

East Gwillimbury's **Bulletin**

MAGAZINE

December 2012, VOL. 14, NO. 10

Since 1998



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Town of
East Gwillimbury



ANNUAL TOY & FOOD DRIVE

Staff from the Town of East Gwillimbury will be collecting for those less fortunate during this holiday season.

Donations of non-perishable food items, gift cards and new unwrapped toys will be accepted starting Monday December 3rd until Thursday, December 20th

Drop-off locations & hours of operation:

**Civic Centre, 19000 Leslie St., Sharon
Monday to Friday, 8:30 am – 4:30 pm**

**Holland Landing Library Branch, 19513 Yonge St. and
Mount Albert Library Branch, 19300 Centre St.**

**Tuesday to Thursday, 10 am – 8 pm
Friday, 10 am – 5 pm
Saturday, 10 am – 4 pm
Sunday, 1 pm – 5 pm**

**Should you, or someone you know
require assistance this year, please contact
The Salvation Army at (905) 895-6276**

ALL INFORMATION IS KEPT STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL.

THANK YOU & HAPPY HOLIDAYS



Successful GOLF 2 REMEMBER tournament in support of Alzheimer Society of Toronto

Presentation of Tournament cheque



(left to right Betsy Sumner, Tara Morse, Jane Simard and David Pearce – Collacutt Travel, and centre Nicole Laframboise – Alzheimer Society of Toronto)

The Golf 2 Remember organizers, and principal sponsor Collacutt Travel, are proud to present a \$5,000 cheque to the Alzheimer Society of Toronto. The funds were raised on September 18th at the 2012 Golf 2 Remember tournament held at Silver Lakes Golf and Country Club in Newmarket, and will help the Alzheimer Society of Toronto continue to...

- Provide free counselling, support groups, and education for people with Alzheimer's disease and other dementias, as well as their families and caregivers.
- Provide specialized dementia care training and professional development for Personal Support Workers and other health-care providers.
- Fund research to find the cause and the cure.
- Sincere thanks to the many golf participants, prize and auction sponsors who made this possible!

The date for the 2013 GOLF 2 REMEMBER Tournament at Silver Lakes Golf & Country Club is AUGUST 21. Inquiries are welcomed by Tara Morse, Collacutt Travel. (416) 225-8871.

For details about the Alzheimer Society of Toronto visit www.alzheimertoronto.org or call 416-322-6560.



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Contributors: Susan Crema-Martin, Brandi McCarthy, Raymond Mark, Anne Hill, Ian Hawkins, Moira Sanders, Daila Webster

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*On the Cover: Photos: Christine Bennis
 East Gwillimbury Santa Claus Parade held Sunday, November 18 in Sharon. Over 25 floats participated displaying this years' theme: The Sights and Sounds of the Holidays! Below Mayor Hackson and your councillors in the parade.*



The holidays are now upon us! We hope that you and your families enjoy the season to the fullest and all the best for 2013!



Once again The Bulletin celebrates an anniversary serving East Gwillimbury for the 15th year... we look forward to another great year! We appreciate the contributions from our monthly contributors and all the businesses that advertise... if it weren't for you we would not be able to provide this community magazine.

I had the pleasure of participating in the East Gwillimbury Santa Claus Parade in Sharon this year as one of the parade judges... thanks to my judging sidekicks Gina Casey, Town of East Gwillimbury and our Deputy Fire Chief Phil Dawson we had a fantastic time! Great to see the efforts of the schools, businesses and groups. Well done.

I now look forward to Christmas, my favourite holiday of the year, and although my decorations haven't been unpacked I will be in the spirit with this weekend's Mount Albert Santa Claus parade and a family gathering... see you all in the new year. Enjoy!

Christine

Please don't forget those that are less fortunate... contribute to your local food bank or toy drive and make the holidays better for all.

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What's On

Starting Monday, December 3 FREE BOOT CAMP

with a food donation for local food banks. 7:30 - 8:30 pm at Healthier at Home's studio, Mount Albert.
Dates: December 3 - 6 and 10 - 13.
Contact Shannon at 416-617-2523 or healthierathome@hotmail.com

Saturday, December 8 Sharon Public School's 3rd Annual Elf Day

Free admission. 9 am - 2 pm.
18532 Leslie Street, Sharon
Fundraising event featuring 40+ vendors, pancake breakfast, fresh Christmas trees, Poinsettias, gift wrapping, crafts for kids, and much more!

Saturday, December 8 Christmas in Uxbridge Men of Note Choir

7:30 pm. A pleasing balance of tenor, baritone and rich, resonant bass voices. Tickets: Adults \$15, Seniors and children 12 and under, \$12. St. Paul's Anglican Church, 59 Toronto Street South, Uxbridge.

Saturday, December 8 E.G. Trail Walk

Brown Hill Regional Forest Tract
Meet in parking lot on the west side of Ravenshoe Road and McCowan Roads. Meet at 9 am, dressed for the weather.

Saturday, December 8

Tree Trimming Party: Come to the Library for holiday fun with crafts, tree trimming, and Christmas goodies. Ages 3 - 7 years. Cost: \$1 / child.
Mount Albert from 10:30 - 11:30 am
Please register by visiting your local branch. East Gwillimbury Public Library, Mount Albert Branch: 19300

Centre St., Mount Albert. 905-473-2472. Details at www.egpl.ca.

Sunday, December 9

Writer's Community of York Region meeting featuring Ted Barris.
Newmarket Community Centre and Lions Hall. 200 Doug Duncan Dr.
The WCYR is a non-profit organization that acts as a resource for writers of all levels in York Region. www.wcyork.ca

Tuesday, December 11

York Simcoe Naturalists Club

General Meeting
7:30 pm. Speaker: Erike Weisz from the Ministry of Natural Resources who will speak about Invasive Species in the Lake Simcoe Watershed. River Drive Park Community Centre, 20 Oak Avenue in River Drive Park (off the Queensville Sideroad, north of Holland Landing). Refreshments will be served. Please lug a mug. www.ysnaturalists.ca or ysnclub@yahoo.ca.

