



The Tribune

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Editorials

My Perfect Christmas

By ELIZABETH CRITTENDEN

Christmas is that time of year
 For all the fun and joy and cheer!
 The first one up takes a peek to see
 The many presents, under our Christmas tree.

The playing all day out in the snow,
 Makes all our jolly red faces glow!
 The good smells of dinner as it cooks,
 The turkey and trimmings, how delicious they look!

Now it comes to our quiet time,
 As we sit around our tree so fine.
 Then we remember, like others do
 The meaning, of our Christmas true!

We read the Special Christmas Story,
 And sing His songs of Praise and Glory!
 We say to God our little prayers
 Of thanks, because we know He cares!

The end of Christmas Day has come,
 We've had our laughs, our joy, and fun!

Now we're snuggled in our beds
 To dream of Pleasant days ahead!

Ed. notes: Elizabeth is a Grade 6 student at Dickson Hill Public School.

Strange idea of Christmas spirit

The Christmas spirit in town this year has been marred for some people by the theft of a Christmas tree from the lobby of Testa Villa and of wreaths from the Winlane Dr. apartments.

The tree was erected by the apartment residents and they had been purchasing decorations for it over a long period. It was set up in the apartment lobby for the enjoyment of everybody but sometime over the weekend it was stolen, decorations and all.

Christmas is not a time for ranting, raving and denunciations so we will suffice it to say that stealing a tree to help yourself celebrate the season is a sickening perversion of everything Christmas should, but doesn't always, stand for.

We can only feel pity for the warped individuals who did this.

Editor's mail

Belonging

Dear Sir,

Last Spring many of us shared a very rewarding and emotional experience — "Music Mania '77". This show has done a great deal over the years to promote a sense of loyalty and awareness of the community bond that exists among many of the citizens of this town. Stouffville's Centennial provided an appropriate theme for this annual show, and we, the participants, were acutely aware of the impact.

"One Hundred Years! A Century! A century of living and working and growing together. A century of changes, but always with the happy memory of the way we were and how it all began."

"Whether you have lived here all your life, or only part of it, it is our wish that the spirit of this town will have touched you and will always remain a part of you."

We met old friends and new-comers to town. We shared a wonderful experience. People put forth the effort to become involved. Long-time residents extended the hand of welcome, and rookies indicated a commitment and desire to share in the satisfaction of belonging. But it didn't just happen. We made it work, and that's what our Centennial was all about.

Welcome neighbour and let's step into the next century smiling, as we count our blessings for the privilege of living in such a fine community.

"A Stouffville Maniac"

30 years ago this week

Excerpts from the December 18 issue of The Tribune.

Santa's visit

Old St. Nick never received a warmer greeting than that which was tendered him in Stouffville on Saturday afternoon. Santa Claus handed out a candy treat to an estimated one thousand kiddies. The white whiskered gentleman was taken aboard a bus when he arrived at Ringwood from the northland and escorted by several of his clown helpers on a motorcycle. Another half dozen clowns assisted Santa with his heavy bags of good things when Santa mounted the stand in front of the municipal hall, to the strains of Christmas carols, a number of the local Lions were on hand to assist in the distribution.

To further brighten the Christmas hustle for the business section, carols will be wafted on the air on the open evenings prior to Christmas under the merchant's auspices.

What's the use?
 "This appeal to save hydro in Stouffville just doesn't add up fairly for the town," said Reeve A. V. Nolan at a meeting held last Wednesday. "We are asking our customer and forcing merchants to cut down on hydro consumption, yet when the monthly bill for power comes along, it is just as high as ever, and we do not take in the necessary cash to meet the bill under that condition," he explained.

The peak load is reached on Tuesday mornings due to many housewives ironing at that time. Irons draw heavily, and with a couple or three hundred pulling at the same time, the peak demand for power is reached for the month.

The reeve said there is nothing that we can do, except pay the bills, which for the past month, was equal to the total receipts from our customers, leaving nothing for upkeep and other charges.

Kids' stuff

Jolly jumping jack gives joy

By Annegret Lamure

This tireless little guy flings his arms and legs about in a most amusing way and will captivate the heart of any small child instantly.

He's not all that easy to make, however. Besides stiff, smooth cardboard, string and some sort of fasteners to hold the limbs



A Jumping Jack is not all that easy to make, but this toy is a lot of fun and makes a great last minute gift. The strings can either be attached on the front in full view or be

together you will also need a very strong hand to cut out the cardboard.

Rather than copying, you will probably want to design your own jumping jack. It's best to make the head and body in one piece and then add jointed arms and legs.

The hinges can be made of wire, but the legs always seem to flop loose after a while

but paper fasteners (the kind that hold notepaper together) bent paper clips or even small nuts and bolts seem to work better. In a pinch you can even resort to buttons, as I had to do. Sewing them on is pretty tricky though, since the joints have to pivot. One advantage to using nuts, and bolts or buttons is that they add substance to your jumping jack and the weight makes for better action.

However, if you are using bent paper clips, the same effect can be achieved by simply taping a penny to each foot.

Arrangement of the string is very important so try to copy it exactly. Otherwise the little fellow may refuse to throw out his arms and legs when you pull on it.

Christmas bike ride

By Greg Taylor

One day, on December 8, I sat down to write about A Perfect Christmas. I would like to sit down with Santa and give him a snack and we would talk about what I wanted.

People these days make you worry because they get so busy.

You should just lie back and drink egg nog and dream about Christmas Day when you get lots of presents.

And that's a perfect Christmas.

