

Family Violence

Despite a most difficult year there's lots to be thankful for

By JACIE B. PALMER  
Herald Special

I have always loved Christmas and this year is no exception. I could hardly wait to get out a few Christmas candles, some table centres and then, finally, the tree. The past 18 months have been very difficult for me and my family. Some days I wondered if I would survive. Now that is all past, and we celebrate this season with childlike delight.

This year we cannot afford our annual holiday to Florida and the gifts will be sparse. Yet, we have so much to be thankful for. We are together. We have love. We have learned, and grown as individuals. Mostly we have shared each others' joys and sorrows. We're a family! And we've proven we'll stick together through thick and thin. We are lucky!

It's hard to believe that this column has been running for six months now. When I contacted the newspaper, I wondered if The Herald would be interested in running a series of articles dealing with abuse. Certainly it is a problem in our community, but typically small town newspapers don't openly embrace such subjects. I give the editor and publisher credit for agreeing to give it a try.

To be honest, I wondered if I'd be able to consistently write articles. My first attempt, and all that. Writing has not been easy and I'm less critical of the press now. Their job is difficult. I know well how it feels to have a deadline for an article and to not feel like completing it. Often I'm not satisfied with the wording but I know I have to be less of a perfectionist and just not procrastinate.



During the past six months I have heard from a number of individuals who were at odds with me over articles, openly embraced my writing or who just called to encourage me to continue! I'm glad you're reading!

The most touching call came from a young mother. Her 15 year old son had been reading the article and asked her to listen as he read it to her. The article was about rescuers and she said she envisioned her own life unfolding through the paragraphs of the article. As we talked, she sounded shocked as I explained that the article was based on my own abusive relationship...as were many other articles. Finally, she had found a kindred spirit. Finally, she had found someone to understand how she felt. She knew she was no longer alone.

I may never speak to her or any

of the other callers again but I am glad if I have opened your eyes to your own abusive relationships. I'm pleased that I was able to listen and then to refer you to an appropriate agency. I'm delighted if just one person who lacked understanding of the issues surrounding abuse has had his or her eyes opened to this crisis in our society. If just one of you has paused before retaliating verbally or otherwise against your spouse, parent or child, it has been worth the effort!

I am excited at what the future holds. I look forward to 1992 and the thoughts which will meet as pen is put to paper. I'm very thankful for the opportunity to share with you! Merry Christmas to you all!

Feel free to contact Jacie by directing letters to her attention at The Herald. All correspondence will remain confidential. Should you wish to speak to Jacie, call the Distress Centre at 877-1211 and your call will be returned. If you are a woman or child in crisis or an abusive male wanting help, call the Distress Centre or dial 911.

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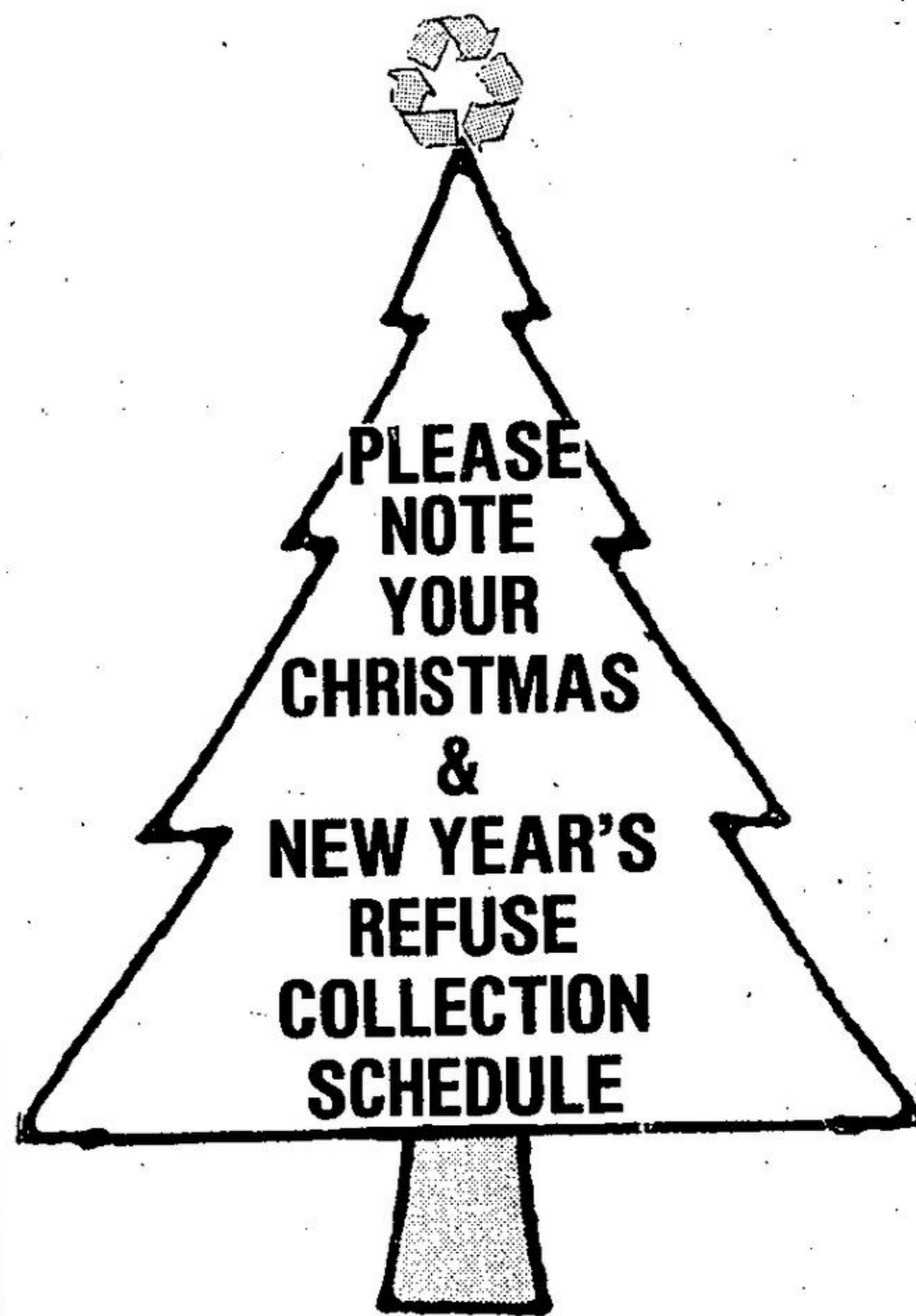
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**CHRISTMAS REFUSE COLLECTION SCHEDULE**



Refuse normally collected on Christmas Day, December 25, 1991, will be picked up on Monday, December 23, 1991.  
Refuse normally collected on Boxing Day, Thursday, December 26, 1991, will be collected on the regular collection day.  
Refuse normally collected on New Year's Day, Wednesday, January 1, 1992 will be collected on Monday, December 30, 1991.

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