-Entertainment Christmas season is here

By BOB SPENCE ..

Thomson News Service Santa has already made a number of quick trips south to appear in various Santa Claus parades, so the Christmas seasonmust be here.

Let's look ahead at just a few of the Christmas specials various TV networks have planned.

Family Channel has three delightful tales debuting in early December. The Christmas Visitor (7 p.m. Dec. 1) is set in dought-stricken Australia in 1891. The young son of an impoverished farmer shakes up his family when he tells them he has just seen Father Christmas. The Bestest Present (10:10 a.m. Dec. 5) an an award-winning animated special based on the characters from Lynn Johnston's cartoon strip, For Better Or For Worse. It's all about getting Christmas back on track. The Small One (7 p.m. Dec. 9) is an animated tale about a Hebrew boy forced to sell his donkey. A man named Joseph buys Small One to carry his pregnant wife, Mary, to Bethlehem.

First Choice has the wacky National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation on tap Dec. 2 (9 p.m.), with Chevy Chase struggling through mishap after mishap.

Home For Christmas, which premieres on both First Choice and SuperChannel Dec. 3 (7:30 p.m.), star Mickey Rooney as an elderly crook who gets caught breaking into a car. While neither is aware of the relationship, the man who catches him - and who takes him home to have the thief work off damages to the car - is the thief's long-lost son.

A fabled feline shows up on CBC-TV Dec. 7. Garfield's Christmas (animated) airs at 7 p.m.

CARADIAN

Pony (10:30 p.m. Dec. 8) on YTV, is a salf-hour Canadian special about two Saskatchewan children who billy want just one thing for Chrismas - a pony to ride around ir father's wheat farm.

If, by the e of the first week of December, u are starting to worry about t long Christmas h haven't started shopping list to CTV for some yet, you can ! advice. oge's Guide To Christmas p.m. Dec. 9) others. Bil! features an Cosby offeri tips for giving. benezer Scrooge And about the real

spirit of Christ Among the cials on Global TV are A Me A Mystery and Me (7:30 p.m.) . 11), in which a teenage girl a mouse team up to find a ing department store Santa d a pair of

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Bob Spence Entertainment horsen Hews

familiar animated tales: Rudolph The Red-Nosed Reindeer (7:30 p.m. Dec. 13) and Frosty the Snowman (7:30 p.m. Dec. 14).

Christmas wouldn't be Christmas without various versions of Charles Dickens' The Christmas Carol. On Dec. 16 (9 p.m.) CTV offers the 1951 British classic, Scrooge. Alistair Sim portrays the skinflint.

Also on Dec. 16, CTV has a holiday special set in the High Arctic. The Woman Who Raised A Bear As Her Son is an animated tale based on a traditional Inuit fable (7p.m.).

Olympic silver medalist Elizabeth Manley does some climbing and some skating in Back To The Beanstock on CBC (8 p.m. Dec. 16). She plays the high-spirited son of Jack the Giant Killer who climbed a beanstalk and disappeared. Now, junior is climbing up that beanstalk, searching for dad.

Rita MacNeil gets the Christmas bells ringing in a musical special Dec. 17 (9 p.m., CTV). Filmed on Cape Breton Island, Now The Bells Ring is about a traditional, down-home Christmas. If Rita singing Silent Night doesn't get you in the Christmas spirit, nothing will.

While we're talking about Christmas spirit - if you sometimes wish that the Spirit of Christmas Past would whisk you back to the old days for a few hours, you might check out YTV. It is running a number of

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Christmas episodes from longdeceased shows. The Cartwrights welcome you to the Ponderosa to celebrate Christmas on Bonanza on Dec. 23 (4 p.m.) and special Christmas episodes of the old Lassie series air at 3-p.m. on both Dec. 21 and 22.



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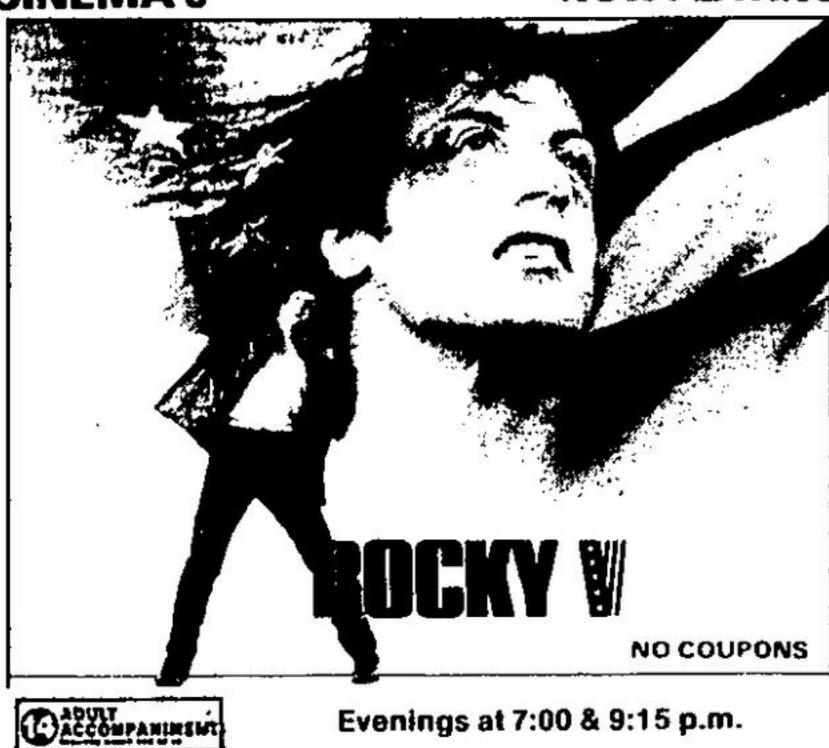
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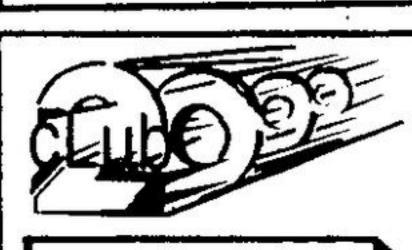
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