

Our Opinion

Christmas the most magical time of the year

Christmastime is the only time of the year I can think of when magic turns a town into a sparkling arrays of lights and Christmas carols echo in the air and people feel the need to give.

Children's thoughts turn to the impending visit of Santa Claus On Dec. 24. Will they be able to keep their little eyes open long enough to catch a glimpse of Santa putting presents under the Christmas Tree or will the old man's magic keep us wondering for another year? Every little sound coming from outside could be the pawing of eight tiny reindeer on the roof. Many fall asleep without a glimpse of the jolly red elf, himself but they wake up the next day to find Santa has slipped by them another year.

To others, Christmas is a time to remember the birth of Jesus., the saviour.

Although the commercialization of the Christmas holidays seem to overshadow the reason behind the day, we never really forget that Dec. 25 is a day to rejoice and realize what we have to be thankful for.

I've often heard people say that Christmas is for the children, with the amount of gifts lavished on them and the whole fairytale quality of the season with Santa's elves busy making toys before Santa and the reindeer make the annual trek from the North Pole to the South Pole and back again.

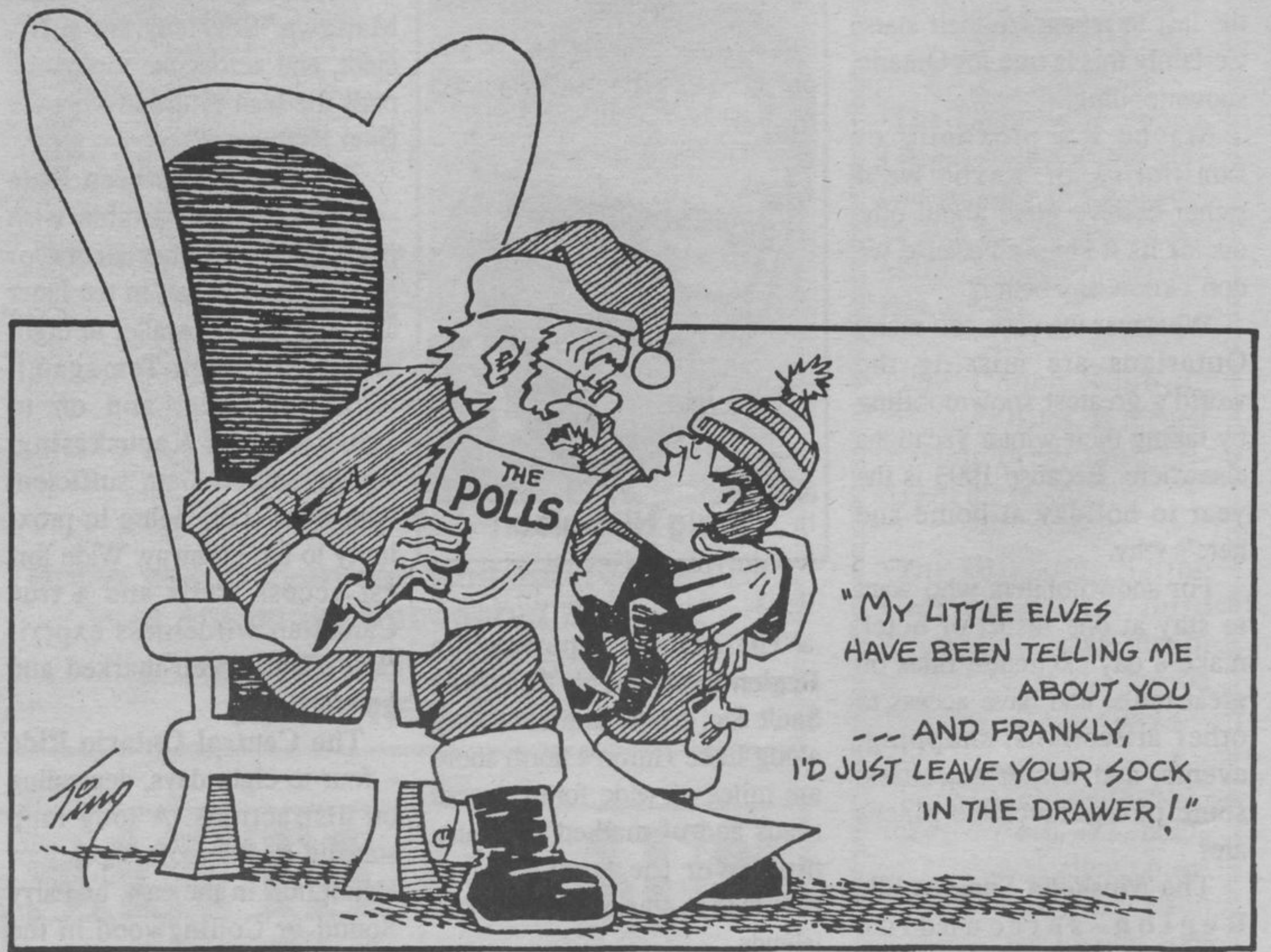
For me, it's a time to be with family. The Christmas holidays is one of the rare times of the year when my family come together. Although we visit my parents at different times of the Christmas holiday (between Dec. 24-26), each one of my five siblings and their families try to manage to make it home.

