, the sport of boxing has nothing to do with the holiday. However, with Canadians and others having the day off from work, they may be able to tune into a fight on television and establish a new tradition. There are other ways people can create their own Boxing Day traditions. Here are a few ideas.

- Collect food or clothing donations from neighbors and deliver them to a shelter or soup kitchen.

- Volunteer to help at a hospital, animal shelter or school when it reopens.

- Encourage children to invite their friends over and curl up with a good movie and some popcorn.

- If you are a business owner, call employees and personally thank them for their time of service.

- Have a fun, family game night.
- Decorate the house with boxes of all shapes and sizes.

- Gather holiday gift boxes and prepare them for the recycling bin.

- Make a charitable donation to your preferred organization.



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Five fun activities to do with your kids

Parents know that spending quality time with the kids is the best part of the day. And organizing a family activity doesn't have to cost much. Instead of signing up for pricey arts and crafts classes, you can get creative at home with your printer and create printable crafts the whole family can enjoy.

Many printers feature built-in printing apps that provide tactile fun for kids.

Here are some great projects to try:

Colouring book pages: There are hundreds of free printable templates that will keep your kids occupied for hours on end. From Olaf, to Mickey Mouse, your kids can select their favourite characters to create their own personal colouring book.

Puzzles: Keep young minds active with the world's most popular crossword puzzles for every day

of the week. There are also plenty of activity sheets to fill cold winter days.

Menu planner: Get your children involved with meal planning to help them feel comfortable in the kitchen and let them grow accustomed to making healthy choices. Receive a week's worth of nutritious and delicious meal ideas that you can make with your kids.

Personalized invitations: Having a birthday party for your child and all their friends? Make invitations with custom templates, graphics, fonts and borders that fit the theme for the party.

Family photos: Showcase your latest family photo by adding original word art, drawings and borders and print with professional quality photo paper to hang around your home.



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Beat the New Year blues by taking time for nature



Across Canada, millions are heading back to work, or school, after a busy holiday. January also signals the peak season for the “post-holiday blues” — feeling down as we return to the daily grind after a long vacation. The end of the holidays isn’t the only thing bogging people down. According to the Canadian Mental Health Association, one in five Canadians experience a seasonal shift in mood and energy known as “winter blues” and about two percent are affected by a type of depression called seasonal affective disorder (SAD).

The good news is that there are natural ways to ward off a yearly recurrence of the blues.

Here are some of our tips to help you regain your sprightly spirit:

Take a hike

Winter is the perfect time to see nature on foot, snowshoe, skate or ski. Walking in nature reserves and parks is a great way to enjoy the beauty of the outdoors while switching up the sedentary winter lifestyle. The Nature Conservancy of Canada’s properties feature diverse terrain types, from pristine forests like Backus Woods in Ontario, to long sandy beaches like Gaff Point in Nova Scotia, all of which are great picks for your next nature trip.

Or, blaze a trail with trivia: Make it a social and educational outing by preparing some trivia about the area’s points of interest and species you might encounter.

Build a snow animal

Are you feeling snowed in as well? Instead of complaining about

the snow that’s got you stuck indoors, turn glum to fun by putting on some gloves and heading to your nearest patch of snow. Let your imagination work its magic and build your favourite snow animal. No matter what the outcome, it will be a masterpiece well worth your time.

Watch the birds

Spotting winter birds can bring tremendous joy and satisfaction, especially when they can be few and far between. Currently, the invasion of snowy owls is all the rave in eastern Canada. But besides the snowies, there are many other species to spot throughout winter, such as water birds like goldeneyes and mergansers, in addition to resident Canada geese and mallards along lakeshore or open water. You may even see birds of prey such as red-tailed hawks and falcons on light poles during daily commutes. Species like rock pigeons and gulls have adapted to survive in urban settings, so don’t be surprised to meet one of these species downtown!

Create an indoor nature day

There are days when the weather is frightful and going outside is not a good idea. But you can still have a healthy distraction from the blue mood by reading up on Canada’s species, their characteristics and conservation statuses. By learning more about them, you will be able to appreciate the wonders of nature and Canada’s diverse, natural heritage for your next visit to the great outdoors.