Greg is a grade 4 student at Whitchurch Highlands.

It's presents time

By Doug Sanderson

Christmas day the church bells chime
 Because it's opening presents time.
 All the children sing the rhyme
 It's Christmas time, it's Christmas time.

Doug is a student at Dickson Hill P.S.



WINDOW ON WILDLIFE

How the Jay saved a Christmas

By ART BRIGGS-JUDE

rawboned Neil Jensen felt helpless. All his love and lore of the northwoods wasn't helping him a bit. His 14 year old daughter was still lost. Vanished without a trace, as if the forest had opened up and closed over her. For what seemed like the hundredth time, he went over in his mind the events leading up to her disappearance.

For the past several years they had talked about spending Christmas at the cottage. This season it had become a reality. The four of them had driven up late Friday, while Eric an older son would be coming up Saturday afternoon.

This morning Neil and Kris had gone and cut a nice shaped balsam, while Joan and Grandma had busied themselves in the cottage. Later when Eric arrived they would trim the tree, then all drive down to the little village church for the midnight service.

It was after they set the tree in place, that young Kris decided to try a little cross country run on her skis. "Don't go out on the lake, and be back in time for lunch", Neil cautioned, as he turned and tugged the chain saw into action.

Kris followed along the lakeshore trail for a while, then cut over to the west, where several high ridges would provide her with some long downhill runs. The area was not entirely new. She had been there before with her brother and his girlfriend. At the top of the highest crest, she hesitated. It's like a king-sized Christmas card she mused, gazing at the etched forest stretching out below. Then she pushed off to become part of that winter scene.

Ordinarily such a hill was for her an easy accomplishment. With five years' experience, she had been on hills much higher than this wooded run. But there was something on that slope she hadn't counted on. Something that has spelt trouble to more than one skier or tobogganist.

The young outdoor enthusiast was nearly down the first run, when the effects of a recent ice storm overtook her. Suddenly she felt herself accelerating on an icy crust. Almost immediately she went off course and lost control, racing between trees down a steep embankment. Fighting to keep her balance and remain upright, she caught one ski in a protruding root. In an instant she was transformed from a clown-like character in an ice revue, to something that resembled a catapulting sky diver. With a crash she went head first into a grove of pines at the bottom of a deep ravine.

The thick evergreens cushioned her fall somewhat, but left her in a precarious position. Her right foot was somehow caught in a crotch of tangled limbs, while a sharp branch had gone part way up her sleeve, and out through the shoulder of her snowsuit. And although her weight arched the green branches downward, she ended up suspended face down just above the mixture of snow and pine needles. Her arm was numb, and the more she tried to extricate her foot, the more it hurt. She yelled as loud and as long as she could for help, but her voice was muffled by the forest floor and lost in the increasing wind. When all her struggles proved useless, she realized she was trapped. Sobbing with pain and overcome with fear she lapsed into unconsciousness.

From its sheltered perch in the top of a nearby cedar, the gray jay watched the girl's unheralded entrance into the pine grove. But now when the figure failed to reappear, the bird's curiosity was aroused. It slipped off its twig and on hushed wings glided down to investigate. Landing at the edge of the pines, it began working through the needled limbs. Then its ebony eyes focused on an immobile form strung like a hammock in the lower branches. The bird flicked its long tail and dropped down closer to where the skier lay.

When there was no movement, the inquisitive bird hopped along the girl's back, cocking its head from side to side as it went. Then as it moved to her shoulder, which was partially draped with a tattered wool scarf, the girl stirred.

Instinctively, the jay spring up in alarm. But in its haste to get away, one of the bird's feet caught a loop of loose wool. The jay was held momentarily, then pushed off with a rapid thrust of wingbeat. It was free; almost. For now instead of releasing where it was caught at the bird's foot, the red yarn was pulling out of the scarf like a string unravels when you open a bag of grain. The startled jay landed in a bush a short distance away, and using its short bill finally pecked free of the woolly snare.

When Eric arrived at the cottage, an almost hysterical grandmother greeted him. Without waiting to change, he opened the back doors of his van, pulled out a ramp, and drove down and away on his snowmobile. Soon he was following along the lakeshore looking for any traces of ski marks the wind hadn't obliterated. Then he remembered the ridges of last winter, and headed in that direction. But instead of coming out near the top of the hills as he planned, he ended up too far to the south, and had to cut back along the bottom.

It was while he was trying to move around an ice-patch, that he noticed a long strand of red wool blowing in the wind. Somewhat puzzled, he shut off his machine and went over for a closer look. That's when he heard the muffled yell, and it seemed to come from where the line of wool entered the pine thicket. Eric moved forward and forcing the boughs to one side, reached in to touch his sister's arm.

Later that night, after their parents and grandmother had gone to the Christmas eve service, Eric stoked the fireplace. Turning to Kris who was propped up on the studio couch with her arm in a sling, and her bandaged leg resting on a pillow, he shook his head and said, "It's a good thing I saw that piece of wool hanging there. I wonder how it got strung out like that?" Kris shrugged her shoulders, then after a long pause she spoke. "It was awful, I couldn't get my arm out of my sleeve or my foot down or anything. My hood was pulled tight over my ears and I couldn't hardly hear anything." Then after another pause she continued, "I must have passed out, but just before you came, someone touched me on the shoulder. It was like an angel, and it gave me new hope. Then I heard the snowmobile and knew you were near."

Out in the cedar swamp, the gray jay fluffed his feathers and pressed close to the trunk of his favourite roost. He winked at the star-lit heavens, settled down, closed his eyes and went to sleep.