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Tasha Orysiuk's Ukrainian dance group inducted into the Dance Hall of Fame

BY JOAN JANZEN

Tasha Orysiuk's dance group, Ukrainian Shumka Dancers, was inducted into the Dance Hall of Fame on November 9 at the Metropolitan Entertainment Centre in Winnipeg. Tasha (née Kanasevich), the group's Artistic Director, is originally from Eatonia, where her love of dancing first began.

The ceremony bestowed a national honour on the group for their unique style and lasting impact on Canadian dance. Shumka combines explosive Ukrainian high-kicks with elegant ballet movements and is Canada's only professional Ukrainian dance company. Having shared Ukrainian culture for 65 years, they are now honoured to be the first group of dance artists from Edmonton to receive this national recognition.

"I feel incredibly fortunate to have a career I love, working alongside an exceptional production and administrative team, and extraordinarily dedicated, hardworking dancers," Tasha said. "This season marks my first year as Artistic Director of the Ukrainian Shumka Dancers."

The Ukrainian Nutcracker tour began in November with four performances in Victoria, presented with the Victoria Symphony Orchestra. This was followed by two performances in Medicine Hat, two in Camrose, and three final performances in Edmonton.

The Nutcracker production includes 50 Shumka dancers, 19 choir members from Kappella Kyrie Slavic Chamber Choir, and 18 children from the Shumka School of Dance, for a total of 87 performers.

The company has been an important part of Tasha's life for many years. She joined the Ukrainian Shumka Dancers in Edmonton in 1996, touring nationally in acclaimed productions. She was selected among 14 Shumka dancers to tour the Eastern U.S. with The Nutcracker – A Ballet Fantasy in 1997 and 1999.

Tasha joined Shumka's Artistic Team in 2015 and became Shumka's Creative Director, focusing on dancer training, choreography, and artistic mentorship. She is an accomplished Canadian dance educator, adjudicator, and choreographer, with extensive credentials and training across multiple disciplines un-



Tasha Orysiuk

"I feel incredibly fortunate to have a career I love, working alongside an exceptional production and administrative team, and dedicated, hardworking dancers."

der internationally renowned artists in Canada, the U.S., England, and Ukraine.

"In addition to my role as Artistic Director, I teach at the Shumka School of Dance, helping to train and mentor the next generation of Shumka Dancers," she explained. For dancers 55 and older, Tasha offers a ballet program and leads Seniors Can Shumka.

"The class has grown into a vibrant community of 45 dancers, ranging in age up to 89 years," she said. "It's often described as my Monday morning party."

This spring, Shumka will be taking another major production on tour. "We will be continuing our commitment to sharing Ukrainian dance with audiences across Canada and beyond," she concluded.

Meanwhile, all her family and friends from her hometown of Eatonia and surrounding area wish to extend their heartfelt congratulations for her most recent honour!



Tasha (née Kanasevich) Orysiuk's dance group, Ukrainian Shumka Dancers, was inducted into the Dance Hall of Fame on November 9 at the Metropolitan Entertainment Centre in Winnipeg. Tasha, the group's Artistic Director, is originally from Eatonia.

SUBMITTED



Santa Claus Day brings holiday cheer to Luseland

LUSELAND — Despite chilly temperatures, Luseland was alive with holiday spirit on Dec. 13 during the town's annual Santa Claus Day. The event, organized by the Luseland Community Development Committee, saw local businesses open their doors with special promotions, draws, and treats for families.

A highlight for many was Santa's Treasure Hunt, sponsored by the Luseland & District Chamber of Commerce. Children started the adventure with a visit from Santa at the community hall, receiving a treasure map before following a route through the business district. Along the way, participants completed fun challenges and created Christmas crafts at each stop.

High school students volunteered

to assist younger children, helping the activities run smoothly throughout the day.

The celebration wrapped up with Santa's return to the hall, where children received prizes and candy bags. Families also enjoyed a Christmas movie, sleigh rides through town, and gathered around a community bonfire to roast hot dogs and marshmallows and sip hot chocolate before heading home.

The event was made possible through the efforts of the Luseland Community Development Committee, the Luseland & District Chamber of Commerce, local businesses, student volunteers, and the wider community. Santa Claus Day once again showcased the strong sense of togetherness and holiday spirit that defines Luseland.



MERRY CHRISTMAS

Wishing you a fun, joyful, and safe holiday season!



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Paula Larson
Photo

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First Christmas with the in-laws? Here's how to prepare!

The holiday season is a time for joy and sharing. This time of year, although relaxing for many, may be stressful for you if you're getting ready to spend your first Christmas with your in-laws. Does this sound familiar? Here are a few tips.

TALK TO YOUR PARTNER

Before the gathering, take a moment to share your feelings and questions with your significant other. Are you feeling nervous? Do you want to know if some sensitive topics are best avoided? This conversation will help you mentally prepare and ease your anxiety.

CHOOSE YOUR OUTFIT CAREFULLY

Select your outfit based on the type of gathering and planned activities. If you know your in-laws like dressing up for Christmas, consider visiting a chic boutique or even a tailor. For a more casual gathering, opt for comfortable yet stylish clothing.

BREAK THE ICE WITH CLASS

Is this your first time meeting your in-laws?



Get to know them better by asking open-ended questions. Not sure how to break the ice? A small gift, such as a plant, a bottle of wine or a candle, can help create a warm connection.

Spending your first Christmas with your

in-laws is an important moment. It's perfectly normal to feel awkward or nervous. However, preparation is your best friend. Visit your local shops to find everything you need for this memorable occasion, and most importantly, have fun!

What gift should you give someone who loves all things food?

If you have a foodie in your life, consider one of these tasty and exciting ideas to make them happy this Christmas.

- **A class or workshop.** Give your loved one the chance to develop their culinary skills in a class focused on their favourite type of cuisine, such as tapas, pastries or sushi. Some classes are also available online. Handy, right?
- **A trip.** If your budget allows, treat your gourmand to an adventure in Italy to savour authentic Italian cuisine or explore Peruvian flavours in Peru. If you prefer to stay closer to home, a weekend getaway a few hours away can introduce them to new tastes and experiences.
- **A gourmet meal.** Does your foodie dream about going to a speci-

fic high-end restaurant? Now's your chance to book a table or give them a gift certificate for two. Sharing a special meal always makes the experience more enjoyable.

- **A kitchen accessory or appliance.** Find out what could elevate your loved one's kitchen experience. A luxury saucepan, a set of sharp knives, a bread maker, an ice cream maker, a stand mixer, a griddle or a glass cake dome are all fantastic options.
- **A gourmet gift basket.** Choose an expertly prepared gift basket, or get creative and make your own. Fill it with a variety of items like gourmet condiments, artisanal spreads and unique spices. The customization possibilities are endless!

Shop at your local stores to find the perfect gourmet gift!



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Expert tips for making your first yule log cake

Want to try baking a traditional yule log cake this year? Use these tried-and-true tips to ensure your success.

BAKE
For a classic yule log, use a light sponge cake made with flour, sugar and whole eggs. Beat the eggs until they triple in volume. Look for a reliable recipe online and bake the sponge cake on a parchment-lined baking sheet.