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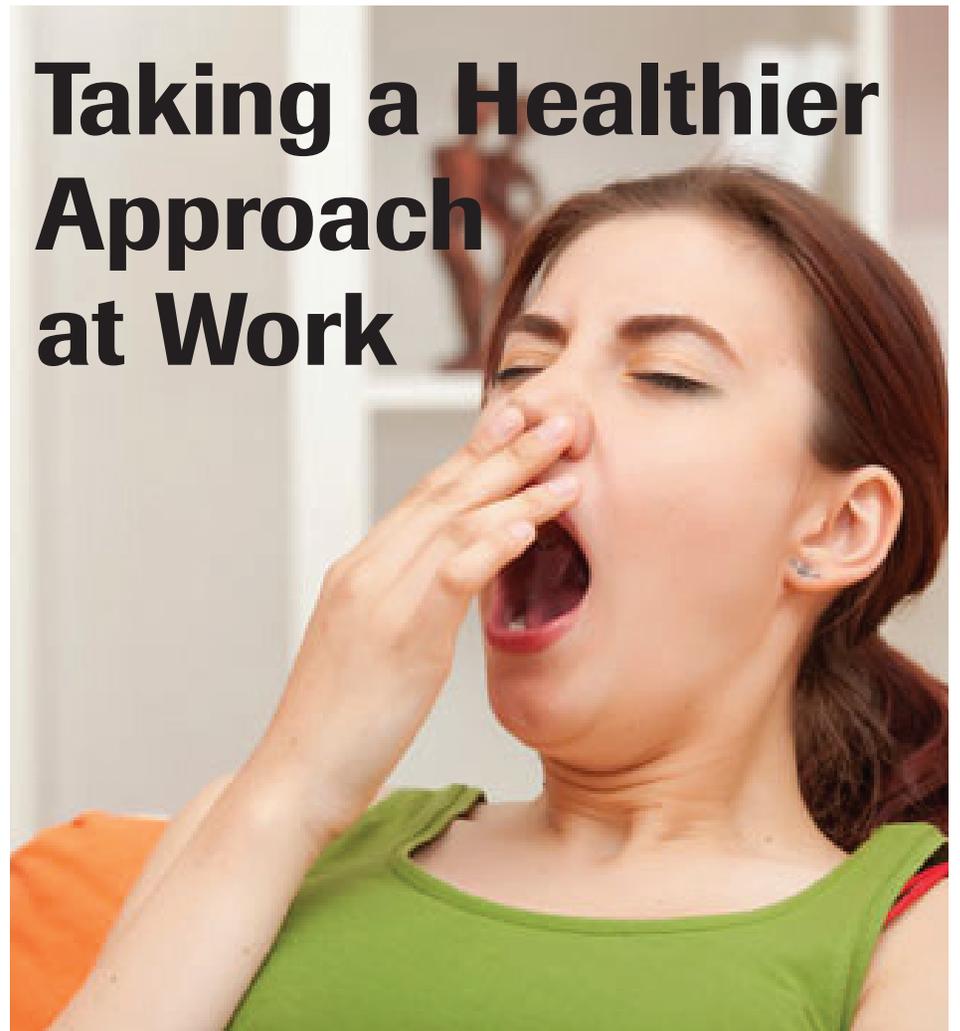


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Taking a Healthier Approach at Work



Another workday begins. After stumbling out of bed and getting ready you head to work. On the way, you hit the drive thru for some caffeine and pick up a box of donuts for your morning meeting. By 10 a.m. you're full of energy. By 11 a.m., you can barely keep your eyes open. With so much work to do, you and your colleagues skip lunch or grab some takeout. And exercise? Who's got the time?

It may seem like making healthy choices--especially at work--is too inconvenient and takes too much time, but it doesn't have to be.

Grazing greener. Help keep waistlines trim, energy levels consistent and arteries clear by swapping those donuts for a fruit tray or yogurt at your next meeting. Better still, put healthy snacking on the agenda by organizing a "Well Wednesday" or "Fresh Friday," where employees take turns bringing in nutritious treats for everyone to share.

Stepping up the pace. Connect with co-workers by organizing a pre or post-work walking group. "Training" for a charity walk or run not only gives the group a goal to work toward, but a sense of greater purpose. Walking is a great way to boost your health, mood and productivity. Or try some lunchtime Yoga or Pilates. Consider pulling together a company slow pitch, basketball or volleyball team--

anything that encourages you and your co-workers to get together and get active.

Passing it on. Whether it's a great article on exercise and depression, a fabulous low fat recipe, or health and wellness information, don't keep it to yourself. Pass it on. If you have a company intranet, post links on the site. Keep it upbeat and general and be sensitive to other people's comfort levels. Avoid singling out individuals or distributing information on controversial issues.

Breathing life into wasted space. Take the initiative and transform a cubbyhole of vacant space into a "recharging space" or "decompression lounge" for people to visit on breaks to de-stress. It doesn't have to take major effort or money. Clear out the clutter and replace it with some comfortable seating, play some relaxing classical or jazz music and add the water cooler to help everyone stay hydrated. It could also be a great place to post wellness tips and information.

Championing a healthy work environment doesn't require huge, time-consuming changes. It can be simple--it's about enthusiasm, creativity and action. Helping strengthen the physical and emotional wellness of co-workers is bound to spread, leading to healthier minds, bodies and a more productive workplace.