Saturday, December 15

Christmas Crafts and Santa Visit:

Create and decorate your own sock snowman with craft expert Pauline Pearsall. All supplies provided. Then meet with Santa!

Craft: Ages 5 + / Cost: \$1 per person.
Santa visit: All ages / Free.

Holland Landing: Saturday, December 15 from 10:30 - 11:30 am. Santa visits at 11:30 am. Please register by visiting your local branch. East Gwillimbury Public Library, Holland Landing Branch: 19513 Yonge St., Holland Landing. 905-836-6492. Details at www.egpl.ca

Saturday, December 15

Forest Jingle Bell Walk

Hollidge Tract, 16389 Hwy. 48
Stouffville. 1 pm to 3pm
Learn how natural plantings can provide
Join other merry walkers along a 2km

forest path. Enjoy festive music and learn how wildlife adapts to winter conditions. Jingle bells will be provided. A donation of non-perishable food for the local food bank is appreciated.

Sunday December 16

Christmas Concert

Mount Albert United Church
41 Alice Street, 2 pm to 4 pm
Featuring Rhythm A'Peal Handbell Quartet and other great musicians.
Free Will Offering. Supporting Food Bank and Handbell Quartet.

Tuesday, December 18

Mount Albert United Church Community Luncheon

11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., Cost \$7.00
Come and enjoy a delicious lunch served by our church.
41 Alice Street, Mount Albert.

Wednesday, December 19

Mount Albert Village Association's Monthly Meeting

Please join us at 7:30 pm. \$10 membership anytime. Location: Mad Hatters' Bistro, Centre Street.
All Welcome! www.mountalbert.com

Thursday, December 20

(every 3rd Thursday)

Holland Landing Country & Western Jamboree

Holland Landing Community Centre.
7 pm to 11 pm. All are welcome.
Jacquie or Walt at 905-473-7072 for info.

Saturday, December 22

Family Skate with Santa

9 am to noon. Santa arrives at 10 am.
Brought to you by the EG Skating Club and EGs Minor Hockey Association.
1/2 Time show at 10:45 by both groups.

What's On

Sharon Sports Complex, Mount Albert
Road east of Leslie Street.

Until Sunday, December 23

Uxbridge Farmers' Market

Sundays, 10 am to 2 pm

Uxbridge Arena on Brock Street.

Fresh produce, crafts, baking, honey,
jams and jellies.

Monday December 24

Christmas Eve Candle Light Service

7:00 pm. at Holt Free Methodist Church,
19188 McCowan Road, just north of Mt.
Albert Road. www.holtfmc.webs.com
905-473-3783

Until December 29

GALLERY OF TREES

See our Gallery of Trees decorated to
different time periods. Whether your
style is Victorian, Edwardian, or Retro,
there's something for everyone. Free
admission. For more information,
please call 905-953-5314. The Museum
is located at 134 Main Street South,
Newmarket.

Every Monday and Wednesday

Holland Landing Storybook House

A free resource centre for families/
caregivers with children from birth to 5
years of age. Join us for socialization,
stories, songs, fingerplays, waterplay,
playdough, music and movement. 930
am – 11:30 am at Holland Landing
Public School, 16 Holland River Blvd.,
Holland Landing. 905-836-8916. Closed
school holidays and July/August.

Every Wednesday

Self Employment Benefit (OSEB) Program

The Ontario Self Employment Benefit
program helps eligible, unemployed
individuals to start their own business.
To learn more or to register for a session
call 905-952-0981. Job Skills, 17915
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www.jobskills.org



**Tree Pickup
January 7, 2013**

**AJ Jakubowska (Ms.) & Eun-Kyung Lee (Ms.)
Lawyers – Family Law**

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Garbage Collection
is one day
later beginning
December 25
and January 1
including Saturday
January 5 (for
regular Friday
pickups)

**Holiday Skating
at Sharon's
Sports Complex:**

**Adults: \$2
Youth (under 16)\$1**

**Thursday, Dec. 27
10 am - 11:50 am**

**Friday, Dec. 28
1:00 pm - 2:50 pm**

**Monday, Dec. 31
10:00 am - 11:50**

**Wed., Jan. 2
1:30 pm - 3:20 pm**

**Thurs., Jan. 3
12 noon - 1:50 pm**

**Friday, Jan. 4
10 am - 11:50 am**

**PA Day Skating
Schedule:
Friday, Jan. 18
1:00 pm - 2:50 pm**



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East Gwillimbury

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Fee \$6.00 per day

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9:00 am -12:00 pm

Fee: \$13.00 per day

Extended Hours: 7:30-9:00 am- Fee: \$3.00 per day

For more details on theme days and to register:
Please visit www.eastgwillimbury.ca
or contact Leisure Services at 905-478-3826

AT CHRISTMAS TIME
 DECK THE HALLS
 SING CAROLS
 STAND UNDER MISTLETOE
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**PARRY SOUND
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Novice A Eagles Go Undefeated in Parry Sound at Bobby Orr Hall of Fame Classic

EG's Novice A eagles were very successful in their first tournament of the season in Parry Sound this weekend, Oct. 12 - 14.

They started off the tournament Friday with a 6-0 win against Midland. The Eagles added two more wins on Saturday beating Parry Sound 3 - 1 and coming out on top against Huntsville 7-3. In Sunday's semi-final against the home team, Parry Sound, the Novice A Eagles pulled off another win 7 - 1 to move on to the finals against Hamilton later that day.

The Hamilton team held nothing back in the Finals and put our team to work early on. Great saves by EG's goalie, hard work by the entire team and a great tie-breaking goal in an exciting nail-biting overtime period, helped the Eagles clinch the victory in a 5 - 4 win.

Tournament MVP went to #16 Adam Johnson. With 28 goals for and only 9 against, what a way to start the season. Way to go Eagles!

