

Don't expect mild winter this time: forecasters

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We were spoiled last year, but not so this season, meteorologists say, predicting York Region can expect a return to typical Canadian conditions for December, January and February.

We are likely to get more of a winter this year than what was delivered last year, but it won't necessarily be brutal, Weather Network meteorology director Chris Scott said.

"It's unlikely your snow brushes and shovels will have a chance to collect dust," he said

of this coming winter.

Compared to last winter's unseasonable, almost temperate character, we can expect a colder, unsettled season, network meteorologist Gina Ressler said.

"We're in for ups and downs — a real roller coaster winter," she said.

"There's nothing big on the immediate horizon, but we could get classic winter storms as cold air takes over in January and February."

Ontario is susceptible to low-pressure Alberta clipper systems and Colorado lows,

she said, explaining clippers occur when weather fronts form off the Western Rockies and travel eastward, bringing cold air, while Colorado lows tend to draw Gulf of Mexico moisture.

Together, they can deliver a mixed bag of hard hitting storms, including rain, freezing rain and snow.

York Region, from Newmarket north, is a snow belt, she said.

Our winter climate is influenced by the lake effect, which involves the temperature of the Great Lakes.

The lake water, including that of Simcoe, is warmer this year.

When cold air flows above it, we can experience winter blasts, she warned.

We can expect more snow, too, Ms Ressler said.

Last year, Buttonville's weather monitoring station reported about 80 centimetres of snow.

Between next month and February, we should brace for more traditional snowfall of up to 100 cm, she said.

Alternating patterns of fair and stormy conditions are expected throughout the season, meaning we can look for stretches of calm weather followed by a winter storm.



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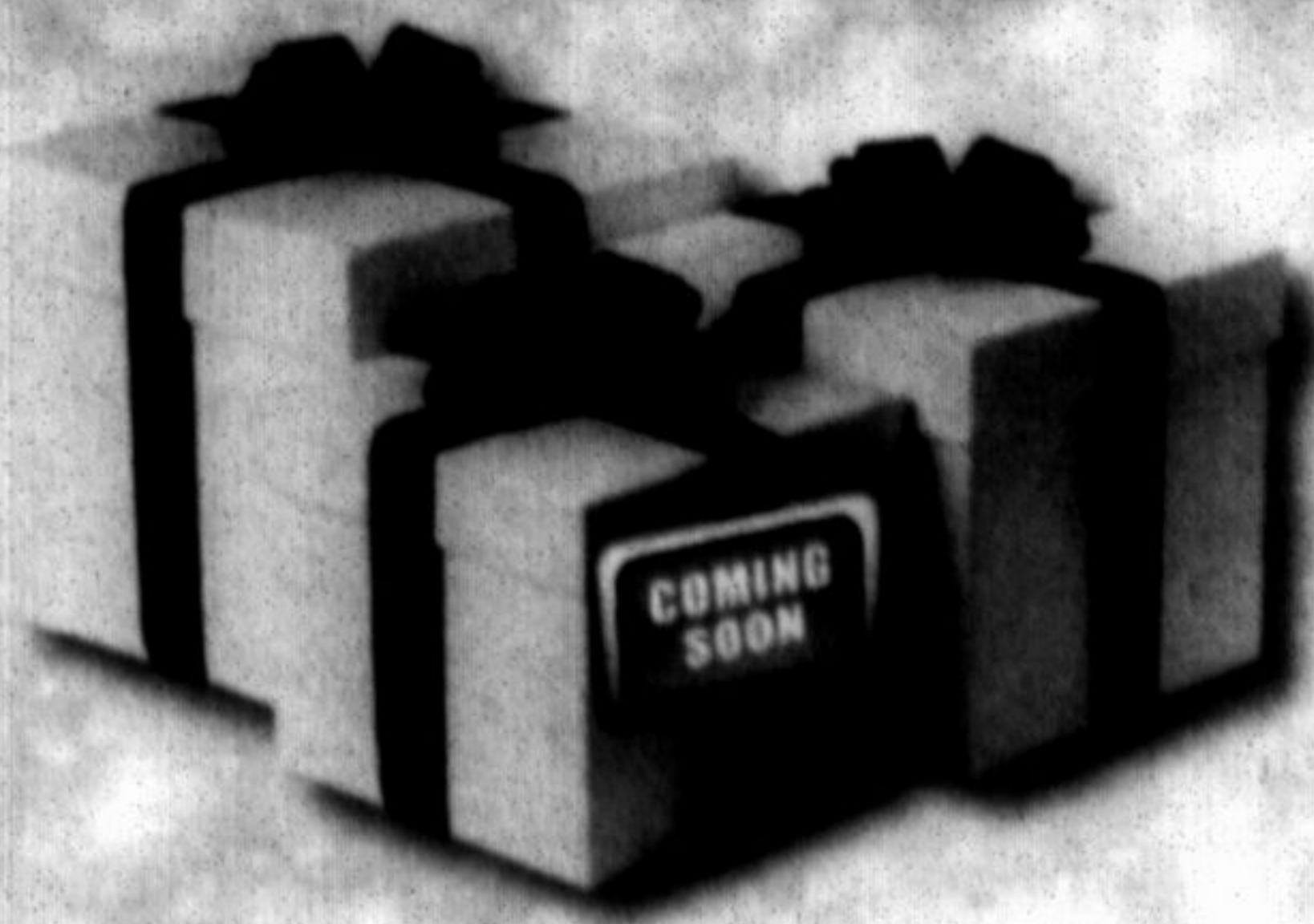
Home Hardware staffer Andre Croteau (right) hands customer Bill Kay a scoop shovel. People are beginning to stock up on supplies for the winter.

Typical of this type of weather pattern, it wouldn't be unusual to see temperatures higher in the Yukon than Southern Ontario on occasion this winter, the weather experts said.

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