

The Liberal

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**Backward,
 turn backward,
 O Time
 in your flight,
 Make me a child again
 just for
 tonight.**



Elizabeth Akers Allen

Merry Christmas from

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Nice gesture, but...

This is hardly the season to seem like the grinch. Everyone is for peace earth and nuclear disarmament.

A few hundred citizens of Paris, Ontario, said so in a referendum last week.

The people of Richmond Hill, thanks to their council, could be next.

If the referendum was no more than a call for nuclear disarmament there would be nothing wrong with it; it might even catch fire and be worth the price of the ballots it is printed on.

But the sponsors, the World Federalists, an organization representing some 1,500 of Canada's 22 million people, have added a couple of their own ideas to the referendum one is that the United Nations greatly increase its peacekeeping forces. The second is

that the UN act "automatically against a nation that attacks another.

The World Federalists seem to have failed to notice that the UN is now dominated by young volatile nations of Africa and Asia.

Giving them authority over disarmament when many of them run by strongmen or are dominated by the military is a bit like giving a five-year-old the keys to the family gun cabinet.

The man on the street may not grasp all this, but the Richmond Hill council, with the benefit of some 17 pages of drivel from the World Federalists should have.

The councillors did not do their homework this time. One wonders how they will manage with a truly hefty document like the town's official plan.



By Bob Rice

Christmas - a time to remember

Columnist's Note: There has been considerable comment (one letter and a collect phone call) regarding the Editor's Note at the end of last week's trivia quiz.

Although it is correct that Dale Evans' horse was named Buttermilk, and not Buttercup as noted in the answers, could it be possible that Buttermilk was the result of a typographical error? I mean, these kind of things can happen to anyone.

Well, here we are gang...the last stretch is being run toward December the Twenty-Fifth. The children are stary eyed with thoughts of goodies under the tree and we parents are anxiously awaiting last minute deliveries, braving long line-ups and hoping that all will be well by Sunday morning.

In spite of the snipes about the over commercialism of Christmas and the never ending rush to tie up loose ends, there will always be something very special about this time of year that will bring people a little bit closer, no

matter what faith or belief.

Christmas is also a time for remembering. Over the next few days we will recall forgotten faces and try to put the right name in the right place. We will miss those who are no longer with us and yet, at the same time, take pleasure in knowing that their presence added to our own enjoyment of Christmases past.

We will, through our children, recapture that fantastic moment when wishes and dreams came true in brightly wrapped boxes and carefully printed cards.

We will remember looking out the window on Christmas Eve, trying in vain to see at least one snowflake fall on the dead leaves and grass and the utmost joy when, upon waking the next morning, we realized it was a White Christmas after all.

We will recall Great Aunts with strong smelling perfume, Great Uncles whose hands seem to shake all of the time, nieces and nephews whose names we always got wrong and Nanas and Grannies who always waited to

open their presents last.

From the past will come memories of hot cocoa, marshmallows, turkish delights and shortbread, and let's not forget the plum pudding with hot lemon sauce.

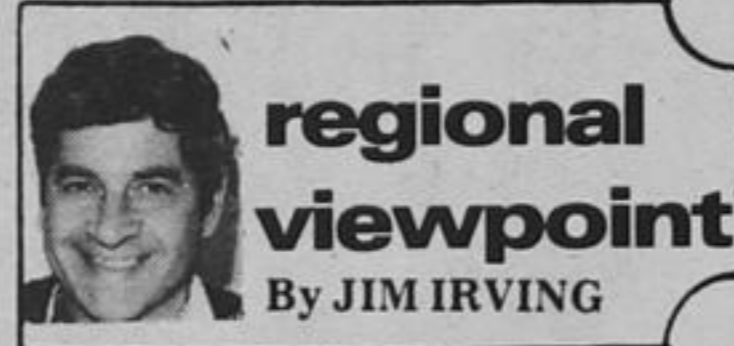
Then there was the phone call, usually booked weeks in advance, to special people separated by miles but not by love.

Some of us may recall our agitation as the Sermon continued, eager to trade our pulpit seat for that of the new sleigh.

Red tableclothes, candles, napkins encased in silver rings, the sound of Dad sharpening the carving knife and the squeak of the oven door as the turkey was removed...these too will come to mind in the next few days.

We will remember our families and The Family and we will all share the common bond of Love.

On behalf of my family, and the ol' Millpond Philosopher, I wish you much joy and happiness at this very special time. Merry Christmas.



All it needed was a little imagination

There's no doubt about it with a little bit of imagination you can do anything.

Well, almost anything.

Take The Liberal's new building, for example — and I won't add Henny Youngman's old punchline. When we first moved in here in the summer, people kept bringing their pets into the editorial office for their shots.

It sometimes took awhile, especially if you were wearing a white shirt at the time, to convince them they had wandered into the wrong place, that despite the hang-dog look of the employees, the animal hospital was next door.

Most of the people understood well enough, but their pets weren't always that agreeable. And it could be a bit disconcerting to have them leap up on your desk and tear away at a story you had just spent the last hour on, or fix you with a pet-ulant stare that said they'd remember you next time they were in the vicinity and they couldn't find a hydrant.

Still we eventually managed to live down our kennel look, somehow. And now when people come in with their loved ones in their arms, we no

longer take for cover, but merely give a jerk of our thumbs northward.

That way, they turn around and head to the vet's next door, or they walk on through to the kitchen, where most of the staff is lined up at the coffee pot, anyway, or are checking the newspaper files to see if those rumored lawsuits about those stories they wrote last March, really do have some validity.

But not too many animals like coffee and they and the owners soon get the drift, so to speak, and head off in the proper direction.

That brings us back to our little cabin among the whines, which I more or less started out to say, has taken on considerable significance with a little bit of imagination.

At least it did last Friday.

For who would have thought that this staid old property on Yonge Street, usually piled high with newspapers of all shapes and sizes from across the region, and with newspaper people of all mishaps and seizures from across the country, could take on such a homey look of Christmas? And almost overnight, as it were.

But there it was Friday afternoon, with the front door locked against all intruders and the Christmas party in full sway.

The sports editor, for example, who said he felt he had been hiding his light under a bushel long enough and that it was time to come out of the closet and declare his brilliance, was especially in full sway, high atop the Christmas tree.

And I must say the tree did have a glow that I haven't seen on any others. The only trouble was, that when the editor was taken down with the other decorations he took the glow with him.

But that is probably just as well, seeing as he drove away with his lights off.

'Twas a great party, though, and such was the spirit of Christmas that none of us even threw any of our empties (in greeting) onto the driveway of what could be described as our reluctant neighbor to the south of us.

However, the fact that someone reported what looked to be a cannon mounted just above the exit, may have had something to do with the

decision, and we decided to cash in our empties at the LCBO outlet just a six-pack or two away.

It wasn't easy lugging in those 13 cases, either, it was even harder lugging them out. Why didn't somebody tell us they don't give refunds on wine bottles?

But as I said before, the important thing was that the place had a Christmas air about it. Forget about that fellow from display ads, who, apparently, couldn't quite shake the old picture. I mean, why else would he curl up under his desk like a puppy in a kennel and then insist that his wine be served in a saucer?

So you see how, with a little imagination you can transform a place into something completely different when the spirit(s) move you. And just as it's supposed to be at Christmas time, you have an over-all feeling of goodwill toward your fellow man (women included), plus the extra feeling that it's going to continue throughout the new year.

And I'm sure it will.

Especially with that combination of snow and freezing rain, how can things help but go smoothly?

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