East Gwillimbury Athletes

*We count on Coaches, Parents and the Community to submit stories to feature!
Thanks for your contributions - email info@thebulletinmagazine.com*

CHRISTMAS CRACKERS

The Christmas cracker was invented in 1847 by Tom Smith, a baker of wedding cakes from Clerkenwell, London.

On a trip to Paris in 1840 Smith discovered the "bon-bon," a sugared almond wrapped in a twist of paper. Back in London, his "new" sweets became quite popular. When he noticed that young men were buying them for their sweethearts he began to place love mottoes on small slips of paper inside the wrapping. In 1846, standing at his fireplace, the crackle of a log gave him the flash of inspiration for the cracker. After much experimentation (and burning hands and furniture), he got it right. He pasted small strips of saltpeter to two strips of thin card. As the cards were pulled away from each other, the friction created a crack and a spark. (The concept is still used today.) By 1947, Tom Smith's cracking sweets were the fashion. They were first known as "Cosaques" after the cracking of the Cossack's whips as they rode through Paris during the Franco-Prussian wars. The name stuck for about another decade before simply being known as Christmas crackers.

The cracker concept was hot and others were quick to copy Smith's idea. The outer wrapper became the showcase in the fight for market share, with more varied and colorful designs. They were also being sold 12, sometimes 6, in a matching box. It forced Smith to head for the patent office to protect his design, and his company, called the Tom Smith Crackers.

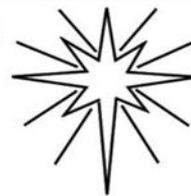


By the 1880s, Smith's company produced more than a hundred cracker designs. By 1900, Smith sold more than 13 million crackers. They were being used not just at Christmas, but at just about any festive occasion, including fairs and coronations.

In 1933, printed foil wrappers with individual designs were launched. The contents became more

Did the Three Wise Men bring gift cards to the manger?

Maybe we should put more thought into Christmas.



Join us this season for a more personal experience.

**Christmas Eve Services
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complicated, some featuring glass pendants, brooches, bracelets and other jewelry.

In early Victorian times, Twelfth Night was officially banned as being too rowdy because of the excessive use of crackers.

The Chinese New Year fortune cookies gave Tom Smith, the inventor of the Christmas cracker, the idea of putting a love motto in the wrapping. Later he added small toys.

IN THE KITCHEN with Moira Sanders

One reason I love this recipe is the sheer number of cookies it makes for very little effort. In fact, shortbread do better with a less-is-more approach. The dough comes together in a few minutes, it's patted into a baking sheet, and bakes for less than an hour. For a twist, finely chop a handful of dried cherries or cranberries and add to the dough before spreading in the pan. If I find myself with a little extra time on my hands, I love the look of shortbread cookies that have been pressed with a wooden cookie stamp (as in the picture). Roll pieces of the dough into 1-inch balls. Dip the stamp into granulated sugar (or berry sugar) and press the stamp onto the balls evenly. The cooler your cookie dough, the more clearly you'll be able to see the stamp.

Shortbread Cookies

2 cups (500 mL) unsalted butter, at room temperature
1 cup (250 mL) rice flour
1 cup (250 mL) berry sugar
3 cups (750 mL) all-purpose flour

Preheat the oven to 300F. Line a 10- x 15-inch rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper.

Cream the butter in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment. In a medium bowl, combine the rice flour, berry sugar, and flour. Slowly add the dry ingredients to the butter. Mix the dough on medium speed until it begins to come together in a ball.

Press the dough into the prepared baking sheet. Use a large rolling pin to distribute the dough evenly, making certain the corners are filled.

Using a table fork, prick up and down the entire surface of the dough, no more than ¼ inch apart.

Bake for about 45 minutes or until the cookies begin to turn a pale golden colour. Cool for 5 minutes, then cut into 1- x 1 1/2-inch rectangles. (Do not wait until the shortbread has cooled completely before cutting or it will be too difficult to cut.)

When the shortbread has completely cooled, remove the cookies from the pan.

Store the shortbread in an airtight container for up to one week.



Moira Sanders has made a career of food which gives her inspiration for her local cooking classes, her website www.moirasanders.com, and cooking for her busy family. Moira co-wrote the award-winning cookbook "The Harrow Fair Cookbook" published by Whitecap Books. Moira can be reached at moira@moirasanders.com.

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Dear Unknown Very Kind Lady,

As a resident of Centre Street in Mount Albert, I would like to thank you for your volunteering task of picking up garbage on both sides of Centre Street on a continuing basis. Our street is always so nice and tidy and that's because you discreetly walk the street very early in the morning, I think on a daily basis, with a plastic bag and pick up everything (from paper to dog poo).

Please know that your generous contribution is very much appreciated and I am very grateful for having such a kind person living in my neighbourhood.

*Many Thanks,
Rose Marie Landry*

Announcement FOOD BANK CONTEST

42" TV WINNER TED MOORE

of Holland Landing



Drawing the winning ball

Ken Blyth Jr., Councillor, Marlene Johnson & Paul Taylor, President of the Lions Club



Many Thanks to All That Participated!



From left to right, Marlene Johnson, Paul Taylor, Ken Blyth Jr., Gary Blyth, Ken Blyth Sr. & Ted Moore



Christmas is around the corner please Remember to give Generously to the Food Bank!

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Helping you is what we do.

Check out these websites for holiday fun:

www.xmasclock.com

www.emailsanta.com

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NQkF7fpw-wl>
(Frank Kelly's Parody 12 Days of Christmas)



Christmas Stress and What To Do About It

By Raymond Mark

Enough of the negative wouldn't you really rather have positive Christmas experiences? Yes, then read on. You have told me about the commercialism, the false aspects of Christmas, the stress and the letdowns. I agree there are no question. Wouldn't you really rather our kids are bombarded by ads, to Christmas. Ads tell our kids that popular. Hey, I have been through to give in or are you a fighter: does about doing it your way!



You and I know that it is possible to the commercial steamroller a little if you own special experience and your credit cards.

