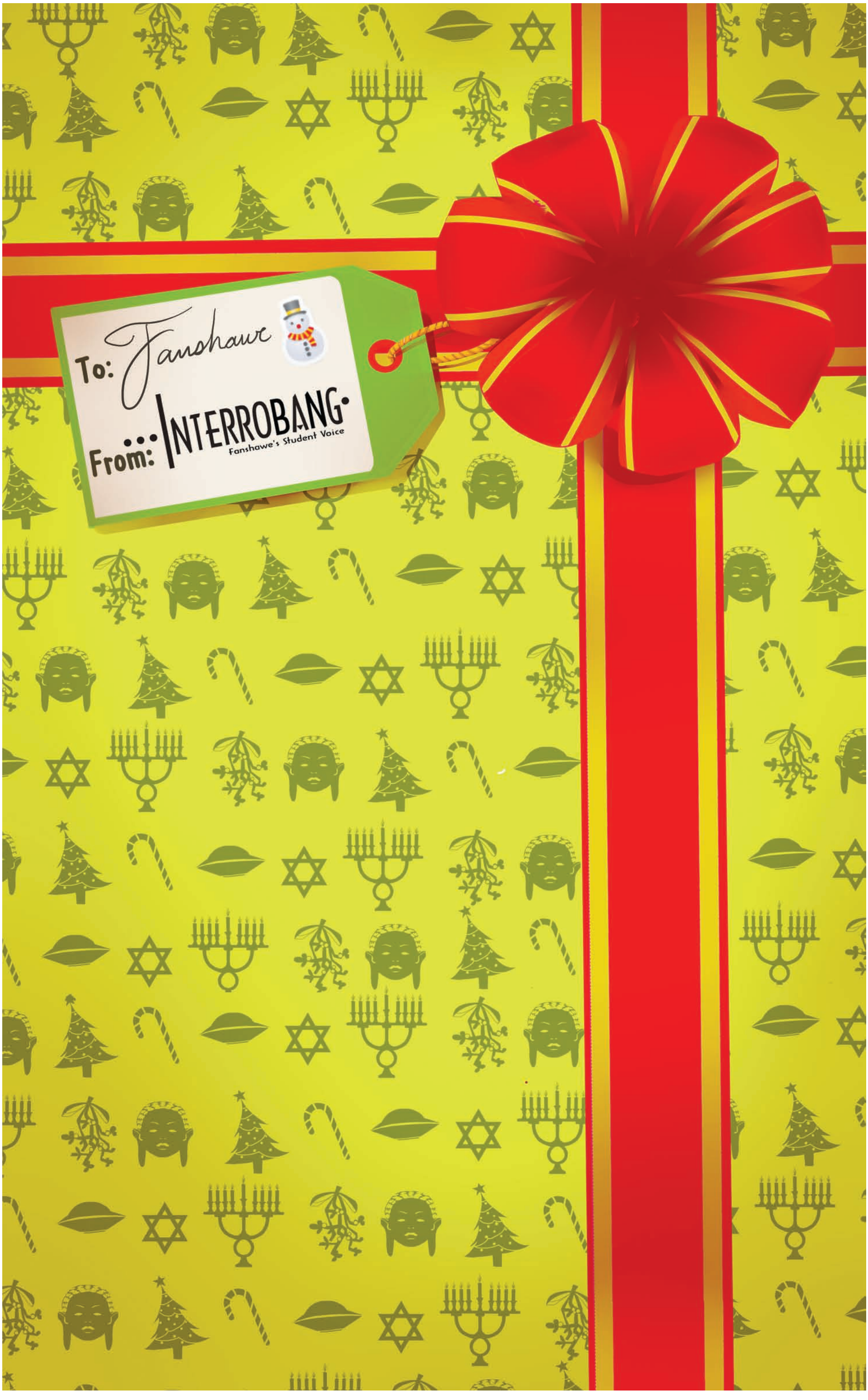
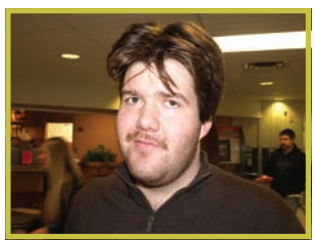

