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We aren't doing this for accolades. In fact we were hesitant about telling anyone in case they thought we were expecting praise. But then we decided that if our story motivated even one more person to consider celebrating Christmas this way, and if that one gift saved just one life, then it would be worth it.

Christmas brings to mind many

things, but most of all the humble birth of one small baby... the reason for the season. The Bible says, in Matthew 25:40, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of Mine, you did for Me.' What better way to celebrate His birth than to give to those in need?

For details on supporting World Vision visit www.worldvision.ca/gifts or call 1-800-844-7993.

PETS ON PARADE
Stouffville Veterinary Clinic
"goes to the dogs"
in celebrating Christmas

Leaving the Rat Race for Alternative Cheese



By Helen Drew

'Oh, I'm doing Katimavik - have you heard of it?' -- tentative pause -- "it's a nine-month program where you live with 11 other people and go to different places in Canada, doing volunteer work. They provide food and shelter and everything. Yeah, it should be great. Yeah, I'm super excited."

I've done this monologue so many times that the words have been reduced to meaningless, mechanical clicks of the tongue. I've considered making up cards to hand out. I really wish I had more to say about it, but without having begun the program yet, I can do little more than anticipate.

While I could be doing some practical planning (since I have less than a week left), packing my whole life into two under-70-pound luggage pieces seems to require more thought than I care to spend. I guess I'll just cram everything in on a whim the night before I leave.

Mentally, though, I have been preparing. What do I have to offer to the world, I keep asking myself? I want to finally learn how to make a mark out there, invest myself in forces greater than myself.

I feel like this is exactly what high school prohibited me from doing --- not to say I didn't allow myself to be passive, but in those small halls, reptilian self-sufficiency is kind of infectious. I feared it would become a lifelong pattern if I proceeded straight to college. So I poked my nose out of the rat race long enough to sniff out alternative cheese.

I'm not expecting Katimavik to be easy. The last thing I want is a formula to apply to the next nine months of my life. I want to be challenged, surprised, awed, touched, frustrated, enlightened and exhausted.

And I know that when you engage yourself in something, you can get almost anything out of it.

Blowing Our Own Whistle

By Jim Priebe

Does the idea of a local radio station catch your imagination? If so, you'll be interested to learn about the Whistle Radio project, inspired by Ivan Harris and founded by Jim Priebe.

Whistle Community Radio is a not-for-profit organization

applying to the CRTC to broadcast on the FM band. The vision of Whistle Community Radio is to provide air space for local culture, music, sport, news and views.

Already we webcast Stouffville Spirit hockey at whistleradio.com. We also have several podcasts on a range of topics, including interviews with local musicians and a local author.

A community station such as ours is required to draw heavily on volunteers in the community. If you've always dreamed of your own radio show this may be the place for you! Already the library, museum and art gallery have expressed interest in contributing regular features.

If you're a techie you may enjoy learning how to operate radio equipment, or if you're a little zany, you may enjoy the promotions side of things. In short, if you're passionate about radio then volunteer with us.

For a taste of some of the music you'll hear, come to our fundraiser on Feb. 4. The event will feature a host of local musicians. Tickets are just \$15 each and are available at a number of places around town.

Check out our website, www.whistleradio.com for more details.

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Merry Christmas

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