ROLL
There are several schools of thought on how to roll a yule log cake. Here's a time-tested method.

1. Remove the sponge cake from the mould as soon as it comes out of the oven. Use a knife if necessary.
2. Place a sheet of parchment paper slightly larger than the cake on your work surface.
3. Turn the baking sheet upside down to place the sponge cake on the parchment paper. Then, immediately (and gently) peel away the paper used during ba-

- king.
4. Roll the cake up using the parchment paper underneath.
5. Cover the dessert with a damp dish towel and let it cool.

That's it! The hardest part is done.

FILL
Unroll the cooled cake and spread it with your filling of choice, such as ganache, whipped cream or jam. Use the parchment paper again to roll the cake back up. The previous steps will have made it pliable and moist.

For the finishing touch, some people prefer to cover the log completely with icing; others dust it with a little bit of icing sugar or chocolate shavings. At this stage, let your imagination run wild.

Are you missing any ingredients or utensils to make your yule log a success? Visit your local shops to get equipped like the pros.



Dear valued readers and advertisers,

We want to extend a heartfelt thank you for your continued support this past year.

As we look ahead, our mission remains clear: to deliver stories that resonate with our community. You can rely on us to bring you accurate and timely news on the topics that matter most.

As we celebrate the holidays, we want you to know that your support is the greatest gift we could ask for. We are privileged to have you in our corner!

Wishing you a warm and wonderful holiday season, and all the best for 2026!

Merry Christmas

from Kate & Robert Winquist and staff!

WE WILL SEE YOU BACK ON JANUARY 6th

Your West Central
VOICE

The Kerrobert
CHRONICLE

CHRISTMAS TREATS! Tables at Elizabeth Middle School were filled with cookies, tarts, squares and cupcakes on Thursday morning for the school's Christmas bake sale. Family and friends arrived at 11 a.m. to buy treats, with students on hand to help with the fundraiser. *PHOTO BY JOAN JANZEN*

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Thank you for your continued business and support. We are looking forward to 2026!

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

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★ All things merry ★

12 activity ideas to bring the magic of Christmas to life for a child

Christmas is just around the corner! Do you have a child or grandchild you'd like to share the magic of Christmas with? These 12 activities are sure to bring out the festive spirit of this much-anticipated holiday.

- 1. **Read a book.** Curl up near the Christmas tree, wrap yourself in a cozy blanket and dive into a captivating Christmas story. Borrow books from your neighbourhood library or buy them at your local bookstore.
- 2. **Listen to music.** Play Christmas music as you do other fun activities like drawing or doing puzzles. Learn the lyrics by heart or even sing along to a karaoke version.
- 3. **Watch a movie.** Choose a funny or heart-warming Christmas movie to watch at home or in the theatre. If you want to get even more in the spirit, wear a cozy toque or your favourite Christmas pajamas.
- 4. **Admire festive decorations.** Once the sun sets, take a walk or drive around your neighbourhood to look at the most beautifully decorated houses. You're sure to

- be amazed!
- 5. **Write to Santa Claus.** Help your child write a letter to Santa. Give them nice paper and stickers for decorating, then drop off the letter together at the post office or a mailbox.
 - 6. **Prepare Elf on the Shelf pranks.** Invite a mischievous elf to your home to pull off all kinds of pranks that your child will discover when they wake up.
 - 7. **Send holiday cards.** Help your child write Christmas cards to their friends, cousins, aunts, uncles and grandparents. Deliver them by hand if possible.
 - 8. **Visit a Christmas market.** These community events have a bit of everything, from music and entertainment to colourful decorations. You're sure to get in the holiday spirit!
 - 9. **Bake cookies.** Make delicious treats like shortbread or gingerbread men and decorate them together. Enjoy some as a family and share the rest as gifts.



- 10. **Decorate the house.** Set up the Christmas tree and hang stockings. If you're feeling crafty, make ornaments, wreaths and garlands to beautify your space. Don't forget to place Christmas figurines or stuffed animals in your child's room.
- 11. **Buy an advent calendar.** Children love advent calendars, which help



- them count down the days until Christmas. Whether filled with chocolates or surprises like stickers and small toys, they're always a hit.
- 12. **Prepare a snack for Santa Claus.** On December 24, help your child prepare a snack

for the Jolly Old Saint Nick. You can also put out some raw vegetables for the reindeer.

Your region has everything you need to bring the magic of Christmas to life for people of all ages. Make the most of these memorable moments together!

May you find peace and happiness this Christmas and throughout the coming year.

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Creative hobbies

7 gift ideas to entertain young and old alike

Creative hobbies are the perfect way to express yourself, relax and develop your fine motor skills. Spoil the artists in your life, regardless of their age, with these inspiring gift ideas.

- 1. Paint-by-number or diamond painting kit.** These fun kits enable anyone to create beautiful art depicting many different subjects, including animals, landscapes and more.
- 2. Candle-making kit.** A wide variety of these kits is available, containing everything you need to start making candles in different shapes and sizes.
- 3. Craft kit.** Packed with assorted craft supplies like googly eyes, feathers, pompoms and glitter, these kits are sure to delight budding artists.
- 4. Art case.** This handy case contains a selection of art supplies, including pencils, markers, pastels and watercolours. It's perfect for both young and seasoned artists alike.
- 5. Light-up board.** An excellent tool for tracing, a light-up board makes it easy to copy a variety of patterns and designs. It's often included with kids' tablets.



- 6. Crochet or embroidery kit.** If someone you love has recently taken up needlework, they're sure to be thrilled to add a new kit like this to their crafting collection.
- 7. Origami kit.** This kit comes with beautiful paper and instructions to create various origami folds. It's a perfect choice for those who enjoy working with their hands.

Visit your local shops today and give the gift of creativity!

.....

4 subjects to avoid during Christmas dinner

Holiday gatherings can easily lead to heated discussions and uncomfortable silences. Here are four subjects to steer clear of at Christmas dinner.

- 1. POLITICS**
To preserve harmony, keep this hot topic off the table. Conversations about controversial bills or different political parties can create division among guests.
- 2. RELIGION**
Although Christmas is a historically Christian holiday, your guests may hold differing religious beliefs, which could quickly cause tensions to flare.
- 3. PHYSICAL APPEARANCE**
Even if you have good intentions, commenting on someone's weight gain or loss can be hurtful. It's best to keep those comments to yourself.



- 4. LOVE LIFE**
A person's sexual orientation or romantic choices are none of your business. Unless the person brings it up themselves, avoid asking about their love life or whether they're seeing someone special.
If the conversation starts to go off track, change the subject with a smile, or break out the board games for a fun distraction.

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Soon we'll say “goodbye 2025” and “hello 2026”

A grandpa sat back in his recliner on New Year’s Day and said to his little grandson, “I remember last year like it was yesterday!”

Before we know it, Christmas will be over, and we’ll be ushering in a new year. So I thought it would be interesting to share how people all over the world celebrate on New Year’s Eve and New Year’s Day.

I have friends in Nova Scotia who have a lot of fun going for a Polar Dip on New Year’s Day, taking a plunge into freezing cold water.