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BOXING BARGAIN BLOWOUT

The snowbird home safety checklist How to monitor your home while in the sun

When Snowbirds finally make their way down south for their annual vacation away from our brutal Canadian winters the last thing they need to worry about is the safety of their home.

According to Patrice De Luca, vice president of Business Development for ADT Canada, there are several key steps Snowbirds should take to ensure peace of mind when away from home. The following home safety tips for snowbirds can help you plan important safety measures before your departure:

- Suspend your newspaper and mail delivery; or have a neighbour collect them for you.
- Make sure your home looks lived in. Try not to draw the window treatments in every window leave it looking somewhat natural.
- Have someone routinely shovel the walk, clear your car off if it snows, or park their car in your driveway if you're taking yours.
- Don't forget garbage collection day. Ask a neighbour to put a bag of garbage at your curb on garbage day so not to tip off burglars.
- Set your lights on timers, in various rooms. With some timers, the lights go on and off at different times each day, which means a burglar can't pick up on a pattern.
- Look into installing motion sensor lights outside to help deter a burglar. Consider installing

them in front and back.

- Ensure that all your doors and windows are locked and secure. Don't forget about the garage, make sure the door is secure. For additional security, place a bar or stick of wood in the lower track of your sliding doors or windows.

- Turn off the water-main and unplug the major appliances as an added precaution.

- Inform a neighbor when you're leaving and returning, and ask them to keep an eye out for anything suspicious. Leave them a phone number where you can be reached, and a spare set of your keys in case of an emergency.

- Consider investing in a home security system as it's a very effective deterrent. A home protected by a monitored security system with visible decals and signs is less susceptible to a break in than one without a system. Make sure your security system includes a loud inside alarm, detectors at all exterior doors, and motion sensors in the master bedroom and main living areas. The alarm system is linked to a remote monitoring centre that protects your home 24 hours a day against burglars, fire, carbon monoxide poisoning and floods by supervising the temperature, electrical system and point of entries of your home.



Winter Maintenance for your Home

Winter weather such as; low temperatures, high winds, snowfall and freezing rain can cause costly damage to your home. Following a few simple maintenance tips can help protect your home from winter hazards.

- Test plumbing shut-off valves to ensure they are working properly.

- Examine your attic for frost accumulation. Roofs should be checked for ice dams or icicles.

Outside the home:

- To prevent falls and injuries, keep your sidewalk and any stairs at the front of your house clear of ice and snow

- Remove snow from around gas meters, gas appliance vents, exhaust vents and basement windows.

- Fit any exposed pipes with insulation sleeves or wrapping

- Trim any tree branches that hang close to the house, garage, or any electrical wires

Inside the home

- Every month that the house is heated, clean or replace furnace air filters

- Test and replace the batteries in smoke and carbon monoxide detectors. Be sure to vacuum the smoke detectors as dust and spider webs can prevent them from functioning properly

- Occasionally run water through plumbing fixtures that are not often used to keep water in the trap (laundry tub or guest bathroom)

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Resolutions

Healthy resolutions for the new year

The tradition of making New Year's resolutions can be traced back to the ancient Babylonians, who promised their gods that they would repay their debts and return borrowed items in the new year. While resolutions have changed since then, people still see the dawn of a new year as an opportunity to commit to doing something good in the months ahead.

No rules govern New Year's resolutions, but many people resolve to do something healthy. The following are just a few resolution ideas for people who want to make 2016 as healthy as possible.

- **Lose weight.** A January 2015 survey from Nielsen found that 32 percent of U.S. consumers resolved to lose weight in the new year. That should come as no surprise, as New Year's Day marks an end to the holiday season, when many people pack on pounds thanks to holiday dinners, parties and the baked goods that seem to find their way into homes and offices throughout December. Seventy-six percent of participants in the Nielsen survey said they did not follow a weight loss or diet program in 2014, which might explain why so many felt a need to lose weight in 2015. If you resolve to lose weight in the new year, do so with the assistance of your physician, who can offer useful advice on diet and exercise.

- **Bike to work.** Depending on how close your home is to your office, consider riding a bike to work instead of driving into the office every day. Riding a bicycle is great cardiovascular exercise, which is a critical part of any successful exercise regimen. But riding

a bike to work also benefits the environment by making the air you breathe cleaner. The U.S. Census Bureau estimates that roughly half of all U.S. residents live within five miles of their workplace, which provides a great opportunity for commuters to reduce total household emissions, all while having fun on their bicycles. If 50 percent of American workers chose to bike rather than drive to work each day, total household emissions could be cut by as much as 6 percent. Biking to work also saves commuters money on fuel.