The true meaning behind Christmas is giving. God gave us His Son to save us. We give our loved ones Christmas presents.

But the best Christmas present to give is not that remote control car, or talking doll or even that new sweater. The best present is the one your give to a total stranger or someone you know who is less fortunate this year for Christmas.

Local groups recognize people may need the help of others during Christmas and food items, toys and other charitable donations are good ways to help with the spirit of the holidays. Although these groups act as coordinators, a difficult task at times, they should be commended for helping make this Christmas special for someone in need. Those who also choose to give, no matter how big or small the donation should also be thanked. Giving, that is the true meaning of Christmas.

Cindy Laundry



Americans light years ahead in worshipping the obscure

No question about it, the Yanks are light years ahead of us when it comes to totems. Americans know how to worship the obscure. Why, in the Gafford Family Museum in Crowell, Texas you can see the actual can opener that Lee Harvey Oswald once used.

And at the Barbara Mandrell Country Museum in Nashville, they've got Barbara's wedding nightie right there on display.

That's nothing—take a trip to the Henry Ford Museum in Dearborn, Michigan and they'll show you a test tube containing Thomas Edison's last breath.

Of course, it looks an awful lot like a run-of-the-lab empty test tube, so you pretty well have to take it on faith that some entrepreneur cranked up old Tom's deathbed and sweet-talked the expiring inventor into heaving his last breath into the tube. Doesn't matter. The point is, the Americans, by virtue of sheer pluck and initiative, have a Thomas-Edison's-Last-Breath-in-a-Test Tube Memorial Shrine—and we lackadaisical, shiftless Canucks haven't.

Ah, but all is not lost.

Canada has the Crystal Skull.

You haven't heard about the Crystal Skull? It's a beauty. A work of art, in fact.

It's a life-size sculpture of a human skull, carved from transparent quartz and full of beautiful internal veins and bubbles. It is five inches high, seven inches long, five inches wide and it weighs eleven pounds, seven ounces. who carved it? Nobody knows.

The crystal skull is more than just a sculpture. It has 32 exquisitely formed teeth and a lower, articulated, detachable jawbone. What's more, the eye sockets have been cunningly hollowed out deep into the skull in such a way as to catch and channel light beams, causing the sockets to flicker with light.

The story goes that the skull was discovered deep in the jungles of Belize, back in 1927 by Anna Mitchell-Hedges, the young daughter of a British explorer. She said that when she held up

the crystal skull, 300 Mayan workers fell to their knees and kissed the ground. She said that they prayed and wept for another two weeks.

I don't know exactly how Ms. Mitchell-Hedges managed to get the skull out of Belize, but she did, and she brought it with her to Canada. To Kitchener, Ontario, of all places, where the skull, reposing magisterially in her living room, continued to dazzle and bemuse observers for years.

Bemusing or not, the skull has been a source of puzzlement to archaeologists. Its workmanship is far superior to anything else found in Central America—or anywhere else for that matter.

No one knows what tools were used to carve the stone, but we know they were a lot more subtle than the chisels and hammers of Michelangelo. The crystal skull shows no trace of scratches or tool marks—even under a microscope.

Over the years, strange powers have come to be attributed to the skull. Some observers claim to have seen an aura surrounding it. Others swear it emits eerie, high-pitched music. Still others

peered into the skull and saw visions of faces and landscapes.

But even if it's just an uncommonly beautiful artifact, the skull is ours. Can you imagine what the Americans would do with something like that? Why, they'd open a theme park around it.

But they don't have the skull. It's right here. In a living room in Kitchener, Ontario.

Or used to be.

