

Fifty-Five Plus News

January 1, 2021

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BREAKING NEWS

CONTACTS:

Recreation Programmer

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Winter Hours:

Closed
until
further
notice.

Welcome to 2021! Good-bye and good riddance to 2020! Looks as if there may be a glimmer of hope in the next few months. In the meantime, we need to stay vigilant, do our social distancing and our masking and our hand-washing. It will be so nice to see everybody in the spring (summer?)

With the provincial move to lock down York Region, all the Town facilities, including the Library and Leisure Centre, are closed. All in-person programs are cancelled. The Library will offer curbside pickup. Please check "Stouffville Reopens" for the latest on the lockdown and on Covid.

Jen McEachen advises that there will be virtual programs offered for the winter session. Registration will start on January 5 at 6:00pm. They will offer Watercolour Painting, Chair Yoga, Scattegories, Stretch 'n' Core, Bingo and Trivia. There will be a workshop on Decluttering and Downsizing on January 29. There will also be a workshop on Hearing Care on February 12. Everything will be strictly virtual via Zoom (which is free). Details will be on the 55+ Club website.

FROM THE 55+ STAFF WORKING GROUP

Since the entire province is now in lockdown, no meeting of the 55+ Club Staff Working Group has been scheduled for January.



HIGH SCHOOL SWEETHEARTS

Were you and your other half “high school sweethearts”? If so, we’d like to feature you in the February newsletter. We’re just looking for 1 or 2 photos from those early years (maybe a wedding photo or a date?) and maybe 3 or 4 sentences about the event. Could be what your parents thought about this guy (girl) or how you met. People are desperate for “happy” stuff to read: please contact Carol at carol.morin2@sympatico.ca if you can help.



MAGNA CONCERT

Many of you enjoyed the annual Christmas concert at Newmarket Theatre put on by Magna International. This year the concert was virtual. The stars are the same (Beverley Mahood). You can still view the “Home for the Holidays” concert at the link Jen provided in the Town’s December update. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-Bp-MkAnK24&feature=youtu.be>

SMILES



An elderly Italian man living alone in New Jersey wanted to plant his annual tomato garden but it was very difficult work because the ground was hard. His only son, Vincent, who used to help him, was in prison. The old man wrote a letter to his son and described his predicament. “Dear Vincent, I am feeling very sad because it looks like I won’t be able to plant my tomato garden this year. I’m just getting too old to be digging up a garden plot. I know if you were here, my troubles would be over. I would you would be happy to dig the plot for me, like in the old days. Love, Papa.”

A few days later, he received a letter from his son. “Dear Pop, Don’t dig up that garden. That’s where the bodies are buried. Love, Vinnie.”

At 4 a.m. the next morning, FBI agents and local police arrived and dug up the entire area without finding any bodies. They apologized to the old man and left. That same day, the old man received another letter from his son.

“Dear Pop, Go ahead and plant the tomatoes now. That’s the best I could do under the circumstances. Love you.”



BIRTHDAY PEOPLE

Beverly Anne Hill, Diane Kennedy, George Iwasiw, Jan Douglas, Joan McCool, Lenore Ramer, Marie Chabot, Nelda Morley, Peg Kirby, Bernice Field, Dot Gourley, Thea Hulshof, Doris Lajoie, Liz Lightfoot, Erika Tessmer, Janet Baigent, Karen Bowman, Shirley Eriksen, Vicki Hughes, Mary Lou Knoblauch, Mirielle Lan, Denise Lee, Kathy Nesbitt, Colleen Ormson, Louissette Pelletier, Barbara Pollard, Barb Robillard, Leslie Chisholm, Laurel Clinton, Leela Dipta, Philomena Francis, Audrey Fung-On, Antonietta Ignagni, Deb Kimpton, Maureen Lawson, Joan Lessard, Shuqing Liu, Ingrid Meitsch, Thevamalar Muthulingam, Diane Perley, Larry Schell, Muthummtha Selvarathnam, Saraosadevi Sivavadivel, Jim Sutton, Beverly Tinkler, Ramie Veerappan, Marlene Vincent, Mking Mei Wong, Maureen Zinner. Celebrate!



HAPPY NEW YEAR

What did your family do for **New Year's**? We have this from Eileen Davidson who grew up in Scotland:

I thought back to when I was a little girl and the big family times we always had at my grandparents'. Hogmanay (as New Year's was called in Scotland) was big. The house had to be cleaned and polished and the baking done. The table in the best room was set up near the window with the best tablecloth, good china and glasses brought out and the plates laden with my Grannies' baking: oatcakes, cloutie dumplings, shortbread and different kinds of cake. "Cloutie" is Scottish for cloth. My grandmother made the cloutie dumplings in a big pan wrapped in cloth then boiled in water, sort of like Christmas pudding. She made golden syrup ones and treacle ones (which were my favourite!). She served them with custard pudding. A tray was set up with bottles of port, sherry, ginger wine and Scotch whiskey.

