

EDITORIAL

with Hartley Coles



Let it snow

*"The weather outside is frightful,
But the fire is so delightful,
And since we've no place to go
Let it snow, let it snow, let it snow..."*

The words of the old song could certainly be applied to this neck of the woods during December. Almost every day at least a few flakes of the white stuff fell to make our lives miserable, or happier, depending on your point of view.

There's no doubt about it, we've got a love-hate relationship with snow, developed in no small part by the part our age, gender, occupation or interests play in our lives. But no matter how much we try to ignore it, snow plays a major role in how we react to winter.

When the first flakes of it fall on the ground it evokes different responses:

The toddler, looking out the window, sees a new wonder in the developing world. His older siblings express delight with visions of sleigh rides, snow fights, snowmen (and snow women), Christmas and ice skating dancing in their heads.

Mothers can't escape the apprehension of dressing the kids in snow suits, undressing them from snow suits, lost mittens, wet boots, quick bathroom runs, etc., etc., balanced by rosy cheeks, happy, smiling faces and cold hands and feet.

Fathers conjure up shovelling drives, pushing cars, hockey, driving in blizzards, pulling sleighs, toboggans, rescue expeditions, etc., etc.

Skiers, their faces alight, glow in anticipation at the thought of sliding down mountainous terrain on a pair of expensive boards, think also of the enjoyable apre-ski time in the lodge over a hot toddy with equally robust companions. Snowmobilers have a new glint in their eyes as they imagine toad running, traversing terrain they'd never look at in other season.

Pedestrian and mothers pushing baby carriages think of clogged sidewalks, ice patches waiting for casualties and the slush and spray from insensitive motorists.

Entrepreneurs of all ages smile, knowing they'll soon be banking hard cash for cleaning endless driveways, parking lots and sidewalks, balanced by the knowledge they'll be rising early and braving the cold while others are snug in their beds.

Snow birds, those fortunate few who escape to warmer climes while the snow flies, prepare to flee from the wrath to come.

But most of us who stay at home and endure the cold and the

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CHRISTMAS CREW: Dinner is served on Christmas Day at the Annual Christmas Day Community Dinner, held this year, at Beth-El Christian Reformed Church, Acton. - submitted photo

Good crew makes dinner successful

To the editor,

This year we celebrated our sixth annual Christmas Day Community Dinner. Beth-el CRC generously provided us with a place to prepare and serve the dinner.

I often receive credit and thanks for the dinner but in reality I only had the idea. I am a horrible organizer and a great procrastinator. If it were not for guests inquiring as to whether the dinner was going to take place this year and fellow crew members encouraging me to set a meeting date, the dinner might never happen.

I am encouraged by these requests and follow through by making up and extending invitations. We send invitations through church bulletins and The New Tanner advertises for us, again at no cost.

A few weeks ago I was grocery shopping in Sobeys. I met two gentlemen, father and son, who I thought would make great guests for our Christmas Day dinner. I had an invitation with me and we discussed how the dinner works. Not far into the conversation the father suggested that he wanted to purchase a turkey for the dinner. I said okay but he must then attend the dinner. "No," he insisted,

"whether I attend or not, I want to donate a turkey." I chose one but he said I must pick a bigger one. Away I went, turkey in hand and further encouraged by his gift!

We had our meeting. Pauline Barlow (also representing her daughter Pat), Paulette and Bill Switzer, Jack and Joyce Carpenter and Marci Paterson. I consider them to be the backbone of the dinner.

Pauline cooks one of the turkeys and makes an amazing gravy. Her daughter Pat is the kitchen boss at the dinner. She organizes the food as it comes in, making sure it stays hot and sending it out when it is time. Paulette and Bill receive the food donations. They also provide transportation and chafing dishes and much more.

Jack Carpenter is our MC during the dinner and the leads the carol singing. Together Jack and Joyce also oversee the gifts, making sure there are enough and distributing them. Marci is the instigator of the dinner and the encourager, one of her gifts is finding favours to place with each setting.

I love and appreciate each one of them.

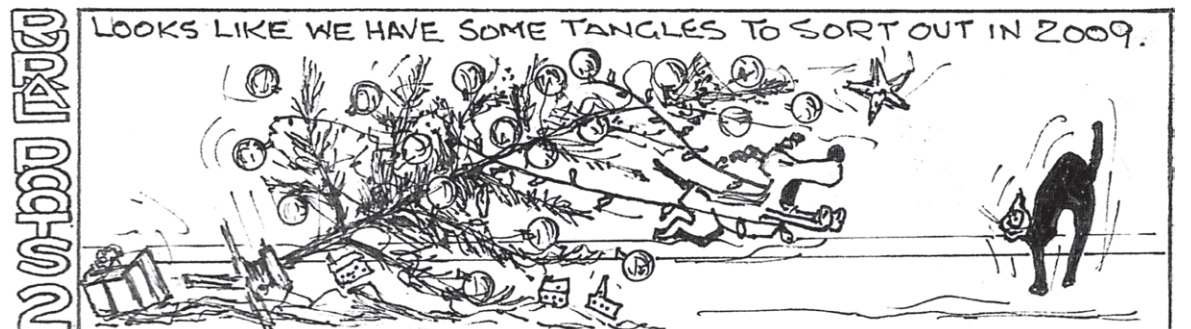
The most amazing part of the dinner is how it comes together. It seems to have a life of its own.

Part of the miracle is that I can stand there and do nothing from 12 till 4 pm and just watch it happen. Everyone that volunteers just finds a place to do their magic and it happens. Setting up, keeping the food organized, clean up, it's awesome. I can't explain it any better than that, you'd have to see it to believe it. Thanks to all of the volunteers. Jake, you are an amazing worker and thanks to your Dad, too for, his beautiful gift of song.

The food is always delicious. We can always count on Shirley for her stuffing rolls, Donna for her coleslaw and Tammy for the tastiest potatoes dish ever. For the past two years Dean has provided us with 20 lbs of potatoes, peeled, mashed and heated. We enjoyed sweet potatoes, broccoli, mixed vegetables, turkey, ham and pork and desserts and of course, brussels sprouts! There wouldn't be a dinner if there wasn't any food and we receive an abundance of it. Thank you to all who send in their food offerings.

Each year we also receive monetary donations, more than we need. These are appreciated but the truth of it is that we only use about \$200. a year. Most of what we need is donated. The di-

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