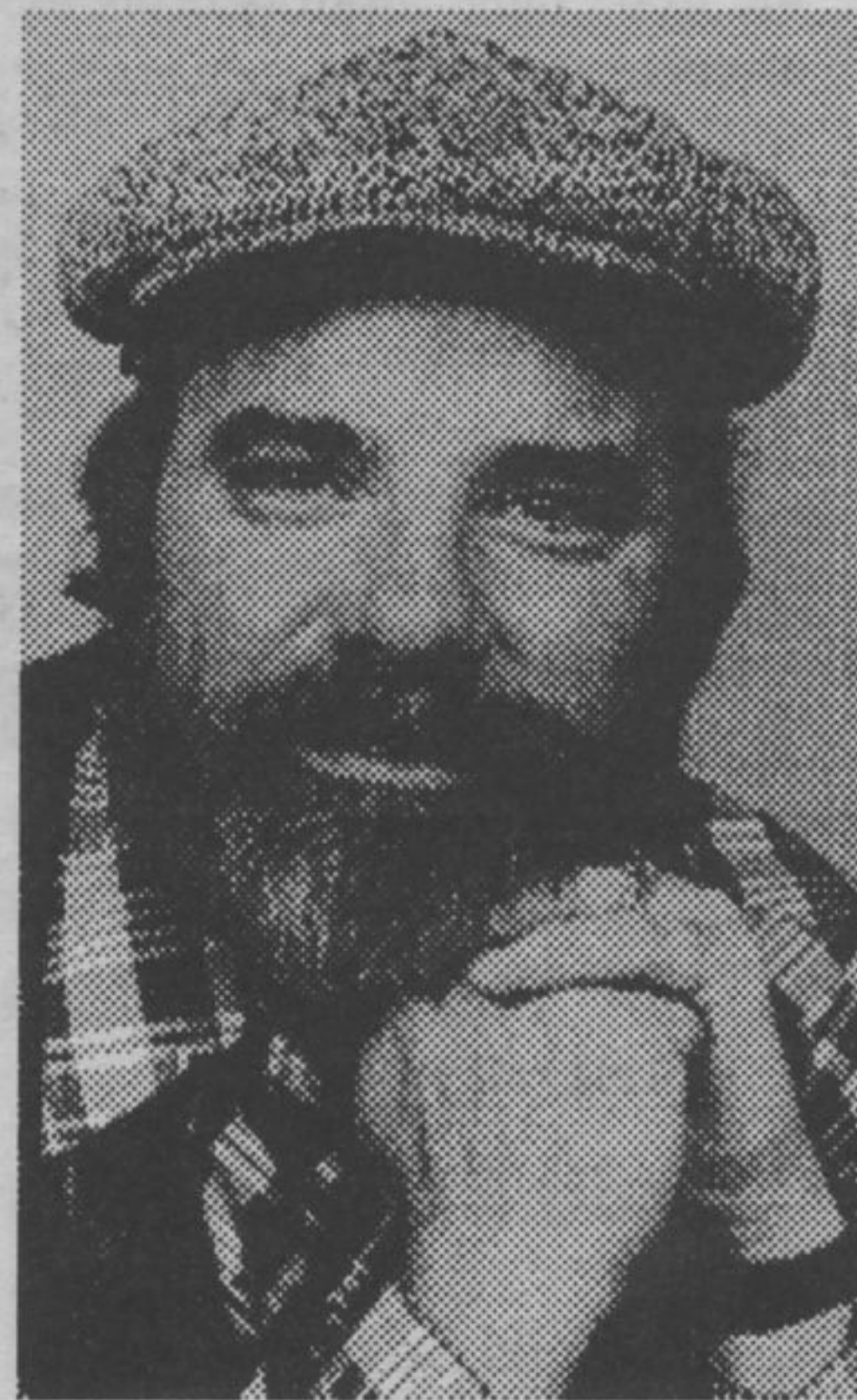
I decided to call up Ms. Mitchell-Hedges to get the latest news of the skull. "She doesn't live here any more" a voice informed me," she moved last year."

To Valparaiso, Indiana.

And yes, she took the skull with her.

Oh well, at least we've still got the CN Tower.

So far.



Arthur Black

The Nipigon-Red Rock Gazette and the Terrace Bay-Schreiber News are members of Laurentian Newspapers Limited, 158 Elgin Street, Sudbury, Ontario P7E 3N5 (705) 673-5667 John Thompson, Vice President



Members of the Canadian Community Newspapers Association and the Ontario Community Newspapers Association

EDITORS
Cindy Laundry
Darren MacDonald
OFFICE/ADMIN.
Clara Dupuis

ADVERTISING
Ad. Manager
Linda Harbinson
Ad. Consultant
Cheryl Kostecki

PRODUCTION
Production
Manager
Heather Michon

GEN MANAGER...Linda Harbinson PUBLISHER...A. Sandy Harbinson
Local offices are located at 145 Railway Street, Nipigon, Ontario P0T 2J0, (807) 887-3583, fax 887-3720 and Highway 17 & Mill Road, Terrace Bay, Ontario P0T 2W0, (807) 825-3747, fax 825-9233
2nd. class mailing permit 0867

One year subscriptions are available by contacting your local newspaper at one of the addresses listed above. Rates are: Local Seniors \$12, Other local \$18, Outside 40 mile radius \$29, USA \$38. GST must be added to all subscription purchases.