At dark, the fire was lit and we were waiting for family and friends to arrive. We had a ceilidh, singing & dancing, someone always had a fiddle or harmonica. My brother and I were allowed to stay up to midnight when we were given a small glass of ginger wine and a piece of shortbread, then to be where we listened for the "first foots" to arrive. My grandmother took the broom and swept out the old year. Then outside she banged two pot lids together 12 times for a good new year. The "first foots" arrived and it was lucky to have a dark-haired man who brought a bottle of whiskey and a lump of coal for the fire. My Grandad and all the men would have a drink from the first foot's bottle for luck. New Year's Day the table was set up again with home-made steak pies, cakes and, in the middle, a giant sherry trifle. Neighbours came to say Happy New Year and we all ate buffet-style. New Year's lasted a long time: even the postman was invited in for a drink and a piece of cake. When I look back, it was such a lovely time with all my family.

LETTERS FROM AWAY

This month's "Letter from Away" is Graham Sparrow. Many of you know Graham from his excellent line dancing class. He and his wife Jan Douglas go to Florida every year. They were fortunate this year because they had to leave their car behind last March, so there it was, waiting for them this year!

Dear neighbours and friends in Stouffville,

We send greetings from Sarasota.

Jan and I have been asked for a brief update of our experiences this fall and express our opinions of how things are where we live right now.

The city of Sarasota is located on the gulf side of Florida, about half-way down the state. We've been told that it has a more relaxed southern "vibe" than the Atlantic coast and welcomes thousands of Canadians on our annual migration to this warm and friendly coast.

It has a vibrant arts community, world-class aquarium, great beaches and lots of places to eat, shop, shop and shop. Check out the Ringling Circus Museum and the Selby Gardens on the city's website for more info at: www.visitsarasota.com.

We discovered Sun N Fun Resort through a friend we met at Cedar Beach Resort. It takes us about three days by car on I-75. If you prefer to fly from Toronto, there are lots of connecting flights from YYZ through Atlanta and Charlotte.

We found Terminal 3 in Toronto to be almost deserted when we flew in November, and our first leg of the flight was half empty. Everyone was wearing masks and there were no food or beverage services. We felt quite safe and arrived at our winter home just before dark.

We've started to enjoy the freedom of good weather and good friends. There is an almost limitless list of indoor and outdoor activities, from tennis, to petanque, woodworking, line dancing, lapidary, all run by the residents ... it's like camp for adults. There is also a wellness centre and of course, pools. Plus, we can sit on our porch and read, enjoy our flower garden, and ride bikes. We "socially distance" and wear masks indoors much like Stouffville and the major stores are also similar from a safety point of view.

Right now, Covid is keeping a lot of folks away. As you probably know, Canadian can't drive across the border (we can only fly) and Brits are not allowed entry.

By comparing the number of people from previous years, and the number of "units" up for sale, there are fewer activities and much smaller classes. We're hoping to see more folks after Christmas. And although there are few kiddies around, the adults still go overboard with colored lights, giant inflated creatures, ad something called golf cart drive-by carolling.

The election has occupied much media attention everywhere, and Americans seem to be deeply polarized politically. As visistors, we feel it only polite not to comment.

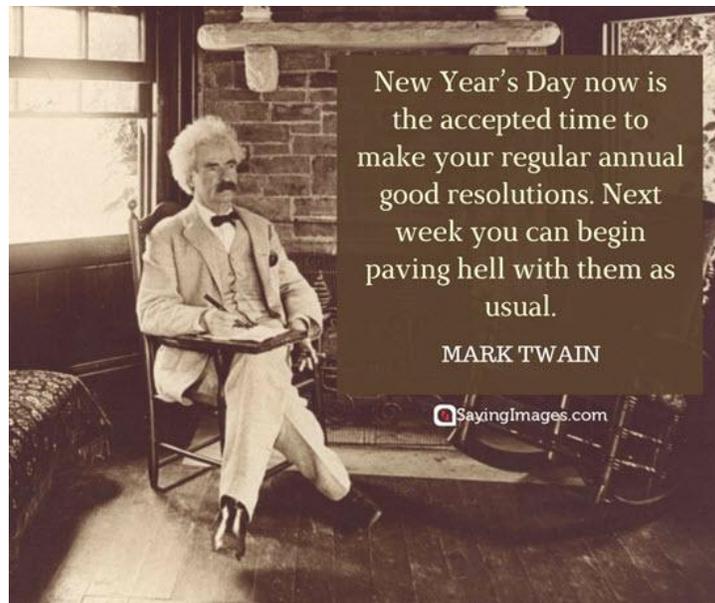
In order to meet our deadline, we'll finish our Christmas letter to y'all by wishing health, wealth and happiness and hope to see you when the sun returns to our little town.

Regards, Jan and Graham



WELCOME 2021

Some cool photos of all the places I visited in 2020



New Year's Day now is the accepted time to make your regular annual good resolutions. Next week you can begin paving hell with them as usual.

MARK TWAIN

SayingImages.com