Part of the negative reaction to Christmas is the feelings of helplessness: it is useless to resist. Well my friend I am here to tell you that you can resist and survive; a happier, healthier you. Get a pad and pen and write down what are your positive memories of Christmas, now and in the past. To help with your list ask your partner, have a family meeting or just give it some in-depth thought. Ask your children what the happiest times for them at Christmas were; my guess is that it will not include their commercialized acquisitions. Ask them specifically to make of list of what they want; a wish list of things money cannot buy.

It is important to enlist assistance from family and relatives especially when making the Christmas meal or other Christmas festivities. Delegate tasks. You don't need to do everything yourself. Enlist a number of co-hosts. The heightened expectations of family togetherness can all combine to undermine our best intentions. Avoid known triggers. For example, if politics is a touchy subject in your family, don't talk about it. If someone brings up the topic, use distraction and quickly move on to something else to talk about. Make the day as stress free as possible.

Here is a chance to practice your positive self-talk. Keep telling yourself that you can make a difference. Nothing will stop you from experiencing a "Merry Christmas" and the "Joy" of Christmas. Believe it, my friend, and it will happen. To all you negative Christmas Grinch's, yes there is a Santa Claus who can bring all of us a positive, special joyful Christmas. I am positive when I say that you can have a "Merry Christmas".

easy solutions. However, let me ask you a have a "Merry Christmas"? I know that peer pressure and the me-first approach they need the certain gift in order to be it myself. Think about it, do you want it really have to be that way? How

experience joy at Christmas. Give in to want, however don't let it dominant your

own special experience and your credit cards. Part of the negative reaction to Christmas is the feelings of helplessness: it is useless to resist. Well my friend I am here to tell you that you can resist and survive; a happier, healthier you. Get a pad and pen and write down what are your positive memories of Christmas, now and in the past. To help with your list ask your partner, have a family meeting or just give it some in-depth thought. Ask your children what the happiest times for them at Christmas were; my guess is that it will not include their commercialized acquisitions. Ask them specifically to make of list of what they want; a wish list of things money cannot buy.

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Hort Happenings • DECEMBER 2012

By Anne Hill

What a great time we had at the Annual General Meeting of East Gwillimbury Gardeners (Mt. Albert Hort) last month. Ken Brown was our guest speaker; he always has good pictures and lots of informative garden hints. Our members had prepared a terrific spread of appetizers and desserts. We saw the gardening year out in fine style.



East Gwillimbury Gardeners

The bulbs are planted; most of the garden clean-up is done. In planting the bulbs I came across a lot of next year's spring bulbs already growing new shoots under the soil so I know there's a whole lot of growth just waiting for its time to appear. The squirrels have been busily hunting for the bulbs I planted but so far I'm not seeing any deep holes. Perhaps the hair I scattered with the tulip and crocus bulbs is discouraging the critters.



Quite a collection of plants from outside is now gathered inside by the patio doors to soak up all the available winter sunshine. They do get leggy over the winter but it's worth it to keep them from year to year. The big succulent is going into its third winter looking very good. It is a flapjack plant – quite a strange-looking thing with paddle-shaped fleshy leaves (*kalanchoe luciae*). The edges of the leaves develop a rich purple colouring during the summer outside.

There are some beautiful places to visit if you have some free time this month. The annual Christmas display in the greenhouse at Allan Gardens runs through December and Black Creek Pioneer Village is decked out for Christmas with special events throughout the month. The Black Creek by Lamplight evenings are very special. All details are on their websites.

Our monthly meetings start up again in February; we have booked some excellent speakers for next year; here's a list for the first few months:

Tuesday, February 19th, 7:30p.m: Gardens of the Islands and Highlands, with Jennifer Walton and Donna McMaster

Tuesday, March 19th, 7:30pm: Waking the Garden. Sabrina Selvaggi will get us off to a good start with the garden and the lawn.

Tuesday, April 16th: Shannon Lindensmith from Georgina Garden Centre will tell us about what's new for 2013.

All good wishes for Christmas and the New Year from all of us at the "Hort".

Our email address is mtalbert@gardenontario.org and our website is <http://www.gardenontario.org/site.php/mountalbert>

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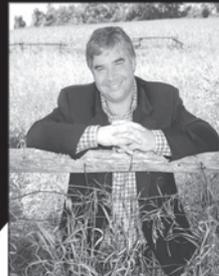


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Holiday Staples get a Healthier Upgrade

It's no secret that holiday food is delicious... and generally ridiculously high in calories! It's so easy to put on an extra few pounds around the holiday season because of all of those delicious calorie laden treats calling our name around every corner. There are always lots of great articles with tips and tricks for avoiding calorie traps at parties and at the office, but what about the main event? The BIG Christmas dinner? It doesn't need to be soaked in calories to be delicious! Instead of the usual tricks to navigating the holiday party scene (never go hungry, snack on veggies....yup, I've heard them all and written about them too), I've decided to attack the main event and give you some easy tricks to lighten up your holiday dinner and maybe even find a new favorite!

1. Mashed Potato Makeover.

Most people would think it's the plates of turkey and gravy that tend to be the "heavy" part of the holiday meal, but those potatoes can be a calorie bomb! Mashed potatoes are a big delicious helping of heavy carbohydrates just waiting to make your pants too tight (and those extra helpings you can't say no to don't help either). Try this trick to cut the calories almost in half without sacrificing taste and flavour; Replace half of the potatoes in your recipe with celery root and/or cauliflower. They both mash up well with the potatoes, have a nice light flavour (so no one will really even know you did it!) and hold on to a bit more moisture so that you can use a bit less butter/cream/milk when mashing them. Another great trick I love is to mash in 3 or 4 roasted cloves of garlic; the buttery taste is out of this world and really adds some great flavour without added calories!