People in Spain and other Spanish-speaking countries eat a grape every time the clock chimes at midnight. The purpose is to bring good luck, good health, and joy for the next 12 months, with each grape representing a month of the year.

In Finland, people melt miniature tin horses in a pan, then take the molten tin and pour it into cold water. Whatever shape the tin hardens into is supposed to be an indication of what the new year will bring.

Meanwhile, in Ireland, folks take a loaf of hard bread and smack it against the walls of their houses in hopes that the loud noise will drive bad luck out of their homes. I think you’re beginning to realize there are a lot of superstitious traditions on New Year’s Eve!

Egyptians shine lights on their pyra-



Opinion
By Joan Janzen

mids on New Year’s Eve, though I’m not sure why. South Africa, Australia, and China are just a few countries that celebrate with fireworks displays on New Year’s Eve.

In Denmark, residents save their chipped china and plates for New Year’s Eve. After the clock strikes midnight, people throw their chipped dishes at their friends’ front doors.

It’s supposed to release any grievances from the previous year—a sort of stress reliever, I guess. The bigger the pile of dishes found outside one’s door, the better, since it represents your popularity.

Kissing at midnight is one of the most popular New Year’s traditions all over the world. In Venice, tens of thousands of people get together for an outdoor celebration and kiss at midnight.

Throughout Latin America, you’ll see shops filled with strings of different colours of underwear for sale. On New Year’s Eve, people are supposed to wear the colour of their choice: red for love, gold for wealth, and white for peace.

If you love food, you would enjoy celebrating New Year’s Day in Estonia, where you’re supposed to eat seven, nine, or twelve meals on New Year’s Day. It is believed the number of times you eat is the amount of strength you will have the following year.

In both Mexico and Greece, a king’s

In Venice, tens of thousands of people get together for an outdoor celebration and kiss at midnight.

cake is served on New Year’s Eve. Whoever gets the slice with a gold coin in it is king or queen for the day. But they also have the responsibility to host the New Year’s party the following year.

On a recent holiday, my son and daughter-in-law discovered that people in Thailand celebrate their New Year festival in April, marking the end of the dry season. They take to the streets for a three-day water fight, and everyone gets soaked!

Meanwhile, on New Year’s Day in Siberia, divers take to the negative-49-degree water and set up a decorated fir tree on the floor of a lake.

In Ecuador, citizens walk around their houses or around the block at midnight, pulling their suitcases. This tradition is supposed to bring safe travels in the new year.

The cold New Year in Japan is warmed up with a hot bowl of soup on New Year’s Eve. The longer the noodle, the longer your life will be.

I was listening to a young woman who grew up in Russia explain that the

people there don’t celebrate Christmas on December 24 and 25, but have similar traditions to ring in the New Year. December 25 is a regular workday, but schools are closed for two weeks around the New Year’s holiday.

Every household decorates a fir tree, and they enjoy a big family dinner on December 31 with lots of food, including caviar and traditional salads. At midnight, they turn on their televisions, watch the main clock on Moscow’s Red Square, and celebrate the countdown with champagne and fireworks.

Grandpa Christmas visits the children, but he is a more serious version of Santa. He is generally tall, wearing a long red or blue coat, and has a long pointed beard. He gives gifts to kids who are behaving well. His helper is his blonde granddaughter, who helps hand out presents. Parents also have gifts underneath the fir tree for their children to open on New Year’s Day.

As we celebrate the New Year, we all remember last year like it was yesterday. I can assure you I won’t be celebrating by eating 12 grapes, sucking long noodles, throwing a hard loaf of bread at my house, going for a polar dip, or throwing dishes at a friend’s front door.

I prefer to trust in wise proverbs like this one: “Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths.”

I wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a healthy, happy New Year. Thanks for taking the time to “check it out.”

HAVE YOUR SAY.

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“Touch heart” words

The word of the year, as voted on by the Oxford English Dictionary, is rage-bait: “combining the words rage, meaning a violent outburst of anger, and bait, an attractive morsel of food. Although a close parallel to the etymologically related click-bait, rage-bait has a more specific focus on evoking anger, discord, and polarization.”

Merriam-Webster announced that their “human editors” (as opposed to their monkeys, algorithms, or AI editors? We now have to clarify whether or not a human is making decisions on our behalf) chose the word: slop.

They defined “slop” as “digital content of low quality that is produced usually in quantity by means of artificial intelligence.” They went on to say: “The flood of slop in 2025 included absurd videos, off-kilter advertising images, cheesy propaganda, fake news that looks pretty real, junky AI-written books... and lots of talking cats.” The problem is, while “people found it annoying... people ate it up.”

What is it about us that makes us jump at anything that promises to enrage and annoy us? Does it make us feel better than the ones engaged in the bad behavior? Or does it justify our hatred of them? Does hating make us feel safe, better, stronger, right? Or is it that we’ve been stooping so low for so long we forgot what it feels like to be upright? To be gentlefolk, to comport ourselves with dignity and grace.

Last year’s word was polarization. This is where we take a side and then blame the opposite side for engaging in “polarization.” It’s a prerequisite for the making of rage-bait and slop. You hunker down and build your arsenal behind your wall, fence, or gated community and start collecting ammunition. This is war, and you are fighting the enemy until your very last mud-sling.

Merriam-Webster reported another often-looked-up term from last year: Touch Grass. They wrote: “After the murder of Charlie Kirk, Governor Spencer Cox spoke passionately about the dangers of social media and urged people to log off, turn off, touch grass, hug a family member, go out and do good in the community.”

I’m old enough to remember not having a computer or a cell phone—which means I’m lucky enough, too. I was 46 years old when my producer made me use a company cellphone because I was reporting from the road. I hated having to carry a phone while on the road—the whole point of the road was to get away from the world!

Pop89
By Madonna Hamel

We don’t just use our phones to keep in touch anymore; we use them to keep us busy, distracted, noisy in our heads. They are sidearms—we arm ourselves with them—keeping fear and depression at bay.

The governor makes sense. Sociologist Jonathan Haidt reminds us that play used to be the purview of childhood. But play-based childhood is being replaced with a screen-based life. And they’re suffering because of it. But it’s not just them—adults suffer from isolation, depression, sleep deprivation, and addiction when we spend huge swaths of time on the phone. Not to mention nature-deprivation.

Author Paul Kingsnorth sees cell phones as “a disruptor of solitude, which is essential to a spiritual life.” And I’d add, if we can’t go to bed without our cells talking us to sleep (anyone remember lullabies?) and being the first connection we make in the morning, when are we alone with our own thoughts? Or does the very idea of that terrify us? When, if ever, do we contemplate, reflect, or pray?

Five years ago, Shoshana Zuboff, in her book Surveillance Capitalism, warned us that “tech companies secretly extract our private behavioral data to predict and modify their future actions for profit. Cell phones are ideal for this because they are everywhere and always with us. They have advanced tracking capabilities.”

Today we say, so what? We like it. I’ve written about this before. But now I want to talk about alternatives. I don’t want to contribute to making “polarization,” “slop,” or “rage-bait” the most popular word of next year. I want to talk solution rather than problem.

