

HOLIDAY REFLECTIONS

Its over for another year. No, not the elections but Christmas and a great one it was - at least for us and I hope a great one for you and your family. Sure we ate too much, probably drank too much or at least more than usual and of course spent too much, but after all Christmas has become a season of excess.

I'm sure retail sales must be up, since as we traveled around Picton, Belleville and Kingston, stores were jammed and if cash registers rang instead of beeping they would have been ringing. Its good to see the economy in an up mode even if investments in the 'E' sector are suffering a little.

All in all, a splendid season this year with the snow and the cold. Reminds one of the 'olden days'.

My daughter and her husband and three sons came in November while my son, wife and two daughters came on the Saturday before Christmas and left the day after Boxing Day.

Now this brings considerable change to the Jackson household. Anjelica, the older granddaughter is 4 ½ years old and Danielle, the younger is 2 ½. If you asked Her Nibs to describe the younger she just says WOW. She's like a little whirlwind, constantly on the move examining this and that and re arranging all and sundry and speaking without a pause. Its possible to understand her if you listen closely, but when all else fails her sister is a marvellous translator.

Normally our house is neat and quiet but not for these five days. Afternoon naps are often omitted, (except for son and wife) and bedtime is after 10.00 p.m.

I don't think we're cut out to keep up with a 2 ½ year old, said Her Nibs to me one day. Perhaps as she gets older she'll slow down, she continued, but when I see the gleam of, not mischief so much as curiosity, I don't visualize much slowing down.

One major difference in kids today and when I was a child (Oh! Oh! here comes a typical grandfather moan I hear you say) is technology. We bought Poo chi an electronic dog (amongst other things) for the older girl, it walks, talks, plays music, dances, begs, barks, eats its bone, flops its ears, wags its tail and reacts to petting (it shows hearts in its eyes) and responds to voice commands. Danielle on the other hand, got an electronic baby doll that talks, learns words and turns its head in the direction of your voice.

But aside from these marvels I was walking out of the family room one day and looked at the two young girls, Danielle was playing Mother with her electronic doll and Anjelica was sitting at the computer playing a game - Barbie Pet Search - that she had received as a gift. What a different world they will grow up in.

Valerie read an article before the family arrived which I think puts the difference in perspective and perhaps explains somewhat why the younger you are the better you can cope.

This article was discussing reflexes, visual and mental acuity and reaction times. The researcher stated that for a 20 year old to understand how the reflexes and reaction response for a 60 year old operate he or she would have to take three (3) shots of vodka in the morning one after the other. The impact of this would given them the response times etc. of a 60 year old.

One horrid thought - how much worse we get when we add extra alcohol to our already slowed down system.

Never mind, it's too dreary to contemplate - have a very Happy New Year.

- John A. Jackson

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