- **Work less.** Work is good for the mind and body, but too much work can lead to elevated levels of stress. Stress can produce a host of negative consequences, including an increased risk for depression, obesity and heart disease. Long hours at the office is one of the leading causes of work-related stress, and many professionals find themselves taking on more than they can reasonably handle. Make an effort to scale back your responsibilities and spend less time at the office.

- **Reduce alcohol consumption.** Reducing alcohol consumption is another healthy resolution for the new year. Excessive alcohol consumption can do a number on the human body. The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism notes that overconsumption of alcohol can affect the heart (increasing the risk for cardiomyopathy, arrhythmia, stroke, and high blood pressure), liver (fibrosis, cirrhosis, alcoholic hepatitis), pancreas (pancreatitis), and immune system (weakening it and making you a much easier target for disease). Reducing consumption can have a

considerable impact on your overall health.

Men and women resolving to get healthier in the new year can do so in various ways.



The 20-minute fitness plan

Most of us don't exercise enough but the good news is that experts agree you only need 20 minutes each day to achieve long-term fitness success.

According to the Canadian Health Measures Survey, only 20 per cent of Canadians are getting the recommended 150 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity each week. Doing so provides many benefits, including better heart health, reduced risk of early mortality, improved mental health, and reduction in certain types of cancer.

"Our bodies were designed to move," says Dr. Allana LeBlanc, Knowledge Manager at ParticipACTION. "You can split up the 150 recommended minutes pretty much however you want – you can even start with bouts of 10 minutes at a time and add onto it gradually".

Fitting activity into your day is crucial to your overall health. Whether you go to the gym, take a walk, or do squats and push-ups during TV commercial breaks. The important thing is to do something every day.

"We can all find 20 minutes in our day to be active," says Kelly Musovic, personal training regional manager with GoodLife

Fitness. Here she shares a 20-minute plan geared toward less experienced gym-goers or those getting back into fitness.

- 5 minute warm up – run on a treadmill or go for a brisk walk. By the end, you should be short of breath but still be able to speak in short sentences.
- Air squats – Simulate sitting in a chair by pushing your hips and butt back, keeping your chest up and ensuring that your knees do not push forward past the toes – 2 sets of 10 reps. Rest for 60 seconds between sets. All you need is your own bodyweight.
- Dumbbell chest press – while lying down on a bench, hold two dumbbells at shoulder width, with your palms facing away from your head, push the weights up and slowly bring them back down until your arms are at a 90 degree angle. 2 sets of 12 reps. Rest for 60 seconds between sets.
- One armed rows – 2 sets of 12 reps on each arm. Rest for 60 seconds between sets.
- 5 minute cool down – you should be able to breathe easily and carry a conversation.
- Finish with stretching or foam rolling to prevent tight muscles.





Tune out, turn off, drop it. Disconnect and enjoy your holidays!

Holidays and vacations away, even “staycations”, are great opportunities to unwind, let go of work related stress, and reconnect with family and friends. That is, they are until the emails and text messages sound their pinging symphony and the temptation to “just check on this one thing” disrupts our peace and quiet.

There’s an image being passed around showing a group of friends at a campsite – the caption reads something along the lines of, “Anybody have plans to stare at their phones somewhere exciting this weekend?” It’s amusing, but sadly true. Far too often we go away (even just to the movies or out to dinner!) and spend too much time staring at the little screen in our hand, worried that we’ll miss out on something important if we don’t check in. The 24/7 cycle catches us in its web.

This addiction is ruining our holidays; we aren’t really getting a break, and we aren’t tuning out and truly focusing on the places we are or the people we’re with. When you’re fixated on posting that pic of the kids playing onto your Facebook page, how much quality time are you actually spending with them? Do you really need your phone with you on a fishing trip?

So here’s a challenge. The next time you go on holidays, leave the electronics at home. The cell, the tablet, the laptop... Did the idea just make you gasp? The more

impossible this seems, the more rewarding you will find it when you do it.

Of course, you may be bringing your phone along with you for safety’s sake, but you can still take steps to ensure that it won’t take over your time away. Here are some tips to help you truly disconnect and enjoy your time away:

Commit to not bringing your tablet and/or laptop. Leaving them behind is the best way to avoid the pull of playing just one more level of Candy Crush instead of taking a stroll around the area.

Turn off notifications. Switch your settings so that you won’t hear that “come hither” ping every time you get an email, text, or Twitter update.

Disconnect your work email account. Your personal email account too even! These can be added back once you’ve returned from vacation, but for the time being, revert your phone to nothing but a phone and you’ll remove the temptation to check in with the office. Go one step further and remove the game apps from your phone as well!

Only you know how deep your addiction runs and how strict you will need to be with yourself in order to fully disconnect and make your vacation, not your emails and social media, your top priority. If you feel you can’t do this alone, or find that you have an unhealthy attachment to your electronics, an EFAP counsellor can help.

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