There is a heartlessness to rage-baiting — a hard-heartedness which is a form of cowardice and selfishness. There is a mean-spiritedness to rage-baiting too. And it’s not just idiots, but clever people, armed with provocation under the guise of righteous indignation. Either way, it’s about putting time and energy into a hard-headed us-and-them war.

I want to drive to the top of the 2026 list: disarming words, cozy words, words about nature and long walks with friends and family, bundled in a parka, stopping for hot cocoa, or staying indoors, sitting under a blanket by a fire with a book. I want to put words of wonder and constructive words to ascend to the top. Ploughshare words, not sword words. “Touch Grass,” “Touch Heart” words.

Of course, we don’t need to wait for Oxford or Merriam-Webster to give us a word. Every New Year’s Eve, my family chooses a word to live by. I think I’ll choose heart.

This year, may I remember to move from my head to my heart. And learn to stay open even when it hurts—especially when it hurts—so that I can be willing, as Hannah Arendt recommended, “to hear the inherent truth inside the other’s opinion.”

I’ll leave you with the words of Pope Leo, as he seems to be one of the few sane people on the planet these days:

“Sometimes, at the end of days full of activities, we feel empty. Why? Because we are not machines; we have a heart. Indeed, we can say that we are a heart. The heart is the symbol of all our humanity, the sum of our thoughts, feelings, and desires, the invisible center of our selves... For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”

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Do Not Be Afraid: There Is Good News

BY KATE WINQUIST

“Do not be afraid! For behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people: Today the Oyen Echo has met its saviour. She is Kate Winquist. Hallelujah!”

Those words, written by Diana Walker on the front page of the Dec. 17, 2020, *Oyen Echo*, feel like yesterday—though five years have passed. It’s hard to believe that half a decade ago, I stepped in to take over a weekly community newspaper many thought was destined to fold. In doing so, I jokingly earned the title of “saviour of newspapers” in west-central Saskatchewan and east-central Alberta. After all, only six months earlier I had launched *Your West Central Voice* from scratch, following the closure of the Kindersley Clarion in February 2020.

It’s a title I take lightly. The need, however, is very real. Last week, the *Carlyle Observer* published its final edition on Dec. 18 after 89 years of operation. Earlier this year, the *Estevan Mercury* ceased publication after 122 years. Saskatchewan has seen a sharp decline in local journalism, with dozens of newspapers closing or consolidating as advertising revenues shift and digital media rises.

Some notable recent closures include:

- *Carlyle Observer*: Closed Dec. 18 after 89 years.
- *Estevan Mercury*: Ceased publication Jan. 1 after 122 years.
- Estevan Web Printing: The province’s last newspaper press, closed earlier this year.
- *Kindersley Clarion*: 110-year-old weekly, closed 2020.
- *Moose Jaw Times-Herald*: 128-year-old daily, closed in 2017.
- *Saskatchewan Valley News*: Closed in 2017 after 114 years.

The trend is clear: hundreds of local outlets across Canada have shut down since 2008, with community newspapers among the hardest hit. Large media chains increasingly consolidate or close underperforming print operations, focusing on digital assets.

This fall, the *Rosetown Eagle* teetered on the brink of closure. Once again, I had the opportunity to step

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Volume 51, No. 48 Oyen, Alberta December 17, 2020 \$2.00

The Oyen Echo changes ownership

—to you (Kate Winquist) from failing hands we throw the torch, be yours to hold it high



By Diana Walker,
“Do not be afraid! For behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people: Today the Oyen Echo has met its saviour. She is Kate Winquist. Hallelujah!”

After a whole year of contemplating, searching and finally decision-making, I’d concluded The Oyen Echo would close its doors: I’d been going through those doors for nearly 52 years.

That final decision came after several conversations with a prospective buyer who decided to turn down the offer to purchase. I thought she was the perfect person to lead The Oyen

7 highway.

“What’s up?” I asked inquisitively.

I can’t remember how Joan responded, but she implied that The Echo’s editor contemplated retirement and thought I might be interested.

I’m a believer that it never hurts to gain information if it could be beneficial. I didn’t know much about Oyen, other than my husband’s cousins lived around the area some time ago. Curiosity got the better of me, and I sent off an email inquiring about what their thoughts were. I didn’t immediately receive a reply, so I thought that I would do some investigating about The Echo.

What I found immediately intrigued me. The editor was Diana Walker, who was born in Oyen in 1947. I started counting decades on my fingers and concluded that Diana was 72-73 years old. No wonder she wants to retire, I thought to myself—Diana’s start in the newspaper business was 1969, the year I was born.

Diana called and left a message a couple of weeks later, apologizing for not getting in touch sooner. It sounded like life was getting in the way, as it has a habit of doing. After playing phone and email tag for a few weeks, Diana and I finally were able to speak. I’m not sure how long our conversation was, but I felt like I had known her for a

long time. The conversation was effortless. She let me know what her thoughts were on The Echo and that she thought that I would be a good person to take over the reins because of my passion for the industry.

I promised Diana that I would give it some serious thought.

I took a drive to Oyen with my husband, Robert. We wanted to see what kind of business district the community had. We were quite impressed. Neither of us expected the town to have such a diverse selection of businesses. It took us some time to locate The Echo office, and when we did, unfortunately, it was closed. I could have called Diana on her cell, but it was a Friday, and I didn’t want her to feel obligated to come to the office on her well-deserved day off!

I emailed Diana, and we arranged to meet in person. My daughter and I drove to Oyen, and finally, I met the whirlwind, otherwise known as Diana Walker. We had such a great visit. Again, it felt like we had known each other for a long time. If my daughter wasn’t so anxious to get home, I’m sure I could have stayed for another hour at least.

We continued to email back and forth, exchanging copies of our papers. On September 28, I had made up my mind. I regretted not telling Diana that I could not purchase The Oyen Echo.

“... I’m sorry, Diana. I just don’t have enough of me to make it work. I think I have enough on my plate building what I have started here. I would hate to add more to it and have the rest suffer as a consequence. I do hope that you are able to continue or find someone local to take it on. If things change, I will surely let you know. Please do keep in touch, and I hope we can still exchange papers electronically. If there’s anything else that I can help you out with, please let me know!”

I know Diana was disappointed, but she understood. We continued our friendship and support for one another through our papers and love for community and storytelling.

On November 26, Diana emailed me, saying she had four papers to go. I asked, “Are you hanging it up at the end of the year for sure?”

“Yes,” she was her heart-breaking reply.

“No other prospects,” I inquired.

“No.”

“Maybe I should be revisiting this? I don’t know what to do?”

Diana didn’t respond to me, but little did she know that I was revisiting the opportunity. My husband and I talked about it for a long time over the weekend, and I told him the only way that I could see it working was if I had him to help me. To my shock and disbelief, Robert said,

“Let’s go for it.”

When I started *Your West Central Voice* back in July, my husband told me that I was the only one crazy enough to start a newspaper during a pandemic.

It’s now six months later, and we are adding another newspaper to our publishing business.

Who’s the crazy one now?

My husband gave his official notice at his job at Nutrien Ag. Solutions on December 7 and will be moving to Kindersley at the end of the month to become a part of the Your South-west Media Group team. He will help me in a variety of capacities, but his main job will be advertising sales.

