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## Winter 2014

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## From the Publisher

Winter isn't officially here, but it pretty much feels like winter is here when I step outside! Plus, I can't help but think of winter and the holidays once we start working on the winter issue of The Local Biz Magazine.

This issue (as always) we have a great lineup for you! All of our feature articles are very timely for the holiday season and Wendy will elaborate more about them in her letter to follow. In the meanwhile, let me tell you what's in store for you from our regular columnists.

For all you dog lovers and dog owners out there (I'm one myself), Corry Hamilton offers up some creative solutions on how you can beat the winter blues, get some exercise and bond with your four-legged pal all at the same time in "Taking the Lead". Malachi Brown in "The Coach Corner" empowers you to reach your goals and not be limited by fear, ego or pride. He urges you to live a better life, to have better relationships and to have a better career or business. If you tend to take two steps forward and three steps back in life, then his column is a must-read!

In the middle of selling your home, but unsure what to do when you get low-balled? No worries. Ryan Smith shows you how to calmly and effectively respond to a low-ball offer on your home in "Real Estate Report".

Since the holidays are just around the corner, some of our regulars have decided to talk about the holidays in their column. Shirley Ouellette in "Tasteful Talk" talks about all things turkey and shares with us her tasty leftover turkey recipes in "Tasteful Recipes". Linda Calder reminisces about Christmases past in the "The Golden Years", while Victoria Cozza in "Teens, Tweens & In-Between" offers up some creative ways you can decorate your home and bedroom. Discover also how to stay trendy this season and get ideas on hair and makeup stocking stuffers from Stephanie Pommells in "Treat Yourself".

If you are planning to hit the movie theatres this holiday season, be sure to read Stephanie Herrera's "At the Box Office", and of course, don't forget to check out Sue-Ann Bavlnka's "Ask Sue-Ann" advice column, and Julie Antoinette's horoscope predictions for you.

Finally, don't forget to visit our website ([www.thelocalbizmagazine.ca](http://www.thelocalbizmagazine.ca)) and read up on what our bloggers are up to as well. We have nine bloggers who blog on a variety of topics including finance and insurance, fitness and health, sports, travel, humour, personal development and pets, and they have a lot of great insight to share with you!

I know you are really going to enjoy the 2014 winter issue of The Local Biz Magazine, as well as all the great content on our website. From our family to yours – Happy Holidays!

**Antoine Elhashem**  
**Publisher**





## From the Editor

Christmas is my absolute favourite time of year! Always has been and always will be. I love going for walks at night, or driving down a random street in my neighbourhood just so I can check out the Christmas decorations people put up on their houses. It truly is magical to see a street illuminated with colourful Christmas lights.

I also love seeing Christmas trees spruced up with tinsel, ornaments and lights. Are you a real tree or fake tree person? Growing up, I've always had a fake tree and that's what I have right now. But I know *a lot* of people who swear by a real tree. It's tempting – one Christmas, I'm going to get one to see what it's like.

The cool thing about Christmas is that everybody has a slightly different way of celebrating it. And though most of us probably are aware of this, we may not really have an idea of *how* it is differently celebrated. This is why in this issue, we have a feature article that gives you a glimpse of how the holidays are celebrated by different people in the Durham community; whether they have a small or big family, whether they are of the Christian faith or not, and whether they grew up in Canada or recently immigrated from another country.

And since this is a Christmas issue, we of course had to have an article that shows you how to cook the perfect turkey, written by none other than our resident food columnist Shirley Ouellette. If you've ever been intimidated of making this traditional holiday main, Shirley will help you overcome your fears! Following this, we have another very relevant feature that will teach you how to deal with temptation and cravings when faced with an abundance of delicious food and irresistible sweets this holiday. We know it can be hard to maintain any sort of health and fitness regimen during the holidays, but our fitness expert will teach you simple things you can do to stay healthy and avoid putting on too many extra pounds by the time the New Year makes its entrance.

On a more serious note, we also wanted to talk about the dangers of drinking and driving, as well as the dangers of distracted driving during the holidays. We want to stress the importance of being sober, focused and vigilant when behind the wheel. Durham readers, please be responsible on the roads during the holidays, and also all year long.

From all of us here at The Local Biz Magazine, we wish you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy Holiday season, and we'll see you in 2015!

**Wendy Chiavalon**  
Editor-in-Chief

## Have Your Say

*Christmas is just around the corner! What's your all-time favourite Christmas jingle?*

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## HOW TO COOK THE PERFECT TURKEY

**I** have always been intrigued about the pioneers who came to Canada and made their home in this sometimes harsh land. Many of them came from Europe where the climate was much milder, especially the winters, and one cannot help but wonder how they survived when the temperatures plummeted to minus 20°C and the snow piled up around their log cabin doors.

They learned quickly that preserving the harvest was very important if they were to make it through the winter months. Everyone in the family had chores assigned to them and typically young boys would feed the livestock and gather wood for fires and the stove. Men would be responsible for making furniture, building fences, ploughing, planting, fishing and general farming. Younger girls fed small animals and generally kept the home clean. The women of the household had to not only care for children, but also cooked, preserved meats, vegetables and fruits, took care of small animals including chickens, and made yarn for clothes and blankets; there really was no “down time”.

During those harsh winter months the pioneers ate wild venison,

pigeons, geese, partridge and hares, plus their own chickens and wild turkeys. They made salt pork, sausages and smoked ham, and stored root vegetables and apples in cellars to ensure they had enough food.

So here we are, and turkey is still our preferred dinner for the holidays. It makes us feel connected with our forefathers and the holiday feast celebrates the tenacity of our roots. So, how do you cook the perfect turkey? What if you don’t want a big bird? Funny you should ask, we have it covered.

Firstly, I want to point out that you do *not* need to cook a turkey overnight! I have heard so many people tell me they cook their turkey for an insane amount of time. Trust me Durhameers, 15-20 minutes a pound will do the trick. But do not stress; buy a meat thermometer to take out any guess work. If you do not want to get a big turkey you could also just buy a “crown” (no legs or wings), or you can cut off the legs and freeze them for later.

But let’s get back to how you cook a perfect turkey:

- 1. Prepare the Turkey for Roasting** - About an hour before roasting, remove the turkey from the fridge. This takes the chill off the meat which helps the meat cook faster and more evenly, and it dries out the skin, which promotes browning and crisping. (Note: If your turkey is frozen, make sure to defrost it 2-3 days *beforehand* in the fridge and then follow the instructions above. The bigger the turkey, the longer it will take to defrost. You don’t want to put a frozen bird in the oven!)



**“It makes us feel connected with our forefathers and the holiday feast celebrates the tenacity of our roots.”**

2. **Heat the Oven to 450°F** – Rub the turkey with lemon, salt and pepper. If you are stuffing your turkey, this is the time to do it. I would recommend you only stuff the neck end and not the main cavity as this will help the bird will cook more evenly.

3. **Roast the Turkey** – Chop finely a carrot, small cooking onion and a couple sticks of celery to make a mirepoix for the turkey to sit on. These flavours transfer to the bird, but they are also the base for your gravy. Pour two cups of broth or water into the roasting pan.

Cook your bird *breast-side down* to start with, to shield the breast meat and ensure all the juices go there and make it moist. (I know it seems odd, but you turn it breast-side up for the last 30 minutes to brown.) Cover it with a tight fitting lid, or make a tent with heavy duty tin foil. Try not to let the foil touch the bird; your aim is to make a tent around it. Place the turkey into the oven and immediately turn

down the heat down to 350°F.

4. **Cooking Time** - The rule of thumb for cooking a turkey is *15 minutes per pound*. However, some factors like brining the bird, no stuffing and leaving the legs un-trussed will make for much faster cooking. Plan on the 15-minute-per-pound rule, but start checking the temperature of your turkey about halfway through the scheduled cooking time to gauge how fast it's cooking.

5. **Baste the Turkey** - Every 45 minutes, remove the turkey from the oven, close the oven door (don't let that heat out!), and baste the turkey all over. To baste, tilt the pan and use a turkey baster or spoon to scoop up the liquids and drizzle them on top of the turkey. Basting with pan juices cools the surface of the turkey and slows down cooking. If you find there is not a lot of liquid add some more water.

6. **Check the Temperature** – If you are using a meat thermometer to make sure the turkey is fully cooked, check its temperature in three places: the breast, the outer thigh, and the inside thigh. The meat should be at least 165°F. Once this happens (or by timing if you do not have a thermometer), turn the turkey *breast-side up* and put back into the oven *uncovered* for another 20 to 30 minutes until the skin has browned a little.

7. **Rest the Turkey** - Grab one side of the roasting rack with an oven mitt and tilt the turkey so liquids inside the cavity run out into the pan. (These juices are used to make the gravy.)

Then, lift the whole turkey and transfer it to a large serving plate or cutting board. Tent the turkey with aluminum foil again and let it rest for at least 30 minutes. This gives time for the meat to firm up and the juices to be re-absorbed into the muscle tissue, making the turkey easier to slice and taste juicier.

8. **Make Gravy** – Gravy is something my family loves, and why not! You can either strain the mirepoix and just use the juices for the gravy, or you can zip up the whole contents of the roasting pan in a blender to make the gravy. If you want a thicker gravy you may need to add a flour slurry or some gravy browning; your choice.

9. **Carve the Turkey** - Carve the turkey by removing the wings first, then the legs, then the breast meat. Once you have the meat off, you can separate the legs into thighs and drumsticks and carve the breast meat into individual slices.

That's all there is to it! Roasting a turkey is really just like roasting a large chicken, but the wonderful aroma and gamey taste is so amazing.

Now you have your turkey plan, what about the side dishes? There is no doubt the turkey is the star of the show, but it needs back-up. Brussel sprouts are a must in our house. I blanch them, slice them lengthways, then fry them with chopped bacon and serve with toasted flaked almonds. We also make a medley of roasted root vegetables; potatoes, carrots, parsnips, white turnips and beets. Try to get small vegetables and keep them whole so they cook evenly. I just scrub them clean in water, dry them, toss them in vegetable oil, sea salt and fresh ground pepper, and put them on a tray in the oven; they take about 45 minutes, but keep an eye on them as smaller ones may burn.

