



Ramblin' Ruth

It's the most wonderful time of the year

By Ruth LeBlanc

Yes Virginia, there is a Santa Claus. No, he doesn't always wear a red suit and have a belly that shakes like jelly, but yes Virginia he really does exist. This huge spirit of giving lives all over the world and comes in many different forms.

Sometimes Santa is big and tall and sometimes he is short and stout. Sometimes he laughs from his soul and other times he merely gives a chuckle. He can appear magically, looking nothing like the big elf that shoots across the sky on Christmas Eve, but rather just like you or me.

Jolly old Saint Nicholas was a gentle soul who did kind things for others, never expecting reward or praise. Making a child smile or bringing a grin to a sad face was reward enough.

Living among us, these Santa-like beings can appear just when you need some kindness the most. One such gentleman appeared just days ago outside my office in the GO Train Station in Stouffville.

Passing my doorway he happened to hear a young struggling teen sharing his wish with me for a computer to do his school work on. Popping his head around the door, this friendly stranger apologized for overhearing but, oddly enough, he had a spare system he would be only too happy to give the boy for free.

As quickly as Rudolph jumps from rooftop to rooftop he disappeared, leaving his phone number and shy smile behind. I saw the spirit of Christmas shining through as he

walked away, leaving the boy with an incredulous look on his face.

Look around, Virginia, at all the good deeds done every day all year round. Forgiving those who, like all humans, make mistakes takes a bigger person, almost as big as Santa, to be gracious and forgiving.

Remembering that housebound person with a visit and a smile can make all the difference in the world not only to that person, but also to you. Sharing when others have nothing can make you feel like you have won the lottery just by seeing the joy you can bring into someone else's life.

So here's to the Santa Clauses all over Whitchurch-Stouffville. The guy in the red suit knows who you are and where you live. On Christmas morning under your tree might not be the biggest gift, but the gift you give quietly all year is priceless.

The season comes upon us so quickly and is over just as fast. Before you know it the tree will be lit and the presents placed under its boughs.

Hundreds of boxes of clementines will find their way to Stouffville's kitchens and rolling pins will be dusty with flour. Stomachs will fill with turkey and you will wish, just a little, that it wasn't over so quickly.

I wish everyone in Whitchurch-Stouffville a very merry Christmas. Remember, the best memories are not about the presents you receive but of good friends, family and other loved ones.

It really is the most wonderful time of year.

News from Stouffville Christian School

Stouffville Christian School recently held its Annual Dinner Auction at the Premiere Ballroom in Richmond Hill.

Thanks to donations from many Stouffville businesses the evening was a huge success, with over \$39,000 raised. Stouffville Christian School wants to thank all those businesses that donated items to this wonderful event.

The school will be celebrating its 25th Anniversary in the spring. We are thankful for the opportunity to nurture and equip a generation of young people to be worthy citizens of Canada.

On Dec. 22 we will be putting on our Christmas Program at EastRidge Church. Come join us in celebrating the true meaning of Christmas.

Forgetting

By Catherine Sword

Christmas, with all the wild, dashing about to do a thousand and one little things, is really a time of forgetting. Hence the constant making of lists, which we promptly forget somewhere.

On Christmas day, while picking up wrapping strewn across the room, it's sure we'll find a list or two. We'll look at it and say, "Ah! There it is. Gee, I forgot to get the chocolate for Aunt May." It's very likely, too, that the nephew is much happier with the book he eventually received, rather than the scarf which was listed next to his name.

In the new year we'll still find lists jammed into pockets, balled up on the bottom of the purse, or tucked inside the wallet, now blatantly visible because of an obvious lack of currency. So many surprise pieces of paper.

It makes one wonder why we allow ourselves to be dragged into this frenzied amnesia. Well, maybe it's because it is a season of forgetting.

Maybe the kids did leave their mitts outside somewhere again. That's just a wonderful opportunity to give another pair. Mittens in their stockings every year until they don't forget anymore. That's just the creation of a family memory, an in-joke, likely to be repeated each generation.

Forgot to put gas in the car? What a wonderful opportunity for a family walk. Forgot to stock the cat's favourite food? Don't worry. One day of sharing your turkey won't spoil him.

Forgot about work for a moment? Forgot about the problems of the world? That's all part of the magic of this season. So much forgetting leaves a little piece of space in our crowded minds and hearts to remember.

To remember there can be peace on earth.

Season's Greetings
from the staff of
Stouffville Fish & Chips & Seafood

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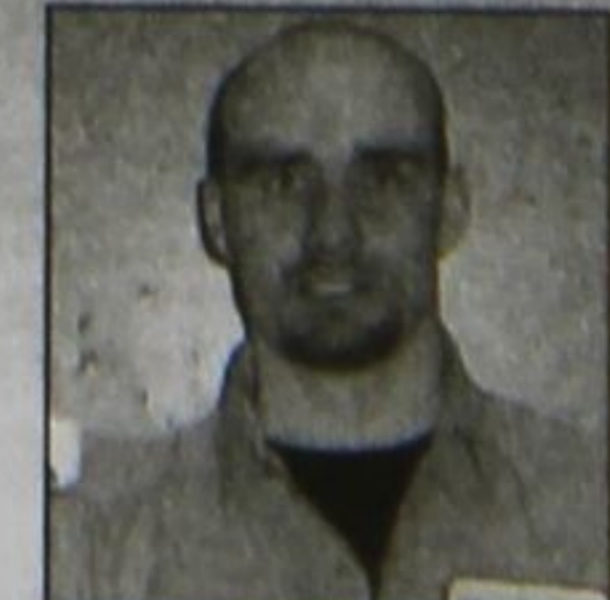
HOURS Mon 11-7 • Tue-Wed 11-8
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Season's Greetings from all of us.



Glad to be of service, and we thank you for calling on us this past year.


Tim Chase "owner"


Adam


Art

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Stouffville