Robert has no sales experience whatsoever, but he’s a friendly guy with a great sense of humour, and he is up for the challenge! After slugging it out on the oil rigs for 30 years and the agriculture industry, I think he is deserving of a job that isn’t so physically demanding. I am proud of him for taking that leap of faith - something that would not be easy for him. He’s not a big risk-taker, although he took a risk 20 years ago when he made me his wife, which turned out alright!

I am looking forward to the next chapter. It’s been almost three years since our family was altogether under one roof, and I am so grateful to the west-central area for giving us this opportunity.

Independent newspapers like ours play a vital role in keeping readers informed about what’s happening in their communities.

in, as I did with the *Oyen Echo* in 2020. It begs the question: if I hadn’t, would anyone else have? Each closure underscores just how fragile local journalism has become—and how easily communities can lose their own stories.

We’ve weathered the storm (so far) by focusing on hyper-local content. Independent newspapers like ours play a vital role in keeping readers informed about what’s happening in their communities. We cover local events, news, and issues that larger media outlets might overlook. We focus on our community’s unique stories and ensure that voices are heard and remembered.

Our work isn’t without challenges. We have a small but dedicated team, which means im-

portant stories sometimes go uncovered—not because they aren’t important, but because resources are stretched thin. Joan Janzen, Patti Moran, Greg Paulhus, Diana Walker, Ian MacKay, David McIver—and my husband, Robert, and I—keep the presses rolling and the stories alive, rain or shine, sleet or snow, and yes, even through postal strikes.

Fun fact: our newsroom qualifies for the senior’s discount almost everywhere. Greg and I are the “young ones,” while the rest of the team brings enough collective wisdom, mileage and well-earned coffee breaks to fill several decades. Experience is something we have in abundance—but finding and nurturing the next generation of journalists remains a challenge we continue to face.

So yes, I may have “saved” a paper or two, but we all know who the real Saviour is—and He happens to be celebrating His birthday this week.

Wishing all our readers, advertisers, friends and family a very Merry Christmas! We look forward to seeing you next year, refreshed and ready to prove that in a world of closures, local stories still have a home.

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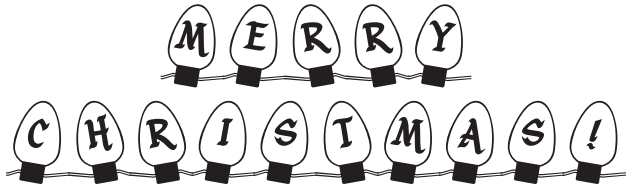
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PLEASE NOTE: Clinic hours are subject to change at any given time.

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MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS 2025

Whereas Tyler Smith, nominated for the office of Councillor for Division 4, is the only candidate;

I hereby give notice that no voting for the office of Councillor for Division 4 will take place on January 14th, 2026.

Dated this 15th day of December, 2025.

Kim Lacelle
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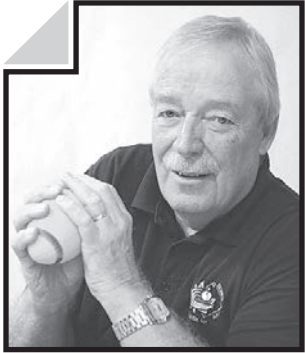
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Looking back at the best from 2025

The best quips, quotes and anecdotes from January through June, 2025 (Part 1)

- Stewart Mandel of The Athletic, on UNC hiring Bill Belichick as head football coach: “Unless Belichick can magically restore eligibility for Tom Brady, I fail to see how this will end well.”
- Mike Bianchi of the Orlando Sentinel: “Spoiled Alabama fans whining about their three-loss team not getting an invitation to the College Football Playoff is like listening to Warren Buffett complain about not getting a senior discount.”
- Headline at the onion.com: “More Parents Say Allowing Child To Play Football Not Worth Risk Of Being Drafted By Jets”
- Lizzie F. in a Chicago Bears’ mailbag: “What legal action can I take against my parents for raising me as a Bears fan? When does this become cruel and unusual punishment?”
- RJ Currie of sportsdeke.com: “Joe Polo, fifth on the U.S. gold-medal curling team, named his daughter Ailsa after a Scottish island that produces the stone for curling rocks. The kid already feels taken for granite.”
- Columnist Norman Chad, on Twitter: “ESPN’s Dan Orlovsky talks more in a three-man booth than the late Vin Scully talked in a one-man booth.”
- Scott Lincicome, a business trade scholar at the Cato Institute, on Donald Trump’s proposed tariffs: “I can’t imagine the president tariffing guacamole right before the Super Bowl.”
- From The Athletic’s story quoting the beloved baseball announcer/actor Bob Uecker, who died Jan. 16, on getting into baseball: “I signed with the Braves in 1954 for \$3,000. That bothered my dad at the time because he didn’t have that kind of dough to pay out. But eventually, he scraped it up.”
- Headline at fark.com: “Unlike a good neighbour, State Farm won’t be there. The insurance company decides that maybe, just maybe, spending millions on a Super Bowl ad wasn’t a good look for them after cancelling all those homeowners’ policies in California.”
- Comedy guy Torben Rolfesen of Vancouver: “I love watching Wild games on TV. They do the announcements in both English and Minnesotan.”
- Rolfesen again: “Mark Davis of the Las Vegas Raiders fired his general manager. I thought if he was going to fire anyone, it would be his hairstylist.”
- Hall-of-Famer Ichiro Suzuki on his least-favourite place to play baseball: “To tell the truth, I’m not excited to go to Cleveland, but we have to. If I ever saw myself saying I’m excited going to Cleveland, I’d punch myself in the face, because I’m lying.”
- Janice Hough of leftcoastsportsbabe.com: “Max Scherzer, who turns 41 this summer, just signed a one-year contract valued at \$15.5 million with the Toronto Blue Jays. Well, the way the U.S.A. is going maybe Max wanted to play in a country that has Medicare.”
- RJ Currie again: “According to a recent study, getting extra sleep on Sundays can help prevent premature death. Finally, some good news for Cleveland Browns fans.”
- ABC late-night host Jimmy Kimmel, on the Super Bowl: “For me, the best part was listening to Tom Brady pretend he was not ecstatic about Patrick Mahomes not winning Super Bowl number four.”
- Luke Fox of Sportsnet.ca., on the aggressive style Sam Bennett brought to Canada’s team in the Four Nations Faceoff: “Sam Bennett, an even looser Panthers cannon all decked out in Red, White and Bruise.”
- Globe and Mail columnist Cathal Kelly, on the recent U.S. animosity toward Canada and its chumminess with Russia: “If Hollywood made Rocky IV again, Ivan Drago would be from Winnipeg.”
- Steve Simmons of the Toronto Sun: “Maybe Don-