And don't forget the cranberry sauce. Put fresh cranberries in a saucepan and add finely grated zest and juice from a large orange. Cook on low until the cranberries have all popped and softened; add sugar to taste.

I wish you a wonderful and delicious holiday season, and hope you can be with your loved ones to enjoy it. Salute!

---

Shirley Ouellette grew up in the far south west of England. Since living in Canada, she has been actively involved in promoting the Local Food Movement. She is a regular columnist with *The Local Biz Magazine* and writes the *Tasteful Talk* and *Tasteful Recipes* columns.



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## HOW DO YOU DECK *the* HALLS?

*T*he holidays are a time for family, a time for fun, and always a little magic. But if there's one thing I've learned over the years is that people never celebrate quite the same. There are literally a million ways to celebrate the winter break and many different holidays to work with.

It doesn't matter if you celebrate Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, or Festivus. From late November when the snow starts to fall, until the clock strikes midnight on January 1st, there are many different ways to bring your family together, or just spend some time alone with your thoughts this holiday season.

In this article I've detailed a few ways that different writers of The Local Biz team celebrate their holidays. Not everyone in Durham Region celebrates the same holiday, but we all have one thing in common, and that's the fact that we do all of this for our family.

...

My holiday season this year starts December 4, when my last class of the semester lets out and I get to celebrate with some great friends and watch the New Jersey Devils play against the Toronto Maple Leafs. This is by far not a tradition, but it's one I would definitely look forward to every year if it was.

Once school is over for me – which is usually the first week of December – it's finally time for my family to decorate the house both inside and out, and put up our plethora of decorations. My dad has this thing about not putting up the Christmas lights until it's 10 below zero and you can be frozen to the ladder in a matter of minutes. But even though it's cold outside, the Christmas lights are my time to make the house shine. If I could, I would cover the house in thousands of lights so it can be seen from space... but for some reason I've never been allowed, so I work with what I've got.

On the lawn every year pulling Santa in his sleigh is a full team of reindeer. There is a bright candy cane runway where the team takes off from lead by Rudolph and his bright red nose. The trees sparkle with multicolored lights, and the house is decorated with LEDs so bright it looks like the North Pole is in full swing. In fact, the theme of my decorations has always been Santa's Workshop on Christmas Eve, and it's topped off by a light up inflatable decoration that can sing and attract people with Christmas tunes from all over the neighbourhood.

But the outside is nothing compared to the inside. To describe it





as my sister once put it, “it looks like we robbed the North Pole,” and it actually seems quite fitting. There isn’t an inch you can walk throughout the house without seeing a ton of decorations. There are *two* Christmas trees decorated with different colour schemes covered with so many decorations I’m always surprised they keep standing. There are decorations all over the house and garland running all the way up the banister and across the fireplace. My sister was right; there definitely was a holdup in Santa’s village!

Once the decorating is done it feels so much like Christmas, but it’s not truly near until my birthday comes up. December 21st is my birthday and it’s always a big thing in my house. Even with a huge Christmas dinner and party just four mere days away, my mother always has what seems like a gala at our house early.

Once my birthday is past and Christmas Eve is upon my house, we spend our time at church. Then when we get home from church, it’s time for bed because let’s face it, who sleeps in on Christmas Day? Christmas Day we wake up early because it’s time to start cooking early, and as soon as the turkey and beef are in the ovens, it’s time for presents. Now, my uncle never misses gifts, so he’s always arriving *before* 8 a.m. and we waste no time opening them. The rest of the day is cooking and cleaning – yes, cleaning even though we’re about to have 30 people make a giant mess – in preparation for Christmas dinner. Once Christmas is over my holiday gets boring; my house has never really been one for New Year’s Eve. So that’s my holiday season because once January 1 rolls around I’m only a few days away from starting school.

The next team member who shared their holiday experiences with me is Wendy, The Local Biz Magazine editor. Wendy has a few different days of parties all crammed so close together just hearing what goes on makes my head spin.

Her Christmas holiday partying starts on Christmas Eve with her husband’s family. Now he’s Italian which means HUGE family get-togethers at his grandparent’s house. And when Wendy says huge she means “My Big Fat Greek Wedding” huge. Almost every family member and their spouses and children are there, and four generations means a ton of food. It’s a traditional Italian dinner

with homemade everything from pasta to the sauce and even the wine. And what would the dinner be without seafood? Christmas Eve dinner is traditionally a fish meal. Hours of celebration culminates at church, and then its home to bed to rest for day two.

Christmas Day for Wendy is with her family. Starting off is breakfast time and presents at home before heading over to mom and dad’s place with her siblings where the fun really starts. Once there it’s

time for more gifts with an English style turkey lunch with all the fixings and then relaxation with board games and a nap before dinner time. For dinner, Wendy’s mom serves a traditional Goan meat dish called sortpotel, which is made and cured months in advance especially for Christmas. Then its dessert time with trifle, fruit cake and traditional Goan Christmas sweets before the night ends on another Christmas celebration.

The final day of celebrations ends on Boxing Day when once again Wendy and her husband spend time with his family, but just his parents and siblings. The wining and dining continue with less people but all the fun of a party with more games and presents until the day is over.

For the next entry I went around my campus and asked some people what their holiday celebrations are like within their household and I’m featuring the answers that are different than the rest.

Jake’s family is also Italian and he has just as many parties to go to as one would expect. But his family is small and his Christmas Day celebration includes dinner at home with his parents and sister. They don’t go all out; they just want a

simple, quiet family dinner. Not as exciting right? But I did mention parties, and those all come many days before Christmas, in fact some of his holiday parties start in November. Jake’s father is part of a big finance company who throws “the best holiday parties ever.” The only downside according to Jake is “they’re a month too early.” But while the party might be way before Christmas, it gets you pumped for the holiday long before the first decorated house shows up. With Santa giving out gifts to the kids, great food and an open bar, what could be better than early Christmas? The next few parties are anywhere in the beginning of December right up until December 24. These are either parties for his work, or with his family and girlfriend. While his Christmas may be quiet, he might need it from all the excitement he gets before school even gets a break.

❁

*There are  
decorations  
all over the  
house and  
garland  
running all  
the way up  
the banister  
and across  
the fireplace.*

❁





The next person who told me their family celebrations was Amber. Amber's family gets to celebrate two different holidays every season as her mother is Jewish and celebrates Hanukkah, and her father is Christian and celebrates Christmas.

Now for those of you who don't know, Hanukkah is celebrated for eight days at different times every year because it is celebrated on the 25th day of Kislev according to the Hebrew calendar. This means it could land anywhere between the end of November and New Year's Day. This year it looks like it will happen from December 16 to 24, which is the absolute perfect time I was told to have it when you celebrate for two different holidays.

Hanukkah is somewhat traditional in Amber's house where every night a new candle would be lit on the menorah and prayers would be said over the candles before giving each other a small gift. For many of the nights, that is all her family would do before they got back to normal lives, but on the first and last nights of Hanukkah, her family, friends, and members of their synagogue would get together and have a small party. In Jewish custom, the foods are primarily fried in oil to commemorate the flask of oil that kept the flame in the temple burning, and there would be an abundance of these foods on the nights when they would get together and celebrate. Traditional games with the dreidel are played, and the parties have gotten much more 21st century, but the traditional faith of her families ancestors is there in their eight days of Hanukkah.

Finally on December 25, Amber wakes up to celebrate Christmas and that starts early in the morning with pancakes and presents. Once everything is opened, it's time to start getting ready and cooking for the Christmas feast that they have at her uncle's house with the entire family every year. Amber's father is one of seven siblings so the party is *enormous* and once they're all together there are even more gifts to open before they get to eat.

The last student I talked to was Andre. He and his family are new to Canada from France and they celebrate Christmas a little different. First off, his family doesn't decorate with a ton of Christmas lights, instead they light a candle every night starting December 8 to commemorate the Virgin Mary. And they have a nativity crib outside without any other lights to pay respect to Jesus the

Saviour. There are no big Christmas gifts in his house, and he told me he would "like to see crazy shoppers like in the movies" because children don't ask for a lot in his part of France. Instead, his parents still have him put his shoes by the fireplace so Pere Noel can put candy and small gifts out for his family. Also on Christmas Eve after church service, his congregation would have a large feast to commemorate the birth of Christ.

❄️  
*His parents  
still have  
him put his  
shoes by the  
fireplace so  
Pere Noel can  
put candy  
and small  
gifts out for  
his family.*  
❄️

Our final entry comes from Antoine, The Local Biz Magazine publisher. He always has a family Christmas. Getting together for food, presents, movies and games. The partying once again picks up on New Year's Eve, but he always manages to make it home to say goodbye to the old year his way, and to get some rest before his parent's anniversary the next day.

...

So there you have it folks. Many of the celebrations described above are different, but there is one common theme and that is family. I think after all these years, the holidays have been completely commercialized and turned into something that distracts us from what really matters, and that is to celebrate together, to remember why we're even celebrating in the first place, and to make sure that we never take things like our family and friends for granted.

So take any ideas that you might have read in the article; I think you might be surprised by how much it brightens up your holidays. But whether you want to take on a French custom, party like it's 1969 (figuratively speaking), or decorate your

house so bright that it can be seen from space, don't forget what your celebration and holiday is about. Remember what happened to bring you these great celebrations, and all the people who have come and gone over the years to make sure you can still celebrate the way you do. Have a happy holiday everyone, and remember to keep yourselves safe, and your families close.