To: Fanshawe
From: INTERROBANG
Fanshawe's Student Voice

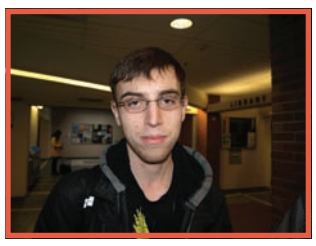
Volume 44 Issue No. 15 December 5, 2011 www.fsu.ca/interrobang/

Q.O.W
QUESTION OF THE WEEK

WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE HOLIDAY TRADITION?

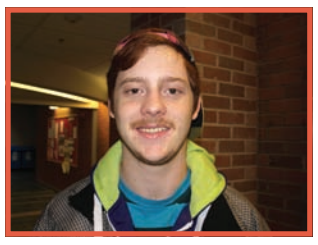


Mischa Kavin
"Our imaginary Christmas tree - it's not really a tree, just branches in a bucket that we decorate."



Josh VanWistinghausen
"I love opening a gift on Christmas Eve."

Brooke Surridge
"It would definitely be going out in the snow to make snow angels, forts and snowmen. Also beer-bogganing."



Ben Kitchen
"For me, it would have to be when my mom makes sticky buns."

Faith Maudsley
"Decorating the Christmas tree - it can get pretty silly. For Winter Solstice, we also wassail the tree by spitting apple cider at it, which isn't quite how they traditionally did it, haha."

CREDIT: KIRSTEN ROSENKRANTZ

A drenched but happy Veronica Barahona, FSU President, posed with members of Fanshawe's cross country team when Rick Hansen's 25th Anniversary Relay Team stopped by the college at the end of November. Barahona trekked out in the rain with some of Fanshawe's finest runners, wearing a commemorative medal that will make its way across Canada. The relay began on August 24 in Cape Spear, Newfoundland and Labrador and will complete its journey in Vancouver, British Columbia on May 22, 2012. "I'm happy that this is an experience that Fanshawe can be a part of," Barahona said proudly.

10 Things I Know About You...

It's the Jess Toso show

Jess Toso is in her first year of Radio Broadcasting. "I am outgoing and fun and will always be down for a laugh and a good time," said Toso. "I believe in living each day like it was your last and am thankful every day for the amazing people I have in my life!"

1. Why are you here?
Because radio is awesome!

2. What was your life-changing moment?
When I decided to come to Fanshawe. I was attending another school and about to finish my program when I realized I wasn't happy. I decided last minute to attend Fanshawe and since then I haven't looked back. It's an amazing program and everyone rocks!

3. What music are you currently listening to?
"The Lazy Song" by Bruno Mars.

4. What is the best piece of advice you've ever received?
Don't eat that chicken, its gone bad! ... saved me a few times from a sick stomach.

5. Who is your role model?
My mother, she is one of the strongest, beautiful people I know. She has supported my brother and I for our whole lives with a smile and is always there when we need her. I could never tell her enough how much I love and appreciate her.

6. Where in the world have you travelled?
Various places in Canada, Chicago and Florida BABY! I would love to travel and see more of the world.

7. What was your first job?
Camp Counselor! Woop woop!

8. What would your last meal be?
Sushi! I absolutely love it... kind of obsessed.

9. What makes you uneasy?
Sharks and spiders! I know it's slightly irrational, but they are freaky!

10. What is your passion?
I love to perform and entertain people. If I can make someone laugh, it's a good day.

Do you want Fanshawe to know 10 Things About You? Just head on over to fsu.ca/interrobang and click on the 10 Things I Know About You link at the top.

CREDIT: SUBMITTED

Jess Toso avoids chicken when possible.