2. Slimmed Down Gravy.

Gravy gets a bad rap as being extremely fattening, but made well, it's really not at all! Let's face it, no one likes a greasy gravy, but skimming the fat from the drippings can be a pain. Enter the "Gravy Skimmer" (Google it, you'll want one!!). I have been using this tool for years and literally could not live without it. It's just a large measuring cup with a long spout that originates from the bottom. Pour in the turkey drippings, wait a few minutes for the fat to rise to the top and then pour out all of the

delicious (de-fatted) turkey juices from the bottom via the ingenious spout! The fat is the last to come out so you can add as much or as little as you wish. From there you can make your delicious low calorie gravy without all the greasiness!

3. Load up the Vegetables!

This isn't really a "trick" to makeover a part of your meal, it's simply something that I find is often overlooked. I like a holiday table filled with a minimum of three veggie dishes (and I don't count mashed potatoes). Simply having some healthier, veggie choices to fill your plate up with can save you a fair bit of calories! Try to think outside the frozen/microwaved carrots and peas too! My staples are roasted Beets (delicious and they look festive!), roasted Brussels Sprouts with Asiago cheese and pecans (my Mom makes these and they are AMAZING), and some simple steamed Green Beans with a bit of butter. You can use any veggies you like, but make sure you use them! They add a healthy dose of fibre and antioxidants to your meal and are generally WAY lower in calories than anything else on the table.

4. Picking on the Pie.

I know, I know, how can I dare mess with pie! Well, I can and I will! Don't get me wrong, I love pie, in fact I like it so much I can never decide which flavour I want, so I have a couple pieces.....oops. A couple Thanksgiving dinners ago I made a few "crustless" pies. I did the pie filling in individual ramekins and topped them with either traditional crust, a crumble topping or nothing at all in the case of pumpkin or lemon meringue. It was a huge hit! People could have two (or three!) different ones and not feel like they were stuffed to the gills! I admit, it takes a fair bit more work, but if you do it ahead of time they can be frozen until Christmas dinner. You can buy cheap ramekins at the dollar store or even use the super small Mason jars (they look really cute). When dessert is being served you can serve a big tray of assorted "mini crustless pies" and let your guests decide on how much they are going to indulge! They taste great AND look fantastic!

I hope you try at least one of these idea's to lighten up your holiday feast just a little. Here's to a delicious AND healthier holiday dinner this year. Enjoy and Happy Holidays!



By Brandi McCarthy, RHN. Brandi is a Registered Nutritionist and certified Personal Trainer at Body Design. Body Design offers personal training, nutrition and lifestyle coaching to assist individuals achieve their fitness and weight loss goals. www.bodydesign.ca



This year's campaign will run from November 15th until December 17th 2012.

Drop off your donation of an unwrapped new toy or *Canadian Tire* money for Holiday Heroes at the East Gwillimbury Community Police Centre
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Circles - The Perfect Christmas Letter

By Vicki Pinkerton

I am writing this near the end of November on my computer, not by hand and I am thinking about Christmas. I always have trouble finding the right gift. If you are on my list, chances are, I can't afford to give you something you really want. That means I will be looking for the perfect gift, the one that doesn't cost more than I have and tells you how I feel about you. Easy, except I also have one more stipulation and that is, the gift has to be something you can use, something that won't just become clutter you can't throw out because it stands for my love for you. That makes gift giving in my house almost impossible. Oh what to do, what to do?

Today I thought, what about a Christmas letter? Not one chronicling my life over the past year but a letter that puts something of myself in the envelope, that gives you a piece of me. What if I committed to write it by hand and maybe more than just once at Christmas? What about a letter a month or every two months? Would send you running to your mailbox in anticipation?

It sounds hard. Handwriting takes longer than keyboarding. We often worry about people being able to read our scrawl and what about our spelling? More often than not, people accept us for who we are. They allow our quirks and foibles, loving us in spite of them. Those same people will love our letters in that spirit. So I started thinking about a letter, the perfect Christmas letter.

If you were going to write the perfect Christmas letter, how would you go about it? I have some suggestions:

The perfect letter would be written by hand in large, loopy letters using a pen that has a rich blue ink, although black, purple, red or green could be considered. The paper would be smooth and silky under the skin and would inspire the free flow of words.

The perfect Christmas letter might not be built with excellent spelling, grammar or penmanship but it would contain a spark that would make the recipient take notice. The voice of the letter writer would echo in the heart of the reader.

The perfect Christmas letter might be to Santa Claus asking for gifts. It could be to a local restaurant commending them for hiring that amazing server who gave such great service last week or it could be to a gas station to thank an attendant who came out in the rain and helped when he really didn't have to. It could be to your parents, sister or brother. It could be to a friend or someone you haven't seen in a while. It might build new bridges, repair old ones or just say, I'm thinking of you. Don't forget, it could also be to someone who has helped you see yourself in a new way, or even someone you haven't like.

The perfect Christmas letter will be unexpected and lie in the mailbox at the bottom of a stack of bills and advertisements. It will be opened and appreciated before a single word is read because lets face it, who sends handwritten letters these days.



The letter will be written and sent out in love. We can't know how it will be received but in the grand scheme of things, we can't worry about that part. Our job is to take the time, pick up the paper and pen and to find words that say, 'I care about you.' A handwritten letter is an intimate moment between two people, the reader and the writer crossing a bridge of words together.

A Christmas card in all of its glory is just a "hey, we're thinking of you." A family newsletter is sent to everyone you know just to catch up. It's fun but not very personal. A handwritten letter is a quaint reenactment of a lost bit of history but in so many ways the sentiment it expresses will never go out of style and it may be the ideal Christmas gift in a world that asks us to put a dollar value on our love.

The perfect Christmas letter could include hand drawn pictures by the kids or simple messages written by them. It could also be composed in a solitary moment where you sit and gather your thoughts.

The perfect Christmas letter does not have to be perfect. I remember my grandmother treasuring letters and reading them again and again. A Christmas letter could have that effect.

The perfect Christmas letter wouldn't be pecked out on Twitter or Facebook. It wouldn't be texted or emailed. There would be no LMAO or LOLs but there would be a piece of you in there.