---

**Sean Heeger is a 22 year old journalism student from Ajax. A once passionate law student, he finished studies at UOIT in the field of criminology but discovered his love for journalism after he started and ran the UOIT Torch newspaper. Now ready to start in this field, he looks forward to finishing school for journalism and writing full-time. Sean also writes for The Local Biz Magazine online where you can read his sports blog 'For the Love of Goals'.**

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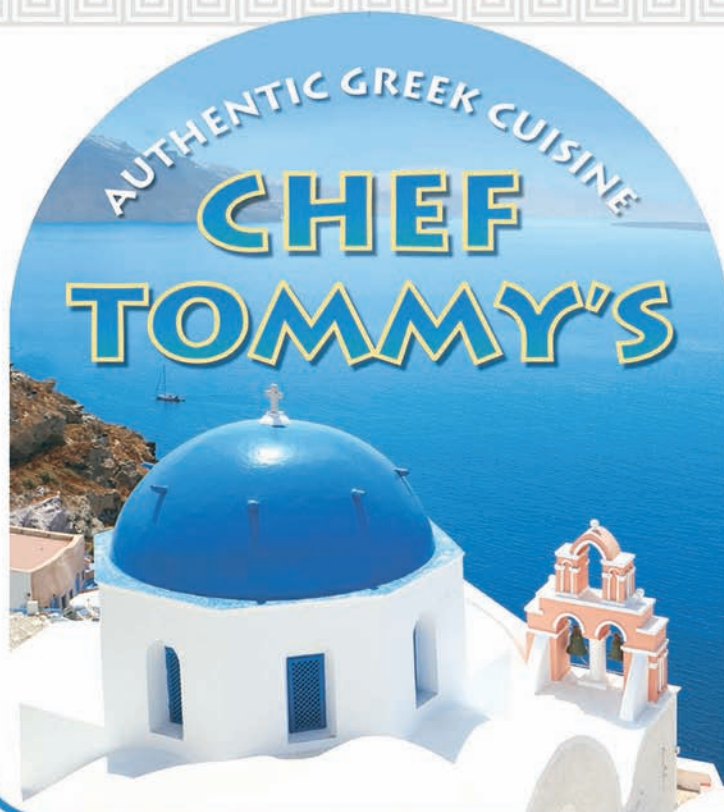
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# Winter Events Calendar



## December 5, 2014

### **Whitby Holiday Celebration and Tree Lighting**

Watch Celebration Square come alight when we begin the holiday season with the annual Christmas tree lighting. Families can enjoy caroling, holiday displays, free activities, hot chocolate and cookies. Please bring an unwrapped toy as we launch the Stuff-a-Bug Toy Drive.  
**Location:** 405 Dundas Street West, Whitby Public Library, Celebration Square  
**Website:** [www.whitby.ca](http://www.whitby.ca)

## December 5, 2014

### **Christmas Moonlight Magic & Tree-lighting (Bowmanville)**

Bring the entire family downtown for a carol sing and countdown to the lighting of Bowmanville's huge Christmas Tree in the town square. You can also have your picture taken with Santa and his live reindeer. Enjoy free horse-drawn wagon rides along the main street. Free admission and free parking.  
**Location:** Historic Downtown Bowmanville  
**Website:** [www.bowmanville.com](http://www.bowmanville.com)

## December 5, 2014

### **Annual Tree Lighting & Fireworks Event (Pickering)**

Free family event including the annual Christmas tree lighting, a visit from Santa, holiday crafts, rides, fireworks, bbq, hot chocolate and live entertainment for both children and adults. Food donations for St. Paul's Food Bank will be accepted at this event.  
**Location:** Esplanade Park, One The Esplanade  
**Website:** [www.pickering.ca/greatevents](http://www.pickering.ca/greatevents)

## December 6, 2014

### **Port Perry Santa Claus Parade**

**Website:** [www.discoverportperry.ca](http://www.discoverportperry.ca)  
**Email:** [info@discoverportperry.ca](mailto:info@discoverportperry.ca)

## December 7, 2014

### **Children's Old Fashioned Christmas (Port Perry)**

Step back in time and tour through the

historic village, traditionally decorated for the holidays with evergreen boughs, bright ribbons and berries. Hot chocolate, cider and Christmas cookies will be served in the schoolhouse throughout the day. Admission: Adults \$4, Students and Seniors \$3, Children 5-12 \$2, Children under 5 are free. We are accepting imperishable food donations for Operation Scugog.

**Location:** Pioneer Village - 16210 Island Rd.  
**Website:** [www.scugogshoresmuseum.com](http://www.scugogshoresmuseum.com)

## December 9 & 11, 2014

### **Make a Joyful Noise Music Night (Pickering)**

Enjoy a free evening featuring local musicians and choirs playing a variety of holiday favourites. Performers welcome - call to get on the program. 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm. Food Bank donations are appreciated.

**Location:** City Hall, Council Chambers, One the Esplanade  
**Website:** [www.pickering.ca/greatevents](http://www.pickering.ca/greatevents)

## December 11, 2014

### **Cinechats Film Festival (Oshawa)**

The Cinechats Film Festival is an acclaimed weekly (and year-round!) series of the best motion pictures from around the world. It's like TIFF, but right here in suburbia -- and without all the immodest hype.

**Location:** Room C-113, G. Willey Bld., UOIT/DC Campus  
**Website:** <http://artsforum.ca>  
**Email:** [artsforum\\_magazine@yahoo.ca](mailto:artsforum_magazine@yahoo.ca)

## December 14, 2014

### **'Yuletide for Band' Christmas Concert**

Come hear the Pickering Community Concert Band perform Christmas classics this season. Guest vocalist Marsala Lukianchuk performing 'Chestnuts Roasting on an Open Fire'. World premiere of 'Gaudete' by Kristie Hunter, an adaptation of a Sacred Medieval Liturgical Chant. Inaugural performance of Sean Breen's arrangement of 'Hark the Herald Angels

Sing'. Plus an audience sing-along! Adults \$15.00, Over 65 and Under 18, \$10.00. Tickets available in advance from any band member or by calling 905-427-5443 or at the door

**Location:** Forest Brook Community Church; 60 Kearney Dr. Ajax  
**Website:** [www.concertband.ca](http://www.concertband.ca)

## December 17, 2014

### **Mayor's Light Tour (Pickering)**

Free event for local adults 55+, tour the streets of Pickering and enjoy the neighbourhood lights. After the light tour, participants are taken to the Pickering Recreation Complex for a short reception, featuring live entertainment. Light refreshments are served and participants then board the bus to return to their original pick up locations.

**Location:** Various pickup locations across Pickering  
**Website:** [www.pickering.ca/greatevents](http://www.pickering.ca/greatevents)

## December 18, 2014

### **Durham Storytelling Gathering (Oshawa)**

Prior to written history, stories were passed down orally from generation to generation. Today, storytellers uphold this oral tradition and narrate happenings from the past and present, real or imaginary. They breathe life into the old tales, nurture new ones, and take listeners on mind journeys into the wonderment of their imaginations, keeping audiences spellbound. Come Listen. Come Tell. Catch the Magic.

**Location:** Northview Community Centre, 150 Beatrice St. E.  
**Website:** [www.durhamfolklorestorytellers.ca](http://www.durhamfolklorestorytellers.ca)  
**Email:** [durhamstorytellers@gmail.com](mailto:durhamstorytellers@gmail.com)

## December 31, 2014

### **Oshawa Celebrates 2015**

Celebrate the New Year at a family friendly event. Children's entertainment, free swims, free skates, hot chocolate and crafts. Countdown at 9:00pm  
**Location:** Legends Centre  
**Website:** [www.oshawa.ca](http://www.oshawa.ca)

## December 31, 2014

### **Family New Year's Eve Party (Ajax)**

It's a time of celebration and new beginnings and the Ajax Family New Year's Eve Party delivers a fantastic event for the whole family. This event features children's activities, games, live entertainment, interactive experiences, face painting, ice skating with DJ and more. Tickets available in December.

**Location:** Ajax Community Center  
**Website:** [www.ajax.ca](http://www.ajax.ca)

## December 31, 2014

### **New Year's Eve Family Countdown (Pickering)**

Free family skate and swim with games, prizes and New Year Countdown. Free event, bring a food donation for our local food bank.

**Location:** Pickering Recreation Complex, 1867 Valley Farm Road  
**Website:** [www.pickering.ca/greatevents](http://www.pickering.ca/greatevents)

## February 16, 2015

### **Family Day (Pickering)**

Family friendly activities for the whole family. Purchase your family passport to access activities including art, crafts, swimming, yoga, squash, tennis and family fit games. Free Family Skate sponsored by RBC in Arena Area. No passport needed. The event runs from 10 am to 2 pm.

**Location:** Pickering Recreation Complex, 1867 Valley Farm Road  
**Website:** [www.pickering.ca/greatevents](http://www.pickering.ca/greatevents)

## February 21, 2015

### **Seedy Saturday and Garden Expo (Pickering)**

A garden related day filled with speakers, vendors, activities for children, environmental exhibits and garden cafe. Bring your seeds to swap, or buy from our vendors to start your garden. \$3.00 at the door, events runs from 11 am - 4 pm.

**Location:** Pickering Recreation Complex, 1867 Valley Farm Road  
**Website:** [www.pickering.ca/greatevents](http://www.pickering.ca/greatevents)

For events that may have been added after the publication date and other ideas to plan your perfect day in Durham Region, visit [www.durhamtourism.ca](http://www.durhamtourism.ca).





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# *It's the Season* to be **Healthy!**

**T**he holidays have always been a time of fond memories. Spending time with family and friends, opening presents and of course, all that baking! The sweet smell of cookies and other tasty treats baking in the oven in the days leading up to Christmas filled the entire house and it was tantalizing!

These memories stick with us as we grow older. Spending time with family and friends are still what the holidays are all about, and food – naturally – is a huge part of it too. With so much love and abundance to enjoy, it's hard to imagine that there could be anything wrong with the holidays. Well, not wrong... just not great for your health or waist line. The large amounts of delicious food, irresistible sweet treats and drinking – which characterizes most holiday gatherings — result in an excess of

calories being consumed in a few short weeks. And an excess of calories being consumed – obviously – results in an extra few pounds by the time the New Year rolls around.