DECEMBER EVENTS

WEDNESDAY 12-07

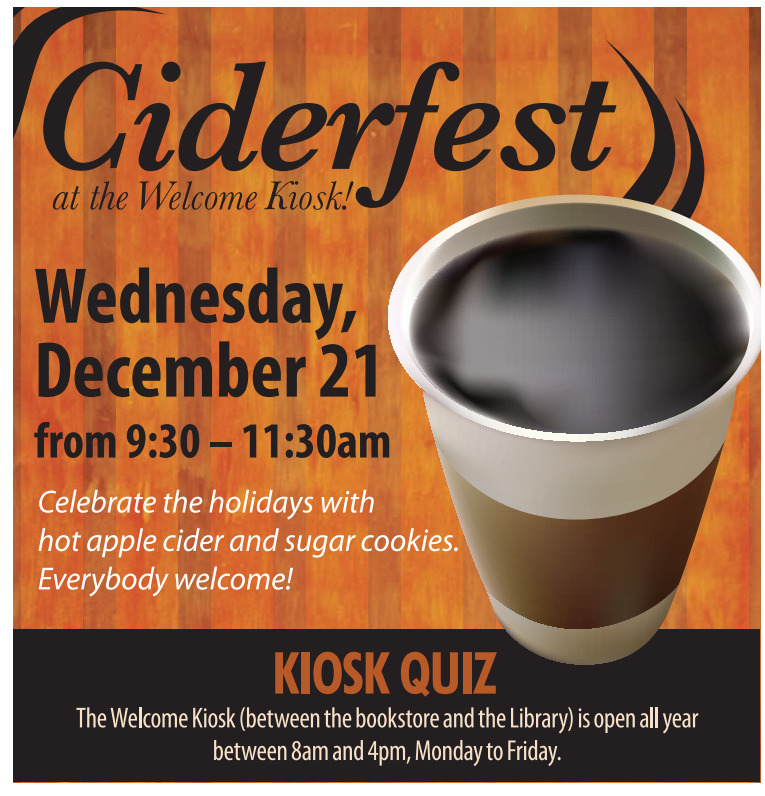
First Run Film:
HUGO

Rainbow Cinemas (in Citi Plaza)
$3.50 STUDENTS | $5 GUESTS
7PM

THURSDAY 12-09

Naughty Christmas Pub
OBS – 9:30PM
$3 ADV | $4 DOOR
ALL PROCEEDS GO TO THE FSU'S ADOPT A FAMILY CAMPAIGN.

TICKETS AVAILABLE IN ADVANCE AT THE BIZ BOOTH



CREDIT: BLUE IRIS PHOTOGRAPHY

Josephine Cleo is putting on a holiday show at the Wolf Performance Hall on December 10 to benefit the Humane Society.

Seasonal snark to put you in the holiday spirit

ERIKA FAUST
INTERROBANG

Even the holliest jolliest Christmas elf has something he or she hates about the holidays. Whether it's getting a terrible gift from your Secret Santa or trying to navigate the bustling malls in search of the last few items on your list, Josephine Cleo is celebrating the things we love to hate about the "best" time of the year.

In her show, Holiday Snidings, Cleo is taking her snark and songs to the Wolf Performance Hall stage on December 10, telling stories, performing Christmas songs and three of her own original songs. The show will be fun for all ages – "nothing saucy, just sassy," said Cleo. Zach Havens, of the band To Tell, will accompany her songs on the piano.

"Christmas is just rife with opportunities to make fun of it – and I don't mean the religious aspect," she said. "I'm billing it as 'Celebrating the things we love to hate,' but it's not mean-spirited in hate, it's the annoyances." Though the show may poke fun at some holiday traditions, Cleo compared it to "the grumpy old man with the heart of gold," adding that it was really about getting into the Christmas spirit.

Cleo said she draws some of her inspiration from working at a MAC makeup counter at a mall during the holiday season, when her co-workers would sometimes be up to half an hour late for their shifts because they couldn't find a place to park. "You think it's supposed to be this time of giving and goodwill, but (people) will ram your car to get your parking spot," she laughed.