So what happens if the letter recipient thinks it is stupid or doesn't like the idea? Maybe all gifts come with that little extra, the gulp as you watch someone you love open the special something. What if they don't love it the way you thought they would when you made the purchase? Maybe this particular gift is worth the risk. I invite you to take the time to write, not just your letter to Santa this year but letters to those you love, offering your time, a piece of yourself, your handwriting and a wee bit of your soul, folded into an envelope and stamped with love.

Merry Christmas.

(Note: handwriting letters is coming back and being viewed as an art form. For more information Google 'Handwritten letters'. Prepare to be surprised and challenged to write more letters on paper with a pen. Apparently it is all the rage amongst young people in the know.)

Vicki Pinkerton lives on a small farm just outside of Mount Albert when she is not driving the roads of Canada. She is a practicing life coach, a writer and adventurer who wonders about many things. www.questacrosscanada.com or lifelinescoaching.org You can help for 2013. Where do you see community? What makes it work? Let me know.

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Decor ~ Colour Me Sold

By Susan Crema-Martin



Being diplomatic is difficult at times when I have to talk about paint colours during a consultation. I often get comments like, “the buyer can paint it the colour they want”, “we lived with this colour and think it is fine to sell the house like this”, or “I know it is red but it is too much work to cover it, they can do it themselves”. In today’s market, most buyers are looking for a turnkey property. They do not want to buy a property that has weeks of work to be done before they can settle in, they want to move in on Saturday, have friends over on Sunday and get back to work on Monday. The Maritz Research staging polls states that 63% of buyers are willing to pay more for a house that is move-in ready.

I just completed a consultation this week with a lovely couple. As soon as I walked into their house I felt like I was entering the 70’s era and luckily they felt like they have been living in the same era and wanted out. I proceeded to show them my 8” x 10” painted colour samples and we started working on a plan to have some of their rooms repainted. They were so excited to get started even though they are not listing until next March. Since colour establishes an emotion in all of us; it can portray a positive or negative feeling. Neutralizing the colours in a property for sale is important because the property will appeal to a broader range of buyers. Lighter colours will also make a room feel larger whereas darker colours typically make a room feel smaller.

In general, choosing a colour can be very difficult. How many times have you painted a room and said, “Oh, it’s too pink, too green or too blue; that is not what it looked like on the paint chip at the store”. If I could give you the top 5 colours to use I would but picking colours is not that simple if you do not understand the undertones. When choosing a colour, it is important to take all fixed surfaces, (floors, kitchen/bathroom cabinets, counter tops, fireplace stone, etc.) into consideration and choose a colour that relates to that surface. Lighting also plays a big part when choosing colour and every property will show off a colour differently.

Think of painting as a strategy to sell your home and not as a chore. Working with a professional can save you time and money, remember - Paint is cheaper than a price reduction!



Susan Crema-Martin is a Certified Master Canadian Staging Professional – CCSP Mentor. If you have a question for Susan, send your questions to: info@thebulletinmagazine.com





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Buying a Business – Caveat Emptor!

By Ian Hawkins

“Buyer Beware” is a saying as old as the hills – so old they even said it in Latin. How do you know what you are getting or what you are getting yourself into? Just because someone seems to have run a successful business does not mean that you are going to replicate that success. The due diligence required when buying an existing business must be just as thorough as when starting one from scratch.

One of the major reasons for buying an existing business is that the groundwork has already been done. There are existing clients, there is market awareness of the business and its products, there are established relationships with vendors/suppliers. There is a price to pay for all this. It makes up that intangible called Goodwill. The issue then becomes what you pay for it.

It is fair to say that the seller’s view of the value is often more than the buyer’s view and somewhere in the middle may be a fair price. Depending on the complexity of the business and the size of the deal, it is often advisable to retain the services of a professional to assist you in valuing a business to ensure you do not over-pay. I have seen many a prospective buyer who overpays due to an unfounded optimism as to how they can “improve” the business or run it better.

In many small businesses there is a ceiling beyond which it is impossible to increase revenues or profits without making changes. There is a finite number of hours that can be productively worked. There is a finite number of clients that can be serviced. In order to achieve an increase in production and profits, additional resources (space, furniture, equipment, assets, people) need to be employed. With these additions come new dynamics such as training, managing, supervision and new costs. Sometimes the new costs outweigh the benefits of increased volume.

Another reason to employ a professional is to ensure you are getting what you think you are. It is like buying a used car. There is a natural temptation for a vendor to “gild the lily” or put lipstick on the pig – trouble is it is still a pig. It is easy to manipulate bookkeeping software to boost sales numbers so the numbers must be reconciled to bank statements. Be very careful with vendors who claim unreported “cash” sales. If they have committed this crime that is a risk they took and they cannot expect their sale price to reflect unreported revenue.

Why is the vendor selling? It pays to have a healthy skepticism on this point. You need to understand the key success factors of the business you are buying and what your strengths are. Is this a business that has run its course? Is there new competition coming or new regulations being considered or passed that will put you out of business. Is new technology changing the way business is done? Speak to the landlord and make sure you understand what the current lease terms are and what will happen at lease renewal. Be aware of all major costs and what could happen to them. Are costs under control? Which are variable costs and which are fixed costs? Variable costs are the only ones you have any chance to impact and frequently these costs go up and not down. While you can manage a fixed cost like rent by relocating this also carries costs and risks.

When buying an inventory of products or materials, make sure you know what you are buying, how often these items sell, how old they are and whether any are spoiled or obsolete. When buying production machinery, make sure the machinery is in good working order. If you are not qualified to tell, get a mechanic who is qualified to inspect each machine for you. Where the business is dependent on a few major clients, make sure that you are allowed to visit with and talk to these clients. Finally, be sure to include a non-compete in your buy-sell agreement. Make sure the vendor does not intend to take your money and set up in competition with you next week. Courts do not look favourably on contracts in restraint of trade so take legal advice on the wording of your non-compete agreement.

Ian and Dorothy Hawkins own and operate Mount Albert Tax Company and Holland Landing Tax Company.