But this year is going to be different.

This year you'll learn how to handle your health and weight! You'll learn how to tackle temptation and deal with cravings during the holidays. And you'll discover how you can avoid gaining weight in general in the winter. The holidays are a time for good company and good food. It's a time for enjoyment and a little bit of indulgence. But let's be smart about it. We can have fun while also feeling good about what we put in our bodies.



## Tackle The Temptation

The small things make all the difference. It can be very hard to handle temptation during the holidays, but when you start cutting out the little parts of your diet that are unhealthy, it starts to add up. This can be anything from rejecting a shortbread cookie, to turning away from that enticing *Ferrero Rocher* chocolate that is calling your name.

One simple thing you can do? Leave the room. Out of sight, out of mind. If you can't resist the urge to eat something sweet out of sheer will power alone, make it easier on yourself and leave the room where the sweets are. This simple action can help prevent you from filling up on too many sugary treats. Instead, you'll have more room for dinner, which is usually a much healthier choice

Sometimes it's also hard to tell what your body *truly* wants and needs. In fact, it can be especially hard to tell whether or not you are *actually* hungry when you are surrounded by delicious treats and have nothing else to do. Instead of eating away your boredom, try grabbing a glass of water and stay hydrated! The water will not only regulate your metabolism, but it'll tackle your temptations as well. You'll also end up with great looking skin in the process – that's a fact!

## Control the Cravings

Cravings can be tough to beat. They can appear at weird times and for different reasons, but it doesn't take much for them to turn into a consistent part of your diet. For instance, what starts out as a few pieces of chocolate a day can end up turning into a terrible habit. We've all been there – it's cold outside, it took you forever to get home because of the snow and you're grumpy – what better way to treat yourself than indulging in a chocolate bar? But then it happens again the next day, and the next day and before you know it, chocolate *is* your diet. (This is an especially likely scenario during the holidays when chocolate is abundant!)

One way to control your cravings is to make sure your sleep schedule is on track. When you are overtired or cranky, all your body wants is sleep or food – sometimes both. It can be hard to regulate any sort of bodily activities when you are lacking sleep. Keep your cravings in check by using your holiday nights wisely, and getting the 8-hour sleeps you need and deserve!

Another way to control your cravings (shockingly!) is to give

into them every now and then. We shouldn't deny ourselves from cravings completely as the more we resist a craving, the bigger the craving becomes, which may lead to eating more unhealthy foods than we should. Completely denying your taste buds desires will probably make you want that chocolate bar more than you actually do. Don't be too hard on yourself – make sure to indulge every now and then, but be mindful. Make sure one chocolate bar doesn't turn into binge eating sessions.

## Cravings and Stress

Stress is another factor that can cause you to eat more. Often times, when your body is stressed, it demands food, but generally the food it demands isn't the healthiest. When you're running short on time or having a bad day, it takes less than two seconds to reach for that piece of cake, compared to the time it takes to make a healthy wrap or salad. Sometimes we also satisfy our cravings out of emotional stress or out of convenience, but when we regulate our stress patterns and learn how our bodies respond to stress, we can help control those cravings.

A tip to remain calm and stress free is to plan ahead! The holidays can be stressful enough with everything from Christmas shopping, to hosting and attending Christmas parties. Plan out your schedule so you know where your time is going and prevent all that rushing around!

Another way to stay stress free? Get your sleep! There is nothing worse than being stressed with less than 3 hours of sleep which only adds to your stress. Make sure to also make time for your hobbies, your favourite activities and spending time with the people you love – they'll distress you too. Remember, by keeping your stress level down, you are also keeping your cravings at bay.

"Another way to control your cravings (shockingly!) is to give into them every now and then."



## Avoid Winter Weight

It's easy to slip back into your old ways when summer is over. No more summer body to sustain and nothing but cold weather – all your body wants is food, warmth and comfort. Winter is generally a time to step away from the diet for most, but that doesn't mean you need to give in entirely to winter weight. *"Although seasonal weight gain varies from person to person, there have been surveys that show an average of five to seven pound gain in weight in winter,"* says Lawrence J. Cheskin, founder and director of the Johns Hopkins Weight Management Centre. Yikes! Catch those pounds before they start to pile on! Here's how:

### 1 Keep on Moving!

One of the biggest contributors to weight gain in the winter is because we move less. We want to stay warm, we want to stay comfortable and we aren't necessarily in the mood to step outside for a run or go to the gym when the weather is cold. Maintaining your regular fitness schedule is important to avoid winter weight. Make it easier by doing what works for you; sometimes we need to change our habits to see results. For instance, if working out in the mornings in warmer weather was easier but in winter becomes a hassle, change your workout times. If it's a struggle to drag yourself to the gym, go before or after work (when you are already out of the house) *before* you get home.

### 2 Have a Bowl of Soup

Studies have shown that individuals eat 20% less when they have soup before their meals. So consider adding a vegetable-based soup as a healthier option to your dinner.

### 3 Go Easy on Comfort Foods

The cold weather can lead to a lot of snuggling under blankets and eating what you want to eat. Let's not even get into the way you've let your workout routine slip! Comfort foods like cravings are nice every now and then, but it's important not to get into the habit of relying

on those kinds of food every time your emotions take a turn or the weather is too cold.

Did you know too that the cold weather could also be another contributor for your terrible mood swings? What some might refer to as the "Winter Blues", is in fact the effects that a lack of sun and cold weather can do to your mood.

Cold weather and no sun can have negative effects on not only your mood, but also your metabolism. This kind of stress depletes your energy. When it comes to eating in the winter, the cold starts a hibernation metabolism; in other words a desire to eat sweeter food – a desire that is helped along with the holidays. Fight the urge! Every now and then comfort food can be nice and even necessary; just don't make a habit of it.

### 4 Avoid Alcohol

Whenever possible avoid alcohol. Although this may be easier said than done over the holidays, the amount of calories in alcohol are ones that you could be saving for more food or not taking in at all! And trust me, it's more calories than you think!

### 5 Rethink What You Drink

Cutting back on alcohol is obvious, but what the winter months see more than at any other time of year are high calorie specialty drinks like frappuccinos, moccaccinos, cappuccinos and so on. It can be tempting to indulge in

"...there have been surveys that show an average of five to seven pound gain in weight in winter"



these decadent drinks every now and then, but did you know that at a medium size, some of these drinks can add up to almost 500 calories?! That's almost a third or more of your regular calorie intake a day depending on your weight and age! These drinks also have the option of adding flavouring and sugary substances such as syrup and whipped cream to them as well which doesn't help. If you plan on drinking a few of these fun drinks this winter, order a smaller size or try lightening up your drink with sugar free syrup or skim milk. These little changes can make that 500 go down to a much more desirable number.

## 6 Scale Back the Snacking

Snacking is a huge part of winter weight. Social snacking is something that everyone falls victim to at one point or another. Limit the amount of bad foods you snack on while socializing, or cut the snacking out of socializing altogether. Additionally, stock up on nutritional backup snacks to use as comfort food, or for when you are in the mood for a treat! Snacking is something that can be a problem all year around, so switch out your snacks for healthy alternatives and notice the instant benefits in how your body feels and looks.

## 7 Account for Slip Ups

There will be days when you will eat a piece of chocolate cake while sipping an extra large cappuccino topped with whipped cream and not bother to exercise at all. That's okay. But try to keep things balanced. If you overeat today, try to balance it out the next few days with extra exercise and less calorie intake. *"...Get exercise anywhere you can. Take a brisk walk on your lunch break and after dinner. At work, use stairs rather than the elevator,"* says Giannetto. *"When you get just 100 fewer calories per day through dieting and exercise or both, that is the equivalent of 10 pounds per year."*

## 8 Stay Focused on Your Goals

One of the best ways to tackle temptation, control cravings and avoid excessive weight gain is to keep your goals in mind. Don't give yourself permission to miss a workout or eat more than you should. Don't let the weather give you an excuse. Stick to your goals regardless. Not only will you end up feeling better about yourself and your body after a workout, but you will see more results than you would if you let yourself get wonky with your health. To help maintain this practice, check your weight regularly. Taking measurements once a week and continuing to take measurements can help you get a better sense of what you are doing wrong and what you are doing right. This will also remind you of your goals regularly and help you motivate yourself when you see results or when you see yourself slipping.

'Tis the season to be healthy Durham readers, so try these tips and tricks out and see if it changes your approach to your health this season. Keep it up all winter long and you'll have a great body you can be proud of by the time summer rolls around. Stay safe, fit and fabulous! Happy Holidays!

Manchari Paranthahan is a third-year student at Brock. She has worked for The Brock Press and has written for the Opinion and Internal News sections. Outside of Brock, Manchari has written for online publications and magazines including Goddess Connections and DJMag Canada. She also blogs for The Local Biz Magazine where you can read her blog 'Fit & Fabulous!' A fitness blog focused primarily on breaking myths about working out and getting healthy, Manchari's blog is suitable for anybody with any type of fitness goal.



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The Drink That Takes You

# THE DANGERS OF DRINKING AND DRIVING

**I**t was February 13th, 1981 - the day before Valentine's Day. Carolyn Swinson's father was crossing the street with a friend of his. He was a single step from the sidewalk when an oncoming car changed his life and the lives of his family members forever. He was hit by a 19-year-old young man who had drank far over the legal limit. Because of his impaired driving abilities, the man drove dangerously fast which resulted in the death of Carolyn's father. Because her father was the first person the car hit, he was killed and the other gentleman was seriously injured.

That was 1981.

Almost exactly 12 years later, a second tragedy occurred. On the 12th of February, 1993, Carolyn's eldest son Robert was driving home after buying a Valentine's Day gift for his girlfriend when he was hit and killed by a 32-year-old woman. The woman had her driver's license for only 10 days, and her Blood Alcohol Level was two and a half times the legal limit.

