

EDITORIAL

with Linda Hillman

Wishing you a Mindful Holiday season

We all tend to be more generous with our thanks during the Christmas season; thanking the people with whom we interact daily; your mailperson, food and drink servers, garbage collectors, friends and neighbours and all those who may bestow gifts and food upon you. But I would like to take a moment to remind us all to also be mindful of where everything we consume comes from.

That potato you roast or mash made a journey from a tiny seed that was planted and cultivated, withstood all that nature could throw at it and then was picked, packaged and shipped to your local store to be proudly displayed as a treasure just awaiting your final preparation. We should thank the farmers, the produce people, the shippers and Mother Nature herself for that gift.

The same can be said for the bright colourful wrapping paper and cards which at some point (or if you wisely chose recycled, in a past life) were once tiny seeds that became trees that offered sheltered to our wildlife before becoming a gift adornments.

I could go on, but you get the point. Most of us are blessed to have so many wonderful products, services and food for ourselves or to share with those who may not. So while we are in this charitable and thankful frame of mind, let's remember to think about where things came from and do our best to both appreciate and recycle the earth's gifts to us.



HO HO HO: The Acton Skating Club held its annual Skate with Santa recently. Many families took advantage of the opportunity to skate with the 'man in red'. - Dawn Brown photo

Christmas wish list

It started about a month ago with a nice, demure request from my mom. "Can you get me a list of some ideas for Christmas?" It was that time of year again. Years ago—even ten years ago—it wouldn't have been a struggle. Why had it become something that was actually a tenuous chore? I had no problem offering ideas for what the kids would like to find under the Christmas tree. It took a few more minutes to think of some things that the Dude would like from his in-laws yet when it came to what I would like I didn't have a clue.

Quite frankly, I don't know what is more of a challenge. Is it trying to get any form of a clue of what either of my parents would like or ideas for them of what I would like? It's six of one and a half dozen of the other as they say.

I do take great pride in how I approach giving someone a gift. I like to do it and I put a lot of thought into it. I like to think about what the person likes or maybe wouldn't buy for themselves. I steer away from gift cards or gifts of cash; instead I want to let the person that I thought about them. I want it to show from the wrapping to the gift. Of course, the one year on Christmas Eve that I ran out of



By
Angela Tyler

tape to wrap presents and used a hot glue gun would not be a good representation of what I thought of the recipients. I did not mean to make them struggle as they did that Christmas morning and I do still apologize for that.

Growing up it would drive us nuts trying to get that perfect present for my dad. We wanted to find that perfect present. That one thing that we could give to him that showed we knew what he liked and deserved. It was pretty hard though. He was never that co-operative. My sister and I would pester him. He would say to us, "I don't need anything. I don't want anything. If I want something I'll go buy it myself. Go buy your mother something instead." After a few decades of that response, we stopped asking and he has ended up a new sweater and jacket collection almost annually. I suppose it's kind of monotonous, however, he always seems to need them and always appreciates them. Hopefully he doesn't read this until the weekend, not that it would spoil anything anymore. The

only thing that is left to surprise him with is which colour they will be this year.

My mom rarely has a suggestion for us either of what she would like. However, mom's are different. It doesn't seem to matter what we give my mom, she is like a kid in a candy store with her anxious enthusiasm and gratitude for each and every present.

A week before Christmas after avoiding it for a month, I wrote out a few things as ideas for my mom. A book, a new pair of pants and some new gloves. I suppose I could have told my mom I needed a new ironing board, but who really wants to open up an ironing board on Christmas morning? I sure don't.

However, now, for me I feel like my dad. Of course we all want to open something under the tree Christmas morning, and yet it's not that I have too much, I just have everything I need. I have my family and most important I have two great kids who freely give me hugs and kisses and tell me they love me.

Merry Christmas to you and your family. When you're done opening your gifts from under the Christmas tree, remember to look around at those who are sharing that moment with you as those are really your true gifts.



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