Mount Albert Village Association NEWS

Please join your fellow community members at our next meeting Wednesday, December 19 at 7:00 pm. Meeting location is Mad Hatters' Bistro on Centre Street, Mount Albert.

The monthly Directors' meeting is open to everyone. Come out with questions or any comments. Join the email list for updates and news - www.mountalbert.com

Did You Know?

These changes have been proposed to the YRT Routes in East Gwillimbury:

Effective April 21, 2013, as part of the 2013 Annual Service Plan, Route 58/58A – Leslie via Mt. Albert will be restructured as follows:

- › Route 58 (Sharon branch) to be discontinued due to low ridership. Existing passengers in Sharon can utilize Route 50 – Queensway or 58A – Mt. Albert
- › Route 58A (Mt. Albert branch) routing will be maintained including connections to 404 Town Centre, Foodland, East Gwillimbury GO Station (only select GO trains will be met), and midday connections to Southlake Hospital, Tannery Mall, Upper Canada Mall, and Newmarket GO Bus Terminal
- › Current rush hour frequency of 30 - 180 minutes will be improved to a consistent 64 minute frequency on Route 58A
- › Route 58A 10:20 p.m. northbound trip and 10:45 p.m. southbound trips will be replaced with Dial-a-Ride services

Visit <http://www.yrt.ca/en/schedulesmaps/DAR.asp> for more information regarding Dial-a-Ride



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Mayor Virginia Hackson and Councillor's Cathy Morton, Marlene Johnston, Tara Roy-DiClemente, John Eaton and staff, Town of East Gwillimbury.

To Mulch or Not to Mulch?

By Daila Webster, Lake Simcoe South Master Gardeners



Whether gardens are designed and maintained by professionals or artfully created by homeowners, I'm continuously surprised by how many of them are not mulched. We've been conditioned to believe that bare soil is aesthetically pleasing and the healthiest solution for our landscape. I would like to assert that mulch is an attractive and beneficial addition to the garden. Mulch feeds your soil essential nutrients while it decomposes; it preserves moisture levels, prevents compaction and discourages weed growth.

I consider myself a slothful gardener. For me, the greatest benefit of mulch is that it significantly decreases my workload in the garden. All of us, from aspiring new gardeners to seasoned and callused plant movers, seldom feel that we have finished our work. Mulch gives me peace of mind and releases me from an ongoing to-do list. After topping up my shredded pine mulch to 3" in the late spring, I truly believe that I'm actually "done" for the season. My only duty is to water during the driest portion of the summer and deadhead annuals and perennials when necessary. What a wonderful sense of freedom! What a rare feeling for a gardener's conscience!

Mulch is any material that covers bare soil. Rocks and stones can be considered mulch, but do not offer any nutritional benefit to the soil. Organic mulches such as grass clippings, shredded leaves or bark, wood chips, compost, hay and straw provide important food to the soil and plants as they decay. When plants are fed, they thrive, resist disease, and are more resilient during extreme temperatures. The result? A trouble free garden! When applying mulch, be sure to keep it several inches from the bark of shrubs and trees to prevent rodents from feeding on trunks and stems. One should also avoid using landscape fabric underneath because it will decrease the amount of water and nutrient absorption into the soil. Use natural coloured mulches and avoid tinted red or black mulches because manufacturers use chemicals to colour the wood. There's another reason to use earth coloured, natural mulches. Let's call it the Beauty Factor. Ask yourself whether you want all eyes to focus on the gaudy orange mulch or on the plants you so lovingly chose, planted and tended.

There's still time to mulch before winter arrives. The price varies depending on the product and whether you purchase it by the bag or truckload. A single pre-packaged bag of mulch typically retails for \$7-\$8 at garden and home centers and covers 2 cubic feet. If you were to purchase in bulk at a garden center, a cubic yard of shredded pine mulch retails for approximately \$50 + delivery (approx. \$45-\$100 depending on distance). One cubic yard is the approximate equivalent to 13.5 bags of pre-packaged mulch. If you have a friend or family member with a trailer or truck, this is the time to ask for a favour or present him with a bottle of wine.

The least expensive way to mulch your garden is to shred your fall leaves with your lawn mower and then spread them onto your garden. By the spring, the chopped-up leaves will have decomposed and your soil will be energized for another growing season. You can do the same with grass clippings, but beware of weed seeds. Freshly mulched tree branches from the arborist's truck can work well too. Most tree cutting companies will drop a load (usually a big load) in your driveway for free. If they are working in your area, it's easier for them to drop it in your driveway than drive to the nearest depot to empty. First ask if they were trimming or cutting any Black Walnut trees. If so, pass on the load because these trees contain a chemical called juglone which can kill or inhibit the growth of the plants and shrubs in contact with the mulch. Arborist wood-chip mulch is usually green (fresh) and therefore it will extract nitrogen from your garden soil as it decomposes. Some gardeners will apply additional nitrogen to make up for the depleted amount but it's not always necessary.

I love mulch because it gives me freedom from weeding and watering. The fresh smell of shredded pine mulch is intoxicating. The rich dark brown colour contrasts beautifully with my trees, shrubs and perennials. Maybe I'm just a



lazy gardener, but I'd rather be spending time with my family and friends than weeding or watering. I'm thankful that mulch helps me balance my passion for gardening with the rest of my life.

Lake Simcoe South Master Gardeners provide free gardening advice in York Region.