Carolyn Swinson knows firsthand the devastating consequences that drinking and driving can have, and her words reflect the sentiment that all victims share, "...every single person we lose or is injured by an impaired driver is something that is totally preventable, which is why I think it makes us [the victims] angrier. Because to us, it was just somebody who was being selfish; somebody who wasn't thinking about the people around them or the family members [of those people]..."

Unfortunately, drinking and driving accidents can take the lives of many innocent people just like Carolyn Swinson's father and son, and injure many more in the process. In fact, charges for drinking and driving tend to peak - when more people happen to be drinking more - during the holidays. After all, back to back, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and New Year's Eve all provide countless opportunities for people to live it up and drink to their hearts desire. With the holidays fast approaching yet again, it's important everyone becomes more aware of the dangers of drinking and driving, to make sure our festivities don't turn sour.

## The Numbers

Mothers Again Drunk Driving (MADD) Canada, an organization for the support of victims of impaired driving accidents estimates that the death toll for victims of impaired driving accidents in Canada in 2010 was between 1250 and 1500 (or 3.4 to 4.1 deaths per day)! Indeed, daily in Canada, on average, 4 people are killed and another 175 people injured as a result of impaired driving.



The Ministry of Transportation reports that over the past decade in Ontario, 2000 lives have been lost as a result of drinking and driving. This does not include the 50,000 people who have sustained injuries for the same reason. More recently in 2012, during the Ontario Provincial Police Holiday R.I.D.E program, 693 people were charged for impaired driving during the months of November and January, and another 625 were given warn range suspensions for having a Blood Alcohol Level between 50 and 80 milligrams. The 2012 figure was slightly higher than the 2011 figure where 682 people were charged with impaired driving and another 583 were given warn range suspensions. Taking a look closer to home, the Durham Regional Police Services annual report found that of the 24 fatal collisions that occurred in Durham Region in 2013, close to half (42%) were due to alcohol / impaired driving.

There are countless more statistics like these compiled yearly and by various organizations, and the same conclusion is reached; alcohol and driving simply do *not* mix.

### Alternatives

Being precautious about drinking and driving does not mean that alcohol is out of the question. *"We don't want people not to go out and have a good time but we want to inform them to do it safely. You have to think before you set foot out of the house just to know how you're going to get home safely."* says Carolyn Swinson.

So what are some alternatives for not drinking and driving this holiday season?

#### 1) Abstain from Alcohol

Obvious, right? I thought I'd put this suggestion first, because, if you abstain from alcohol, then the rest of the alternatives listed aren't necessary. However, often times, abstaining from alcohol is the least chosen option at parties and social events. Peer pressure in particular makes it much harder, especially when drinks are placed into your hands as soon as you enter the door. Additionally, seeing friends and families with drinks in their hands can incline you to follow suit – why be left out? But in situations like these, falling to social pressure can leave you with greater consequences later. Staying completely sober is the absolute safest way to keep yourself from drinking and driving on the roads. Not only that, but it shows immense responsibility on your part if you choose to abstain from drinking because you will be driving home after.

#### 2) Choose A Sober Buddy (aka a Designated Driver)

You can always count on your friends! When going out for the night, planning ahead is the name of the game. In your group of friends, designate one person as your sober buddy or designated driver who will refrain from alcohol that night to drive people home safely. Rotate the role, so everyone shares the responsibility. Just keep in mind though the definition for a sober buddy. Carolyn Swinson describes a sober buddy as, *"...a person who is NOT going to drink that night. Not the person who's had the least to drink, but the person who pledges to be completely sober."* If you have a pal who never drinks at all, then you're in luck. This person could be your guaranteed designated driver at all events (if they're okay with that)!

#### 3) Use a Designated Driver Service

Designated driver services are specialized driving services specifically used to safely drive home party-goers. If you don't have a person in your group, or anyone else that can drive you home then consider a designated driver service. There are several companies that service the Durham Region such as Keys To Us ([www.keystous.com](http://www.keystous.com)), A D.D. 4 U ([www.add4u.ca](http://www.add4u.ca)), Ontario Designated Driver Services ([www.ontariodesignateddrivers.com](http://www.ontariodesignateddrivers.com))

and DD Services ([www.dd2u.ca](http://www.dd2u.ca)), just to name a few. Don't forget to call ahead if you know you are going to be drinking and will be in need of such a service, as pre-booking at some of these companies can save you money. Finally, if you wish to ride to and from your event in style, some limousine companies also offer designated driver services as part of a package deal, if you book their limousine service to get you to your event as well.

#### 4) Take a Taxi / Bus / Train

As great as designated driver services can be, they may be simply too expensive an option for some people. In this case, consider taking a taxi, bus or train. Taxis can be cheaper than designated driver services, and both tend to be

conveniently located outside of bars and clubs. However, taking Durham Region Transit (DRT) or the GO bus or train, is probably by far the cheapest bet and a popular choice. DRT and the GO often run free of charge after a certain time of night on nights like New Year's Eve. Check their websites for more information.

#### 5) Call a Trusted Family Member or Friend

Carolyn Swinson often speaks to teenagers of the risks of drinking and driving. Her first hand experiences resonate with them and help drive her message home. She emphasises trust and communication between drinkers and someone they trust. *"If I'm talking to teenagers, which I do on a regular basis, I tell them they need to have somebody they can trust that they can phone. Maybe it's a parent or a family member or a good friend that they know that if they need a ride home they can call that person and that person will come and get them home safely"*.

Unfortunately, alternative #5 can prove difficult for some people, especially teenagers. Sometimes, the fear of getting in trouble prevents many young drinkers from making good decisions. Young people in their 20's can find it nerve-racking to ask for a ride home when they feel they could get punished for their drinking. However, this fear of punishment can lead to greater, more negative repercussions. Therefore, if drinking and driving is something that you worry about for your drinking-age children, the safest option is to remove the factor of fear and make taking the safe route an encouraged option rather than an opportunity for scolding. Allow them to call you if they are intoxicated for a ride home, and save the lecturing for another time.

The Ministry of Transportation reports that over the past decade in Ontario, 2000 lives have been lost as a result of drinking and driving.



## 6) Stay Overnight

Staying overnight at a house party may be another alternative for some people, and should be seriously considered before any host begins planning a party. As the host, potentially saving the lives of people on the roads (and your guest) will certainly prevent the happy occasion from becoming tragic.

### Legal Penalties

If you choose to drink and chance getting behind the wheel after, you need to be aware of the consequences of doing so. These not only include consequences based on livelihood – that's a given – but ones that could get you in serious trouble with the law. Ontario has some of the toughest drinking and driving laws in the country. In Ontario, the legal drinking age is 19 and the Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) level at which conviction is carried out is above 0.08. However, charges and repercussions begin at the 0.05 level.

If tested in the “warn range” (a BAC level of 0.05 to 0.08), offenders can be charged with:

- **3 days** roadside suspension and **\$150** in monetary penalties for the first offence
- **7 days** roadside suspension and **\$150** in monetary penalties for the second offence along with a required alcohol education program
- **30 days** roadside suspension and **\$150** in monetary penalties for the third offence, along with a required alcohol treatment program with an initiation of the ignition interlock condition for 6 months. Offenders may be subjected to a mandatory medical review.

The penalties for being convicted with a BAC level above 0.08 or refusing a breathalyser test are significantly more severe:

- **First offence** – 90 days roadside suspension, \$150 in monetary penalties, admittance into an alcohol education and treatment plan, minimum 1 year into the ignition interlock program, 7 day vehicle impoundment, \$1000 fine, and a 1 year license suspension
- **Second offence** – 90 days roadside suspension, \$150 in monetary penalties, admittance into an alcohol education and treatment program, minimum 3 years in an ignition interlock program, 7 day vehicle impoundment, 30 day minimum jail sentence, 3 years license suspension and a fine that is determined in court.
- **Third offence** – 90 days roadside suspension, \$150 monetary penalties, admittance into alcohol education and treatment program, a lifetime ignition interlock condition, 7 day vehicle impoundment, 120 day minimum jail sentence, lifetime license suspension and a fine based on the judge's decision.

For more information, visit the MTO's website.

Some people try to determine how much they can drink before they reach the legal BAC limit, but it's impossible to accurately figure this out. Many factors influence your BAC such as, the alcohol concentration of your drinks, your weight, age, gender, size, fitness, fatigue, alcohol tolerance, how fast you drink, and when / whether you ate, and your body's ability to digest alcohol. Furthermore, it takes time to get your BAC back to zero, and

coffee, food, or physical activity will *not* make you sober any faster.

...

Holidays are a time for rejoicing and happiness; a time for gatherings with our loved ones and having fun. But a few too many drinks, and just one wrong decision, can make the holidays a time for mourning and despair. The holidays with their festive nature means more drinking and driving in general, and the only way to keep everyone safe is awareness and acting on this awareness. Even one casualty caused by drinking while driving is unacceptable, especially since it can be avoided.

Preventing yourself from drinking and driving does not mean that you should never drink ever – but drink responsibly. That phrase often loses its meaning, so it's important to remind ourselves how we “drink responsibly”. Plan ahead, bring a sober buddy or call a trusted friend or family member to pick you up, use a designated driver service or take local transit. Anything to make sure you can get home while keeping yourself and everyone around you safe. The rule is, if you plan to drink, plan not to drive. Enjoy the holidays, safely and responsibly. Make this a season you will cherish with happiness and love, not sadness and grief.

---

Suffia Malik is a student and freelancer who enjoys reading and writing in her spare time. She is often up late past midnight studying with a trusty mug of hot chocolate by her side – all of course, in an effort to realize her dream of becoming a journalist.