Sports
By Bruce Penton

- ald Trump wants to take over Canada just so his country can win a hockey tournament again.”
- Another one from RJ Currie: “Canucks starting goaltender Thatcher Demko is out week-to-week, and he’ll be replaced by backup Kevin Lankinen. Demko is hampered by a lower body injury and a lower save percentage.”
- Greg Cote of the Miami Herald, on Aaron Rodgers’ future: “If the Dolphins sign Rodgers to replace Tua Tagovailoa I’ll hitchhike from here to Winnipeg.”
- Headline at theonion.com: “Numerous teams express interest in Aaron Rodgers playing elsewhere”
- Jeremy Baker on bluesky.app, after Canada didn’t make the medals at the 2025 World Junior hockey championship: “Some people are complaining about the refs and bad calls. The game was in Ottawa. If Canada can’t find a corrupt ref in Ottawa of all places, we deserve to lose.”
- Columnist Norman Chad, on things overheard from the four-legged competitors at the Westminster Dog Show in New York: “Donald Trump stopped by and asked to see the American foxhound’s birth certificate.”
- Ontario columnist Keith Schell, reminiscing about a CFL transaction in the early 2000s when the Winnipeg Blue Bombers released Tom Europe and signed Tom Canada: “Don Cherry would be proud.”
- Jessica Hadwin, wife of PGA Tour player Adam Hadwin, as the two were driving away from Sawgrass Saturday morning after Adam missed the cut at the Players on Friday: “Look at these losers, having to work on the weekend.”
- Another one from Rolfesen: “Giannis Antetokounmpo just joined the 20,000 career point club and can now access the VIP lounge at the Milwaukee international airport.”
- Janice Hough again: “Arkansas blew a 16-point lead midway through the second half and a six-point lead with one minute and 15 seconds left and the ball, to lose to Texas Tech in OT 85-83. This is the most embarrassing thing to happen to Arkansas since they elected Sarah Huckabee Sanders governor.”
- A groaner from RJ Currie: “The Massachusetts golfer who bit off part of another player’s finger got out on bail in the amount of \$10,000. That doesn’t include the tip.”
- Reecey Pierce, on X, after the Masters’ Tuesday night Champions dinner: “Everyone just wants to know if Cabrera and Scottie swapped prison stories.”

- RJ Currie again “I recently drove in St. John’s, Newfoundland, on a highway named after local skip Brad Gushue. It was great: No matter how many mistakes I made, it was someone else’s fault.”
- Retiring CBS reporter Dennis Dodd, reminiscing in his retirement column: “Fun fact: The antacid still hasn’t been invented to combat the effects of press box food.”
- Vancouver’s Torben Rolfesen: “Tiger Woods’ design firm is going to build a nine-hole short course at Augusta National. Prediction: They’ll hold a tournament there called the Mistresses.”
- Sportswriter Ray Ratto of San Francisco, in a pre-Kentucky Derby story: “Kids just don’t go to the track anymore, which is a shame because it remains a great place for young people to learn to smoke cigarettes and leave the butts in someone else’s beer.”
- Headline at fark.com: “Bill Belichick’s girlfriend instructs him to deny that she’s too controlling.”
- Another fark.com headline: “The Royal and Ancient Golf Society warns players not to cheat on their handicaps. Trump immediately designates them as a terrorist organization.”
- Gary Van Sickle of golf website The First Call, on whether the PGA could create as much drama as this year’s Masters: “A White Sox fan is now the Pope so, yes, anything is possible.”
- Retired sports columnist Rick Reilly, in a blast-from-the-past column after Tiger Woods obliterated the field with a 12-shot win in the 1997 Masters: “... Forty-seven-year-old Tom Kite ... would finish second in the same sense that Germany finished second in World War II.”
- Greg Cote again: “(The Panthers) become only the fourth team since 1980 to reach the Stanley Cup Final a third season in a row -- a Cat trick.”
- The late Muhammad Ali, feeling confident about an upcoming fight: “I’ve seen George Foreman shadow boxing and the shadow won.”
- U.S. college basketball coach Billy Tubbs: “This year we plan to run and shoot. Next year we plan to run and score.”
- From the Canadian parody website The Beaver-ton on Florida’s Stanley Cup win over Edmonton: “The City of Calgary has announced a co-belligerents victory parade, where a photo of Connor McDavid looking sad will be paraded through the streets.”

Care to comment?
Email brucepenton2003@yahoo.ca



Back in the 1930s Santa Claus arrived in Luseland on Mr. Thomas Youse’ sleigh. Santa usually appeared in the person of Archie Wilson. HUB & SPOKES - LUSELAND HISTORY BOOK

Holiday Greeting from the Mayor of Kerrobert

As we move into this joyous season and I reflect on the past year, I am reminded what an honour it is to represent this community. It has been a privilege to work with council as we address issues, as well as share our ideas, goals, and enthusiasm for the continued development of this community.

The ongoing work on our infrastructure and the demolition of the old hospital were two of the biggest projects this year, among many smaller ones aimed at supporting future growth.

A special thank you to all the community members who volunteer for the various groups that protect us,



Mayor Mike Mitchell

entertain us, keep our community looking beautiful, showcase our heritage, remember our fallen, and keep us active. Without the help of volunteers, small-town communities cannot thrive.

Thank you also to our town office staff, public works staff, and summer workers for keeping the town maintained, looking good, and ensuring our facilities function properly.

On behalf of the town council and all the staff of the Town of Kerrobert, I would like to extend my heartfelt greetings for a happy, healthy, and safe holiday season.

Mayor Mike Mitchell

The Christmas story comes alive

The Christmas story has been told throughout the centuries, however along the way the symbolic meaning of the circumstances surrounding Christ's birth have been forgotten. The revealing of this symbolism causes the Christmas story to come alive once again. First century Jewish believers would have taken note of these meaningful details, yet it's very easy to overlook them today.

The story begins, "That night some shepherds were in the fields outside the village guarding their flocks of sheep." (Luke 2:8). The only flocks kept near Bethlehem at that time of year were the Pass-over flocks. The shepherds were looking for lambs that were spotless, without blemish or broken bones that could be used for sacrifice. And it was the shepherds who were called upon to seek out and identify the newborn Lamb of God.

It was just an ordinary work day for the shepherds when suddenly an angel appeared and said, "I bring you good news of great joy for everyone! The Saviour, yes the Messiah, the Lord has been born tonight in Bethlehem, the City of David." (Luke 2: 10). The shepherds made their way into Bethlehem, not only to see a baby, but also identify the spotless human Lamb of God who would become the sacrifice for you and I.

The angel gave them further instructions saying, "And this is how you will recognize him. You will find a baby lying in a manger, wrapped snugly in strips of cloth." (Luke 2: 12). The manger held significant meaning for the shepherds who protected a newborn



lamb by carefully placing it in a manger to prevent it from getting injured by the rest of the flock, because an injured lamb could not be used for a sacrifice. Jesus was born in a manger.

In those days people wore strips of cloth around their waist when they travelled. The cloth was used to wrap the bodies of anyone who died. Baby Jesus was wrapped in strips of cloth, signifying he was born to die just like a spotless lamb.

Jesus, the spotless lamb was without sin while living on this earth. Hebrews 4:15 says he was "tempted in every way, yet he did not sin", and 2 Corinthians 5:21 says "He who knew no sin was made to be sin for us". Jesus was the last Passover lamb to be offered.