Send your questions to our gardening hotline at lssmastergardeners@gmail.com

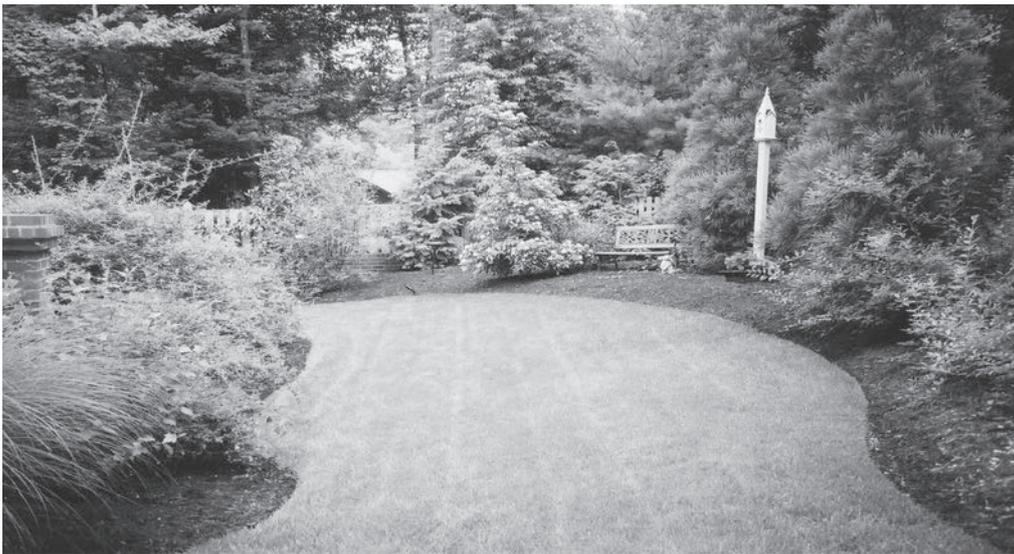


Photo (top) vegetable garden with straw mulch. (bottom) natural wood chips purchased in bulk to cover a large area.



Photo above: Gardening with Confidence



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What's Happening @ 

WHAT CHILD IS THIS?

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Advent services beginning December 2, 2012 @ 10 am.

Christmas Eve service on Monday, December 24th @ 6:30 pm.



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Super Saturday

Join us for this unforgettable experience on **December 8th, 2012** from 9am - 1:00 pm (registration opens at 8:30), with special guest **Chocolate Tales**, a Toronto-based company dedicated to teaching specialty chocolate making (www.chocolatetaleskids.ca). Kids from JK to Grade 6 will learn all about chocolate in a hands on, age appropriate workshop. Registration includes the workshop with Chocolate Tales, gingerbread decorating, Christmas crafts, a puppet show and a hotdog lunch! Please pre-register as space is limited. The \$10 registration fee can be paid in advance or on the day of the event. To register or for questions, contact us at carol@hillsidechurchmountalbert.com or 905-473-3227.

Sonshine Fellowship Christmas Banquet

Join us as we celebrate the Christmas season with our annual Sonshine Fellowship Christmas Banquet. For those 55 and up, this event will be held on Thursday, December 6 at 11:30 am. A free will offering will be collected.

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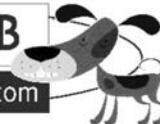


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Through the Hayes

My name is John Hayes and my wife, Julia and I own and operate Blackwater Golf on Highway 48. We are closed now for the winter but look forward to seeing you next year.

This month I am going to talk about vindication and accountability. It's always nice to be vindicated and this month it happened to me. It was just like an early Christmas gift. As many of you know I have often advocated for a more open government, transparency and a clearer communication between Town and resident. I think that too much of the decision making process goes on behind closed doors (in camera meetings) beyond scrutiny and without accountability. It's even more unnerving when some members of our council make accusations and hints of "backroom" deals. Whether the accusation is right or wrong, it is certainly upsetting to the public. Take, for just one example, the municipal purchase of the property next to the Town offices for "future expansion". Who knows what transpired and if this was a good decision. As it turns out the building has some serious pollution problems and is not usable in its present condition. In retrospect, we might just as well have bought the eastern shore of the Sea of Tranquility (I'll admit it's a bit of a commute)

So, you could have knocked me down with a feather when I read Andre Marin's (the Ontario Ombudsman) article in the York Regional News on October 22nd. He is reporting that too many municipalities are playing by their own rules and could be in violation of the protocols of the Municipal Act. Mr. Marin suggests that if there is any doubt of violations of the Municipal Act then just hold an open meeting – simple? – no?

He goes on to say that the overall perception of public skepticism is enhanced by the weak slap on the wrist for those who transgress. In the same article he states that if council ignores laws, then penalties must be applied...

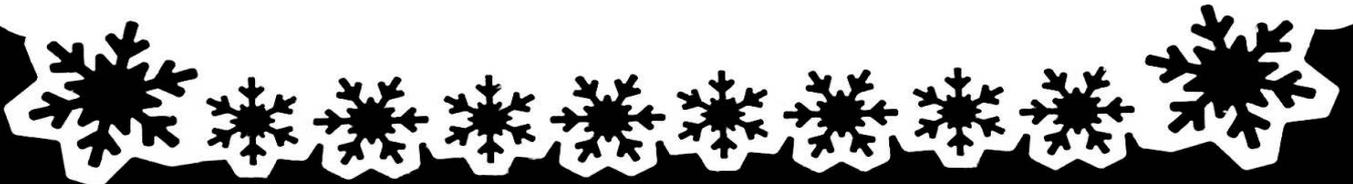
Soooo – if you've gotta government related complaint, you feel things aren't just right, you just wanna know who's who and what's what - who're you gonna call? Put this number on your speed dial and let your fingers do the walkin'. When you dial this number then YOU can do the talkin'.

Ombudsman's Office 1 800-263-1830. From what I understand - they're there to help you. Will these changes take place? - Who knows? Should these changes take place – you bet your baby blue booties.....

Can we believe in the impossible? Will the politicians relinquish power willingly. Well, maybe. As the White Queen told Alice "Why sometimes I've believed as many as six impossible things before breakfast!"

Don't forget to leave out the cookies and milk – MERRY CHRISTMAS AND GOODWILL TO ALL.....

So long for now, see you next edition..... Please feel free to contact me at Blackwater Golf (905) 473 6684 or contact @ blackwater-gc.ca. No rude emails or I can't forward them....



Wishing Everyone
a Merry Christmas and
Happy New Year!

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