## Distracted Driving

There have been many, many articles written about drinking and driving, that hopefully the message is getting through. In recent years however, there is another worrying trend that is on the rise that also deserves our attention, and it's known as distracted driving. Distracted driving is a fairly broad term, but it refers to talking, texting, typing, dialing or emailing while using a hand-held device either for communication or entertainment. The Ontario Provincial Police say that distracted driving is slowly becoming the #1 killer on our roads. In fact, in 2013, distracted driving accounted for 86 deaths, which was higher than deaths due to impaired driving and aggressive driving.

This may not come as news to some of you. With the plethora of cell phones nowadays, texting while driving is becoming a fairly common occurrence even though studies show it can seriously impair your ability to drive properly and slow down your reaction time. The problem is, while drinking and driving is an obvious no-no, the dangers of texting and driving seem to be lost on most people. But that needs to change. Taking your eyes off the road even for a few seconds to read or send a text, diverts your attention from what's going on in front of you, and can lead to an accident that can seriously injure or kill another person. In Ontario, those caught using a hand-held device while driving can be fined \$280, but officials are looking to substantially raise this dollar amount in order to drive their point home. Durham readers, please pay attention to the road this holiday season and leave the texting for when you're *not* behind the wheel.

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Wendy Chiavalon is the Editor-in-Chief of The Local Biz Magazine



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Winter will soon be upon us; time to Fa-la-la-line up for some great movies!

### For The Kid In Us All

Ben Stiller is back for another romp in the dark as security guard Larry Daley, in the **Night at the Museum: Secret of the Tom**. Reuniting some familiar characters and introducing new ones, Larry embarks on a quest to save the magic before it is gone forever. The adventure starts Dec. 19th.

**Paddington** tells the story of the comic misadventures of a young Peruvian bear who travels to the city in search of a home. Finding himself lost and alone, he begins to realize that city life is not all he had imagined - until he meets the kindly Brown family who read the label around his neck that says, "Please look after this bear. Thank you," and offer him a temporary haven. It looks as though his luck has changed until this rarest of bears catches the eye of a museum taxidermist. The delightful bear makes his debut on Jan. 16th.

A live action version of **Cinderella** is coming to theatres March 13th with a star studded cast including Kenneth Branagh, Cate Blanchett, and Helena Bonham Carter!

### Thriller & Action

**The Hobbit: The Battle of the Five Armies**. This brings a cinematic conclusion to the adventures of Bilbo Baggins (Martin Freeman), Thorin Oakenshield (Richard Armitage) and the Company of Dwarves. Orcs, dragons, and wizards are a plenty in this epic Battle of the Five Armies, as the future of Middle-earth hangs in the balance. Opening Dec. 17.

**The Kitchen Sink** has a little of everything in a tale of a high school-aged vampire, zombie and human who form an unlikely alliance in order to save their town from invading aliens. Coming out Jan. 5th.

### Comedy

Hugh Jackman returns to comedy in **Chappie**. After being kidnapped by two criminals during birth, Chappie becomes the adopted son in a strange and dysfunctional family. Chappie is preternaturally gifted, one of a kind, a prodigy. He also happens to be a robot. Opening March 6th.

Under the Dark Comedy genre you can see Johnny Depp, Ewan McGregor and Gwyneth Paltrow in a story of debonair art dealer and part time rogue **Mortdecai**. Charlie Mortdecai (Depp) must traverse the globe armed only with his good looks and special charm in a race to recover a stolen painting rumored to contain the code to a lost bank account filled with Nazi gold while dodging angry Russians, the British Mi5, his impossibly leggy wife and an international terrorist. Opening Jan. 23rd.

### Drama

A movie that has been talked about for the past year is making its debut on Valentine's Day: **50 Shades of Grey**.

Stephanie Herrera is an Entertainment Specialist, speaking, teaching, and writing about Improv, Comedy and Life through her company, Durham Improv & Acting Studio. She is an award winning actor and singer performing regularly on screen and stage.



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# Treat Yourself

by Stephanie Pommells

## 'Tis The Season to be Trendy!

As I was packing away my summer wear into Rubbermaid bins, I was rejoicing in the idea of sweater weather. I love the chunky knits and cozy socks of the season. Yes, I even love the epic ugly holiday sweater!

This is a great time of the year! It's the best time to try out new hair and makeup products. Holiday packs often come in trial sizes, allowing you to experience the product without committing to big bottles you'll never finish. While you pick up some for stocking stuffers, don't feel bad for picking up some for yourself to experiment with.

Tools are another great gift idea, and 2 things I would recommend you look into are:

1) **The Miracurl** – This neat hair curling tool is safer to use at home than a wand; the user is less likely to be subject to nasty burns. Like all other tools though, you should make sure to follow manufacturer's instructions.

2) **The Wet Brush** – If you are a person with a very sensitive scalp, and brushing out your hair is torturous, this normal looking brush is magic. It detangles the hair with ease. It's also the perfect size for a stocking!

To go over some of this season's hottest makeup trends to consider when you're out shopping, I've enlisted the fabulous Makeup Artist Amanda Elysia Uhrig who writes:

*Lips are huge this winter, and are showing up on runways everywhere in 2 very different but equally sexy ways. First, is a barely-there nude lip. If you love playing up your eyes, try pairing with a nude lip to keep your face balanced. Cheat the look by dabbing a bit of your concealer over your lips followed by a little bit of gloss and you'll never have to worry about searching for the perfect nude lipstick again! Itching for some colour? Choose a colour that makes a statement, whether it is natural or bold. But the key to staying on point this season with colour is to keep the lips totally matte! Skip the gloss and use your favourite matte lipstick or lip liner alone for a sexy on-point pout.*

*Numerous celebrities, namely Kardashians, have been making contouring super popular. In an age where everyone and their dog has a camera, it is more essential than ever to be photo-ready at any given moment. Contouring can help sculpt and define your features, and is that extra touch that can elevate your makeup to the next level. Choose a contouring or bronzing powder that is totally matte and is a few shades darker than your natural skin tone. Stay away from products that are too shimmery or orangey as this will look less natural. With an angled brush, sweep the product under your cheekbones, along your hairline and along your jaw. My favourite bronzers are "Hoola" by Benefit, and "Sunny" by NYC. Another sneaky cheat is to buy your favourite face powder 2-3 shades darker!*

So Durham readers, brave the mall and get into the holiday spirit. Tow those bags and take in the tinsel. Hang out under some mistletoe and sip that nutmeg. Stay trendy and definitely don't drink and drive. Happy holidays!!

Stephanie Pommells is a hair dresser and salon owner of Stevie P's Hair Salon. With her artistic sense and impeccable attention to detail she enjoys working with clients to give them what they need. She also enjoys writing and researching the latest techniques in order to expand her expertise.



# Real Estate Report

by Ryan Smith

## How to Effectively Respond to a Low Ball Offer

**So you have your home on the market for a while now and you just got an offer. It's from a buyer who wants your home....Yay! Of course you're excited and feeling great. That is, until you realize the buyer submitted a low ball offer. How should you respond?**

**Start by setting aside your emotions. Make sure you focus on the facts, and then prepare to make a counter offer that will keep the buyers involved in the offer.**

### Check Your Emotions

When you get an offer, even a very low one, it usually means that that person wants to buy your home. Even if the offer is offensively low, it deserves a response; whether it's to make a counter offer, or if the terms are really bad, a total rejection may be necessary. Remain calm and discuss with your options with your REALTOR®.

### Sending Back a Counter Offer

Counter the low offer with an offer that has the price and terms you're willing to accept. Some buyers make a low offer because they think that's customary; they're afraid they'll overpay or they want to test your limits. Many times after this initial offer, they are ready to seriously play ball. It also shows that you are willing to negotiate. One strategy for your counteroffer is to lower your price, but remove any particulars such as changing the closing date, or any add-ins like the appliances that you'd like to take with you.

### Consider the Terms

Price is not always the number one thing. A low offer might make sense if the terms and closing meets your needs. Consider what terms you might change in a counteroffer to get the deal to come together so you are happy with it.

### Review the Comps

Ask your REALTOR® whether any homes that are comparable to yours (known as "comps") have been sold or put on the market since your home was listed for sale. The market can shift very quickly, especially in different neighbourhoods. If the market has shifted, you may have to lower the price you were expecting if you want to sell.

### Don't Signal Desperation

Buyers are sensitive to signs that a seller may be receptive to a low purchase offer. If your home is vacant, or your home's listing describes you as a "motivated" seller, "quick closing available", you may be signaling you're open to a low offer. If you can, remedy the situation. Stage the property or ask your agent *not* to mention in your home listing that you are a motivated seller. Doing so, might result in the next purchase offer you get being closer to the price you'd like for signing.

Hopefully when your next offer comes in, it's a good one! If not, hopefully you are now better armed to deal with any low ball offers you may get. And remember; stay positive during the sale of your home!

.....  
Ryan Smith works as a full time real estate professional. In his free time, he is actively involved in many charities and community events. As a past president of JCI Durham, he has given much of his free time to a number of local charities and organizations. When he is not selling houses he enjoys giving back to his community.

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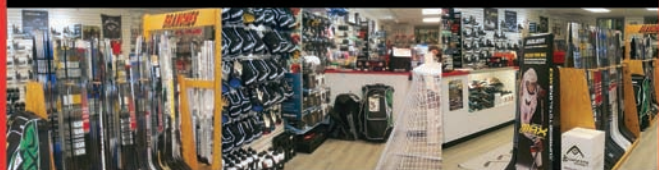
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# Teens, Tweens & In-Between

by Victoria Cozza

*'Winter is a time for comfort, for good food and warmth, for the touch of a friendly hand, and for a talk beside the fire. It's the time for home.'* - Edith Sitwel

**It is officially okay to say it's winter!** Time for snow and classic Canadian cold weather! All the layers of clothing and hot drinks by the fire!