As the years go by the story of Jesus' birth continues to be told, especially during this festive season. Your loving Father God carefully orchestrated every detail of the story, demonstrating His enormous love for each and everyone. He had only one purpose in mind "For He wants everyone to be saved and understand the truth. For there is only one God and one Mediator who can reconcile God and people. He is the man Christ Jesus." (1 Timothy 2: 4-5).

During this special time of year, Pastor Dana and Marge Bailey, along with the leadership team and congregation at Kindersley Christian Fellowship wish you all a very blessed Christmas season and a Happy New Year in 2026.

Stamina is the force that drives these drummers

BY JOAN JANZEN

KINDERSLEY — Kindersley resident Helen Barclay and her friends have been drumming for a long time. According to a Dec. 31, 2001 West-Central Crossroads article, Barclay formed a drum circle three years earlier after purchasing a collection of drums. Shakers, a marimba and a steel drum were later added to the group's repertoire.

What began as a stress reliever — a chance to visit

with friends and enjoy a fun activity — wasn't intended for the public stage. Performances were limited to the occasional birthday party or small group.

More than two decades later, that rhythm hasn't slowed.

As 2025 ends, Barclay and her fellow drummers continue to play together and entertain audiences throughout the year.



Adult drum circle members (from left): Glennis Getz, Helen Barclay, Gladys McCarthy, Julie Boychuk and Lorna King. Photo: Dec. 31, 2001, West-Central Crossroads.

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Shopping for gifts online? Avoid these common mistakes!

Doing your holiday shopping online definitely has its advantages. It helps you escape those crowded malls and avoid driving in snowy conditions. If the online option appeals to you, make sure to avoid these pitfalls.

DON'T WAIT UNTIL THE LAST MINUTE

Online shopping and procrastination don't mix well during the holidays. Start your search early to ensure your gifts arrive on time. Check estimated delivery dates and, ideally, give yourself some extra time in case of delays. If you're running behind, be prepared to pay for express shipping.

DON'T FORGET TO READ PRODUCT DESCRIPTIONS CAREFULLY

Pay attention to dimensions, materials, sizes, language and other important details specific to the product you're buying to avoid disappointment. Whether it's furniture, clothing or electronics, vague descriptions may be a sign that the website isn't legitimate, so be cautious.

DON'T BLINDLY TRUST AN UNKNOWN WEBSITE

Use secure and reliable websites that provide thorough information, including full contact details and clear exchange and refund policies. Do the prices seem too good to be true? Are there exorbitant extra fees? Is the site cluttered with broken links and buttons? If so, it's best to click away. Stick to websites you're familiar with, especially those of local retailers.

DON'T NEGLECT TO READ THE RETURN POLICY

Before making a purchase, take the time to understand the return policy. Ask yourself: can you get a refund, or is it an exchange-only situation? How long is the return period? Is the product a final sale? Do your homework to avoid any unpleasant surprises.

Happy online shopping!



Christmas party: how to be the perfect guest

Hosting guests for Christmas celebrations certainly requires energy and preparation. However, being invited to someone's home doesn't mean you're completely free of responsibilities. Are you attending a festive event this year? Follow these tips to be a model guest.

ARRIVE ON TIME

Plan your route and check the traffic to ensure you arrive no more than 15 minutes late. Try not to arrive too early either, so you don't disturb your hosts' last-minute preparations and create an awkward situation. Will you be late due to unforeseen circumstances? Send your hosts a text so they don't worry.

BRING A HOST GIFT

Never show up empty-handed! Bring a gift to thank your hosts for their hospitality. It's a nice gesture that shows your thoughtfulness and appreciation. A classic bottle of wine, a bag of specialty coffee, a locally made candle, homemade bread or a plant are all great choices!

OFFER TO HELP

Are the appetizers ready to be served? Is the counter piling up with dishes? Do the vegetables need to be peeled? Offer to help. Helping out your hosts will ease some stress and allow them to enjoy the event more. You can also offer to play a game to entertain the children or set the table.

Ultimately, remember to be courteous and use common sense. Put your phone away, greet everyone and dress appropriately. Stop by your local shops to find everything you need.



May the Christmas season fill your home with love, and your life with laughter. Thank you for making Kindersley your home! Wishing you a safe and happy holiday season! All the best in 2026.

Holiday Hours of Operation:

	West Central Events Centre	Town Office	Aquatic Centre
December 22 nd	7:00am to 10:00pm Public Shinny: 10:00am to 12:30pm Public Skating: 1:00pm to 3:30pm	8:30am to 4:30pm	Regular Programming
December 23 rd	7:00am to 10:00pm Public Skating & Shinny: 10:00am to 2:30pm	8:30am to 4:30pm	Regular Programming
December 24 th	10:00am to 2:00pm Public Skating & Shinny: 10:00am to 1:45pm	CLOSED	Regular Programming
December 25 th	CLOSED	CLOSED	CLOSED
December 26 th	10:00am to 2:00pm Public Shinny: 10:00am to 1:45pm Public Skating: 12:00pm to 1:45pm	CLOSED	CLOSED
December 27 th	8:00am to 6:00pm Public Shinny: 9:00am to 1:00pm Public Skating: 3:00pm to 5:00pm Sponsored by Whitecap Resources Inc.	CLOSED	Regular Programming
December 28 th	9:00am to 7:00pm	CLOSED	Regular Programming <i>FREE</i> Public Swim Sponsored by Inter Pipeline: 1:30pm to 6:00pm
December 29 th	7:00am to 10:00pm Public Skating: 11:00am to 3:00pm Public Shinny: 12:30pm to 4:00pm	8:30am to 4:30pm	Regular Programming
December 30 th	7:00am to 10:00pm Public Skating & Public Shinny: 12:30pm to 4:30pm	8:30am to 4:30pm	Regular Programming
December 31 st	10:00am to 2:00pm Public Shinny: 10:00am to 12:00pm & 12:15pm to 1:45pm	8:30am to 4:30pm	Regular Programming
January 1 st	CLOSED Open for Jr. Klipper Home Game	CLOSED	CLOSED
January 2 nd	7:00am to 10:00pm	8:30am to 4:30pm	Regular Programming

West Central Events Centre

- Call 306-463-1820 or email recreation@kindersley.ca for more information!
- View the Ice Schedule at: <https://www.kindersley.ca/things-to-do/ice-schedule/>
- Please note all schedules are subject to change!

Kindersley Aquatic Centre

- Call 306-463-2082 for more information!
- View the full schedule at: <https://www.kindersley.ca/community/community-facilities/aquatic-centre/>
- Please note all schedules are subject to change!



★ All things merry ★



This year, break the ice with karaoke!

Games like musical chairs, bingo, white elephant and limbo are great games to liven up Christmas Eve and other holiday parties. In recent years, karaoke has become a popular addition to the lineup of fun. Are you hosting a holiday party and looking for a fresh way to keep your guests entertained? Organize a karaoke night.

EQUIPMENT

Whether you rent a private room or prefer to sing and dance in the comfort of your own home, you'll need essential equipment, including:

- At least two good-quality microphones
- A screen or projector to display the lyrics
- A stereo or speakers
- A computer, tablet or smartphone
- Karaoke software, platform or app

To create the ultimate karaoke atmosphere, add fun lights, a smoke machine and a disco ball. If you

plan to host karaoke nights regularly, consider purchasing equipment. Otherwise, you can rent professional equipment from a specialty company.