I've always had mixed feelings about winter. I love the look of it, but I can't say the same about the cold weather that comes with it. All weather aside though, my absolute favourite thing about winter is the holiday season. Every kid looks forward to the holidays, no matter what you celebrate. It's such a fun time of year; it's hard *not* to love it. I personally fall in love with the warm and family feel of the holidays every year. I don't really obsess over the presents and commercial aspect of it. Don't get me wrong though, if I see a good book waiting for me under our tree I'll be over the moon and run to it like a little kid; I just prefer to spend my time with my family and friends. Decorating our house with my sister, playing in the snow with my little cousins, and eating lots of delicious food is what I look forward to and treasure most.

When it comes to decorating, I am a "go big or go home" kind of girl. I love adding a touch of the holidays all around my house, especially in my bedroom. I have many different decorations for my room, from little things on my door to my own mini tree right next to my book shelf. Since decorating is a big hobby for me in the winter, I thought I could give you some ideas for decorating your rooms. One thing you could do is dig through your decorations and see if you have an old set of Christmas lights. You can put them along your bed frame, desk, or even the top of your windows. I love the look of them around my room in the winter! It adds a little more light and gives me a warm feeling of the holidays. Another thing you could do is get little snowmen, Santa hats or holiday themed signs. These could go on your doors, a desk, or your dresser. I think they look very cute and it's an easy way to decorate.

I hope these ideas will inspire you to do a little more decorating this holiday season. Just remember, this season is about love, family, laughter and most importantly food. Just kidding! The food is a great perk though! ;-) Happy holidays everyone! Love Victoria

Victoria Cozza is a 15 year old, grade 10 student in Ajax. She loves singing, playing piano and reading. She also loves music and dance and is a part-time competitive dance student. She loves spending her free time with her family and friends.



# Tasteful Talk

by Shirley Ouellette



**Does anyone know what happened to 2014?** It has to be one of the fastest years on record for me. With no real spring and summer, it was a complete whirl. Someone with a sense of humour told me that October was going to be an Indian summer, but alas, that did not really happen either. So now that winter has already graced our tables we need to look harder for local produce. Most of the farmer's markets finished in October, but some farmers still sell directly out of their back doors, so call your local farmers and find out what they have available. Root vegetables store well, as do apples so you will find many small farmers will continue to sell these well into the winter months. Plus, if they raise animals they will have frozen meat and sometimes sausages, burgers and pies.

With the holiday season fast approaching, I am sure you have your local turkey ordered. I know I do and I am so looking forward to that wonderful aroma that fills the house as it starts roasting – it takes me back to my childhood. Coming from a large family, my mom had to be creative to make the food stretch, especially the meat. We could not afford to waste anything, so every morsel of leftover turkey was turned into inventive dishes. One of my favourites was turkey curry. It became so popular in my little village that groups of friends would get together every Boxing Day to share leftover turkey in various forms of East Indian curry. After getting the curry in the oven, everybody bundled up and took a long walk through the woods with kids and dogs in tow to the local pub. We would all have a drink or two, then back we would go home and be greeted at the door by the rich heady smell of turkey curry; wonderful times!

Using up every scrap of meat whether it be turkey or any other animal, not only makes economic sense, it is also a mark of respect for the animal who so graciously gave their life so we can live. The North American Indians respected animals and felt they had equal rights to humans. They hunted animals for food, but the hunter first asked permission of the animal's spirit before taking their life.

I have played with many leftover turkey recipes over the years, and am happy to share with you one of my favorites that really celebrates the winter using acorn squash. It is a fun way to serve two dishes out of the roasted acorn squash that you slowly eat with each course. Happy Holidays my friends and remember Durhameers, vote at the cash register and buy local. Salute!

Shirley Ouellette grew up in the far south west of England. Since living in Canada, she has been actively involved in promoting the Local Food Movement. Sustainability concepts on a broad spectrum are close to her heart and she encourages everyone she comes into contact with to consciously practice sustainable living habits.

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# Tasteful Recipes

by Shirley Ouellette

## Acorn Squash Soup & Turkey Curry (serves 4)

### You will need for the soup...

- 5 Small Acorn Squash
- 1 Large Onion, finely chopped
- 2 Cloves of Garlic, finely chopped
- 2 Cups Turkey Stock
- 1 tbsp Mild Curry Paste
- 1 tbsp Vegetable Oil
- 2 tbsp 35% Cream

### For the curry...

- 2 Cups Cooked Turkey, large chunks
- 1 Large Onion, roughly chopped
- 2 Cloves of Garlic, finely chopped
- 2 Cups Mixed Colour Bell Peppers, sliced
- 1 Can Coconut Milk, 400 ml
- 2 tbsp Spicy Curry Paste
- 1 tbsp Vegetable Oil
- Fresh coriander, chopped

### How it's done...

To make the soup, place the onion and garlic in a pot with the oil and sweat off until soft. Add the stock and curry paste, cover and leave to gently simmer.

For the curry, take another pot and stir fry the peppers in the oil on medium heat stirring frequently for 5 minutes. Remove with a slotted spoon and set aside. Add the onion and garlic and turn the heat down; sweat off until soft. Add the coconut milk and curry paste; turn down to low and leave to simmer.

Preheat oven to 350F. Take four of the acorn squash and cut off the tops to make "hats". For the last one just cut in half as this will be the flesh for the soup. Scoop out the seeds and stringy membranes. Wash and dry the seeds, toss with 1 tsp oil and a sprinkle of sea salt then place on a baking tray and bake for approximately 10 minutes until golden brown. Turn the oven up to 400F and place the squash on a tray, cut side up in the oven to bake, approximately 30 minutes, test with a knife and make sure the flesh is soft. Scrape all the soft flesh from the cut squash into the soup pan and either zip in a blender or with a hand blender. If the soup is too thick add more stock if you have it or water. Put the "serving squash shells" into large bowls for stability and ladle in the soup then garnish each dish with ½ tbsp of cream and some toasted seeds, pepitas.

Before you sit down to enjoy the soup, add the cooked turkey and peppers into the curry sauce, cover and turn off the heat. Enjoy the soup!

Now pour the turkey curry into a serving dish and garnish with the coriander. Allow your guests to ladle the turkey curry into their acorn squash bowls and enjoy with the curry.

### Did you know?

1oz of turkey breast is approximately 30 calories and an excellent source of protein. 5ozs of acorn squash is approximately 56 calories and is very low in saturated fat and cholesterol. It is also a good source of fiber, vitamin A, C, B6, folate and magnesium, thiamin, potassium and manganese; who knew!

### Wine Pick

Strewn Two Vines, Riesling Gewurztraminer VQA with a bright straw colour; floral, citrus, lychee and spice aromas with a hint of petrol; off dry, medium body; tropical fruit and citrus flavours with balanced acidity and good finish. And at \$11.95 who can resist!







# Taking THE Lead

by Corry Hamilton



## Beat the Winter Blues

Cold, snowy days probably make you want to stay by the fireplace rather than head outside, but if you're like me, cabin fever sets in and I need to get out into the great outdoors and burn some energy.

There are many activities that you can do with your dog, whether you are super active or a couch potato. For those of you who like to cross country ski, you may want to try skijoring with your dog. You can use a harness and attach your dog to you and let them do most of the work; or if you have an off leash park, allow them to run beside you, while you ski.

Snowshoeing can be done by small and big dogs alike. It is a great way to bond and burn calories. If you make it an early morning routine, you can both start your day off right and have tons of energy to make it through the cold, dark days.

While your dog may not be able to pull you around the yard, if you have kids, try dog sledding. A simple sled and harness combo will have your kids screaming with joy as you run around the yard after them.

For those of you who don't love old man winter and aren't that active in cold weather, you may want to consider thinking like a child. Who doesn't love making snow angels, throwing snowballs or playing a rousing game of tag? You can make a play date with your dog owning friends and become a kid for a little while. Your dogs will love it too as they run, roll and frolic with you and their doggie friends.

By thinking outside the box and bonding with your dog in the great outdoors, you will beat the winter blues and spring will be here in no time!

We loved the name of Corry's business so much, that we decided to name her column Taking the Lead. Corry's furry family is full of special needs animals, and when she isn't planning her next great international adventure, you can find her curled up with a book, snapping pictures or taking a nap with her cats.

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# Ask Sue-Ann



by Sue-Ann Bavlnka

### Dear Sue-Ann:

A friend of mine did an in person reading with you and she was really impressed. She sort of blazes the trail on spiritual teachers/rituals and I follow her lead. I last saw a psychic (in person) for the first time in June of this year...I didn't find my reading to be very specific. My friend thinks it is because I'm not too clear on different areas of my life, but that is precisely why I'm interested in spiritual guidance.

I guess I'm wondering whether you think it is too soon for me to be seeking a second psychic opinion and why one person's reading would be specific vs. another's vague? Do different healers have access to different messengers? I'd rather not invest in another vague reading...

*Signed: Seeking Guidance*

### Dear Seeking Guidance:

I believe everyone gets what they are supposed to get...the vagueness did exactly what it was supposed to do...it led you to ask questions and keep reaching for answers. In other words, maybe you were not meant to get the answers that you required from that reader. As you stated, you are looking for spiritual guidance and that is a specific thing. Maybe she was not the one to offer the kind of spiritual guidance that you need at this time. The specifics in one reading and vagueness in next doesn't mean anything really. Readings are truly an individual thing and every reader is very different. Sometimes it is hit and miss with some readers. If you are questioning your higher power, your divine guidance, your understanding of God, it is in the end a question of faith. It is not in God's design to prove to you of his existence. Our responsibility is to seek it and all the signs you need, will be put in front of you.

There are many schools of thought regarding what is 'too soon' for a reading. My opinion is that when you are working on something and seeking out answers, then 'too soon' does not fit into that. You know what you need and you are an adult, therefore if that is what you think you need then you have to do what is right for you.

Your question regarding messengers is a good one. The ability to hear spirit is one thing. Having that ability and not developing it or your spiritual beliefs will effect what you are able to hear. Everything needs balance. We co-exist with many things in the unseen world and it is work to define what it means. Readers are like any other business...just like there are effective people there are also ineffective ones, but in the end everyone gets what they were supposed to get. We are all exactly where we should be when we are meant to be there.