PLAYLIST

Many karaoke systems allow singers to make special requests. However, some guests might need a bit of inspiration. Help them out by creating a playlist of well-known songs, including some holiday classics.

RULES

Before the party begins, explain the rules to your guests to avoid misunderstandings and disappointment. For example, set a limit of three songs per person and establish a rotation system.

Finally, don't forget to provide both alcoholic and non-alcoholic drink options, as well as snacks, like chips and appetizers. Merry Christmas and enjoy your karaoke night!

Smart ideas to spoil your favourite sports lover

Are you looking for the perfect Christmas gift for someone who loves to keep active? Here are a few ideas to explore.

- Equipment for working out at home, such as a push-up board or yoga mat
- Reusable or rechargeable hand warmers for outdoor activities
- Seamless, breathable and cushioned technical socks
- Wireless headphones that are shock- and sweat-resistant
- A self-massage accessory, like a ball, roller or massage gun
- A bag cover that fits the size of their bag, measured in litres
- A breathable neck gaiter that can serve as a neck warmer, headband or hat
- A functional and stylish sports bag that fits their activities and needs

- An insulated and personalized water bottle
- A smartwatch loaded with features to enhance their workout routine
- A compact, quick-drying microfibre towel that's perfect for any sports activity
- A hydration vest or belt, ideal for running or hiking

If you really don't know what they might need to enhance their workouts, a gift card to their favourite sporting goods or outdoor retailer is always a good bet!



May this festive season bring peace and happiness to one and all.

REDDI MART HOLIDAY HOURS:

Christmas Eve, December 24, 2025:	6 AM - 7 PM
Christmas Day, December 25, 2025:	12 Noon - 4 PM
Boxing Day, December 26, 2025:	12 Noon - 7 PM
New Year's Eve, December 31, 2025:	6 AM - 10 PM
New Year's Day, January 1, 2026:	12 Noon - 7 PM



KERROBERT
REDDI MART



★ All things merry ★

Wishing you a Merry Christmas and a safe and Happy New Year!



Doug Steele
MLA for Cypress Hills
steelemla@sasktel.net • 306-672-1755



Tips to celebrate Christmas remotely with your loved ones



- Is your sister studying abroad? Do you have a friend in the hospital? Is one of your parents stuck at home with a nasty bug? There are many reasons why someone might have to celebrate the festive season from afar. Here are a couple of tips for sharing special moments despite the distance.
- **A gift in the mail.** Send your loved ones a gift through the mail. Get creative with a personalized delivery or consider using a singing telegram service.
 - **A virtual get-together.** Video conferencing software is more accessible and effective than ever. Why not use it to connect with your loved ones? You can enjoy drinks, dinner, a board game or simply sing, laugh and chat together.
- No matter how far apart you are, you can still share special moments and create wonderful memories this holiday season. This Christmas, stay close to the people you love, whether you're physically together or not.



MERRY CHRISTMAS and HAPPY NEW YEAR

We send you warmest greetings, full of best wishes for you and your family!
May the holiday season bring you and your family health, love, prosperity, and peace!
Wishing you a bright and merry holiday season and Happy New Year!
- Nikki Meschischnick & Staff





306-463-2628 - 309 Main Street, Kindersley, SK

★ All things merry ★



Taking great family photos at Christmas: our tips

Whether you're planning an intimate Christmas dinner with your immediate relatives or a large celebration with the extended family, seize the opportunity to capture some memorable group photos. Here are a few tips for a hassle-free photo shoot.

- **Choose the backdrop.** These photos are all about the people. Select a plain backdrop that keeps the focus on your family rather than on busy decorations and bright lights. Make your job easier by ensuring no unsightly objects are in the frame, especially if you lack photo editing skills.
- **Test the lighting.** Before you start taking photos, check the light sources in the room. Ask a friend or family member to help you test them. Try to avoid using the flash unless absolutely necessary, as

- it can cause people to blink and affect the image quality.
- **Look for blemishes.** While everyone gets settled, take a quick look at each person. Check for stray hairs, stains on clothing, bits of parsley caught in teeth or even an open fly!
 - **Vary the poses.** Keep things interesting by encouraging your subjects to change their hand positions or to try a variety of standing or sitting poses. Don't hesitate to take a few relaxed shots where everyone can make funny faces or open their mouths wide.

Finally, for an enjoyable experience, don't spend too much time on your Christmas photo shoot, especially if they include young children. Say "cheese"!

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Merry Christmas

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MERRY Christmas

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For an eco-friendly Christmas, choose your decorations wisely

Holiday gatherings often produce a certain amount of waste, but you can still reduce your carbon footprint. At this time of year, consider decorating your home sustainably. Here are a few ideas to incorporate into your holiday decor.

USE OBJECTS FROM NATURE
Explore your local park or a nearby wooded area to find fallen pinecones and turn them into decorations like garlands or tree ornaments. You can also dry slices of citrus fruit and arrange them in a serving dish with cinnamon sticks to create a table centrepiece.

CHOOSE ITEMS MADE OF RECYCLED OR ORGANIC MATERIALS
In contrast to new items made of toxic or non-biodegradable materials, local artisans offer countless eco-friendly alternatives. For example, you can buy soy candles or ornaments made from fabric scraps. This choice benefits the planet while adding a unique touch to your holiday decorating.

CONSIDER THE IMPACT OF YOUR CHRISTMAS TREE
It's hard to imagine Christmas without a tree. The same question



always comes up: real or artificial? According to experts, a synthetic tree is a relatively eco-friendly choice, if you keep it for more than 20 years. A locally sourced real tree typically has a lower environmental impact than an artificial counterpart.

Visit your favourite local retailers to discover all the eco-friendly options available to you.

3 perfect appetizers to serve your guests during the holidays

Is it your turn to host family or friends for Christmas? Between decorating and curating the perfect playlist, don't overlook the importance of appetizers. Hors d'oeuvres are a true holiday essential. Want to impress your guests without complicating your life? Here are three suggestions that are perfect for the occasion.

- 1. BACON-WRAPPED PEAR BITES**
Slice some pears and place one or two sprigs of rosemary on each slice. Wrap each slice in bacon and bake at 400 F for 15 minutes. That's it!
- 2. AVOCADO CRISPS**
In a bowl, combine diced cucumber and chopped dill. Add lemon zest and a pinch of salt. In another bowl, mash an avocado and mix in the juice of half a lemon with a dollop of Greek yogurt.

Take some tortilla chips, spread the avocado mixture on top and garnish with a spoonful of the cucumber mixture. For a



- little extra flair, place a piece of smoked salmon or salted seaweed on top.

3. OYSTERS WITH A SPLASH
Oysters make a simple yet elegant appetizer to welcome your guests. Arrange the open shellfish on a bed of
- coarse sea salt or crushed ice. Then, drizzle the oysters with a few drops of lemon juice. For an "adult" version, add a splash of vodka.

Stop by your local shops to pick up the freshest ingredients. Bon appetit!



May you be showered with love, happiness and joy this Christmas.

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Wishing everyone a Happy Festive Season

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