Blessings,  
Sue-Ann

Sue-Ann is a mother of 3 and resides in the Oshawa area. She chooses to utilize her undeniable psychic ability to assist you in resolving all of life's issues. Host and Community Producer of Divine Lane on Rogers Cable 10, Tuesday's at 9 pm. You can find out more and forward your submissions to Sue-Ann at [www.divinelane.com](http://www.divinelane.com).



## The **COACH** Corner

by Malachi Brown

### Not Again

Two steps forward, three steps back.

Are you caught in *that* dance again? Why does this happen? As we approach the end of another year, are you satisfied with your life progress in the past year? Did you achieve the goals you established at the start of the year? If you have, a great big congratulations to you.

How about the people who are thinking, no, I was caught in *that* dance again. It always feels like I'm taking two steps forward, three steps back. Is this dance showing up in your business, in habits that you swore you were going to give up; or how about in your relationships with a spouse, members of your family, or your friendships?

What causes this?

Can I suggest three things that might be preventing you reaching your goals – the life of happiness you long for?

Fear, ego and pride!

Ask yourself the question; are any of these affecting how I'm showing up?

I want you to be honest with the answer. A new year is fast approaching. Will it be different or the same old, same old? You know how much you dislike the feeling. Let's do something about it this year.

Examine all areas of your life, then ask yourself, how is fear, ego or pride influencing how I'm living?

I'm afraid to be the person I feel inside, or do I carry on with the "this is who I am person", even when you know it's not true. Are you *fearful* about how the real you will look to others? "It took me years to build this persona!"

What about the family relationships you would like to be better? Are you still waiting for the other person to make the first move? Is that *pride* saying to you, no, they have to make up with me! How long will you let this continue? Be the bigger, braver person. Take the step towards reconciliation. You will feel amazing when you release all that old stuff.

Is your life calling you to do some meaningful charity work, but your *ego* is saying "I'm above that, or I'm too good for that person or situation"? What about a new adventure? Is your ego stopping you from trying, just in case you fail?

Tell yourself I want a *better life* in 2015. I want a *better business*. I want *better relationships*. I want the *best me*.

I want a life that is NOT run by fear, pride or ego.

Starting right now I'm going to make it happen. Why not start this Christmas season? At the end of 2015, God willing, I want you to be able to say honestly, that was the best year of my life so far.

Are you up for the challenge? Yes you are.



Malachi of Dennis Brown & Associates applies his passion in helping others unlock their full potential, enabling them to live the abundant lives they were created to have.



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# The Golden Years

Red and green. Those are the colours of Christmas. Don't try to dazzle me with blue, silver, gold and white. It will always be just red and green for me.

All my life, Christmas has been special for me. My late Mother loved all special occasions, but especially Christmas. Christmas started in September with the making of the Christmas cakes. The fruit was soaked in rum or brandy for several days, and then the rest of the ingredients were added. Everyone who was home took turns stirring it. Once the cake was baked, it was wrapped in cheesecloth, placed in a tin and given a shot or two of brandy. Every so often, a bit more brandy was added. Last year I found Mam's (English spelling) Christmas cake recipe and I'm now following her tradition of making it.

Mam also loved to buy gifts. Filling stockings made her happy; the more the merrier. An empty chair at the table meant someone else should be there. I don't know how many times that "someone" who was new in town and alone for Christmas would end up at our Christmas table. Years later, I would run into people who mentioned the Christmas they had spent with us.

On Christmas day, Dad would make a big breakfast and then we noshed all day. Over the years, we kids have eaten sausage rolls, chocolate biscuits, nuts, chocolate and candy all day from a very full table. That's a family tradition I wouldn't change! My grandson can go to the table and help himself to the same things I could when I was his age. (Sometimes from the same plates!) Each year, my son, his wife and my grandson also come over to set up and decorate the Christmas tree. When it's all done, my son lifts my grandson up so he can put the poor old 1969 star on top. I wonder how much longer this star will hold up to tradition!

Christmas is a magical family time. It's a kaleidoscope of memories with one Christmas blending in with another. Families sit around the tree talking about Christmases past. *"Remember the Christmas that we..."* Often times, we can't put a year to the memory but that doesn't matter. It's the warm feeling and the sense of sharing that the memories bring which matter. One of my favourite memories took place over fifty years ago. My cousin Gail and I were fourteen, and my sister Kathie, twelve. The aroma from Auntie Flo's kitchen was wonderful. The turkey came out of the oven to rest. Gail, Kathie and I wandered in and out, sampling a bit of the skin. All of a sudden, we heard Auntie Flo yell. We were called into the kitchen and saw what had upset her. Sitting on the counter was a poor naked turkey! Somehow, we had eaten all the tasty skin! The look on my Auntie Flo's face and the naked turkey was priceless! It still makes me chuckle today.

I hope all of you have many shared memories of wonderful Christmases, and I hope that this year you add a few more. My wish for you is a very Merry Christmas and joy in 2015.

Linda Calder is a retired teacher. She likes to write and enjoys spending time with her family. She also enjoys going on cruises, taking pictures and scrapbooking.



# Horoscope

(DECEMBER 2014 - FEBRUARY 2015)  
by Julie Antoinette

## Aries (March 21st – April 20th)

Like the Phoenix from the ashes, you will rise. Renewal and victory are yours. Prepare to be reborn. First, death must do its work. Just as the autumn leaves mulch into the soil and become food for new life in the spring, so will death's work create the platform for new life. Let go and let yourself grow.

## Taurus (April 21st – May 21st)

A young person offers new perspectives to help you through a struggle with recent heartbreak. It's okay to move forward. Soulmates sometimes show up as teachers. You'll soon graduate from this class. A new soulmate will appear shortly. For now, spend time with children at every opportunity. You will learn much and your heart will heal in their company. Children come from heaven. They're here to teach us, not the other way around.

## Gemini (May 22nd – June 21st)

Your dynamism and passion are explosive. You are confrontational and dramatic which has an exhausting effect on family and friends. You must tone and hone this energy. Do not squander it on drama thereby throwing your pearls to swine. Channel your passion effectively into a new creative project. New adventures await. Relief from a well-directed release makes all things new.

## Cancer (June 22nd – July 22nd)

You are an enigma, a giver and taker at once. You've been generous - with strings attached. Generosity becomes your tool to command others. A tweak in your emotional approach to giving will attract love to you. Learn to give without emotional manipulation and watch your wishes make their way to you successfully. Proposals and invitations fall into your lap as you enjoy your wishes purely without the effort of manipulation. Freely give, freely receive.

## Leo (July 23rd – August 22nd)

'Tis the season for giving Leo! You offer time, emotion, support and affection. Your giving is intangible, but deeply felt and appreciated. 'Appreciate': "to increase in value." It is important that you understand this concept. Like a rubber band pulled back and released, your giving has carved out an abundance of flow headed your way. It comes in waves and from unexpected sources. Learn to receive with true appreciation and watch your value multiply!

## Virgo (August 23rd – September 23rd)

It's time for inventory, Virgo. You are greatly pleased with your assessment. You discover how emotionally fulfilling this year has been. Each of your wishes has come true from long ago. Wind down this wonderful year slowly and gradually. Unlike the rest of us, the holiday season does not inundate you with the hectic hustle and bustle. And how fortunate! Why rush such a sweet closure?

## Libra (September 24th – October 23rd)

You've been diligent and prudent, working with practical wisdom. You now reap rewards of prosperity and expansion after a lengthy struggle. Start from scratch, applying your newly mastered skills. A trip helps you unravel through developing a new interest. Pursue your hobbies. They reveal your intrinsic worth and lead you in fresh new directions.

## Scorpio (October 24th – November 22nd)

You've gathered vast experience in lies and deception which now paves your destiny. What you do with this experience will direct you. Form new ideas and intentions. Exchange paranoia and suspicion for clear objective perception. Truth will prevail. You will feel justified. Past sufferings are now your strengths. Your perception is clear, acute and unbiased. You've earned your own trust.

## Sagittarius (November 23rd - December 21st)

Stuck in the matrix? You've been plugged in for too long. You're feeling daring, courageous and bored. Use your enterprising spirit to charge ahead. New conceptions come in business and work. Beware of an untrustworthy authority figure. 'Authority' - from the Latin 'auto' meaning 'self'. Conflicts, confusion, boredom and restlessness resolve once you answer this question with authenticity - derivative of the same Latin root. Whose matrix are you stuck in?

## Capricorn (December 22nd – January 19th)

Ready for a fresh start? You tire of the familiar punitive drudgery. Your self-concept is up for renewal. Notice how thoughts become habit. Change the thought and the resonant emotion will follow. Old emotions fall away into disuse and a newfound self-respect will take their place. Consider this word breakdown: 'Re-spect' - to view anew.

## Aquarius (January 20th – February 19th)

Your love life is forefront for examination. Does your lover have your best interest at heart? A truth is revealed about your relationship. Long-term considerations are in order. How long have you felt held back? How much longer? You decide. The planets offer clarity but the decision is yours. Beware of self-betrayal. You know what's wrong, the planets urge your acknowledgement to free yourself from the exile of delusion. Ultra-futuristic Aquarius must evolve. It is unfitting that you should remain stagnant.

## Pisces (February 20th – March 20th)

You are feeling empathetic, emotionally raw and attuned. Someone will need your support. This feels daunting as you could use some yourself. It is as if you are in crisis. This is a blessing in disguise. Sometimes helping others also helps us. We feel that help as it moves through us. Perhaps this is what you needed all along.

Written by Julie Antoinette. Julie is a Sociology and Psychology graduate, a Psychotherapy Intern and a lifelong student of the psyche. In her free time, she is a crochet adventurer and musical muse. In writing this horoscope, she intends to intuitively uncover messages from these astrological archetypes which are part of us all collectively, and guide you into your future. As above, so below.



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