"It's a show meant for fun, and I want people to come to laugh (because I'm funny), forget their troubles (because the show is engaging) and bond over the not-so-great holiday headaches (misery loves company!)," she added. "I also hope they will walk away from the show having found a fresh new voice in London (mine) that aspires to reach the heights of the Divine Miss Midler," of whom Cleo is a huge fan.

Cleo is already on her way to Bette Midler-level stardom, having a small piece of the star's history on stage with her on December 10. After finding an online auction of one of Midler's microphones from a show Cleo herself had attended at Caesar's Palace in Las Vegas, "a split-second decision and mouse click later, and I am now the proud owner of Bette's Shure KSM9 handheld vocal microphone in champagne finish," she grinned.

"I said to myself that if I won the auction, it would be an omen that good things are to come, and that I am on the right path toward my dream of being a singer. Maybe it's just wishful thinking, but if Bette started in Bathhouses, then surely I can begin my career at the Wolf Performance Hall!"

Cleo is a graduate of the Accounting program at Fanshawe, and is currently working as an Accountant in London. Though she is fairly new to our city's music scene, this is not her first time on stage. In May this year, she put on a show about her journey to becoming a singer. "I've known since I was 11 that I wanted to sing, but I just never ended up getting there," she said. Her May show had people in hysterics, and this Christmas show promises to be another excellent night of entertainment.

Part of the proceeds from Holiday Snidings' ticket sales will benefit London's Humane Society. Cleo has a dog and a cat from the Humane Society and said she thinks they do a great service for the furry citizens of our city. "A relationship with a pet is like no other. It's unconditional love," she said. "Anything that I can do to support (the Humane Society), I will." She is also encouraging people to bring donations of wet or dry cat food to the show, as well as monetary donations to purchase raffle tickets for some awesome prizes, including a MAC cosmetics gift basket and gift cards to Best Buy, Weezi and Grooves.

Tickets for Holiday Snidings are on sale at Weezi (2-204 Albert St.), Grooves (353 Clarence St.) and her website josephinecleo.com. Tickets are $20, and the show starts at 6:30 p.m.

Remembering December 6 with on-campus memorial

BEV COULSTON
WOMEN'S CAMPUS SAFETY COMMITTEEE

On December 6 at noon in the Alumni Lounge, the Women's Campus Safety Committee will be providing a memorial for the 14 young women, all engineering students at École Polytechnique in Montréal, who were murdered on December 6, 1989 by Marc Lepine. Fourteen other students, of which four were male, were injured and Marc Lepine subsequently killed himself.

The murder of such talented young women profoundly shocked everyone – both women and men. For women, it was a terrifying reminder of their vulnerability to hatred and harm as a result of their sex and aspirations. For men, it was a stark realization of the fear that women face every day of their lives.

There was no doubt that Marc Lepine had targeted the women. His suicide note talked about other women whom he wished to kill. When he first entered the university, he separated the men in the building from the women and made statements during the shootings about "fighting feminism."

December 6 has become the anniversary of what is known as the "Montréal Massacres," but more importantly, it has been designated as the National Day of Remembrance and Action On Violence Against Women. But there is a present perception by some that women are no longer particularly at risk of violence and that there is no longer a need to advocate for social and political change, or education and training to prevent violence against women. Others suggest that the violence that women experience is no different from the violence experienced by men and that is mostly perpetrated by strangers or casual acquaintances.

In Ontario, a Committee was formed in 2003 by the Chief Coroner's Office to review domestic violence related homicides in Ontario each year. These cases are homicides perpetrated by intimate partners – not strangers or casual acquaintances. In Ontario, there are approximately 20 to 30 domestic violence related homicides a year. In 2010, there were 18 cases, involving 36 deaths reviewed by the Domestic Violence Review Committee. Most of the victims were female. There were two male victims and both of these were the children of the perpetrator. All of the perpetrators were male.

It is estimated that there are over 600 cases of missing and murdered Aboriginal women in Canada. In spite of repeated attempts by families of these women to have these cases fully investigated, the tragedies that these families experience – Amnesty International calls these tragedies of a national proportion – continue.

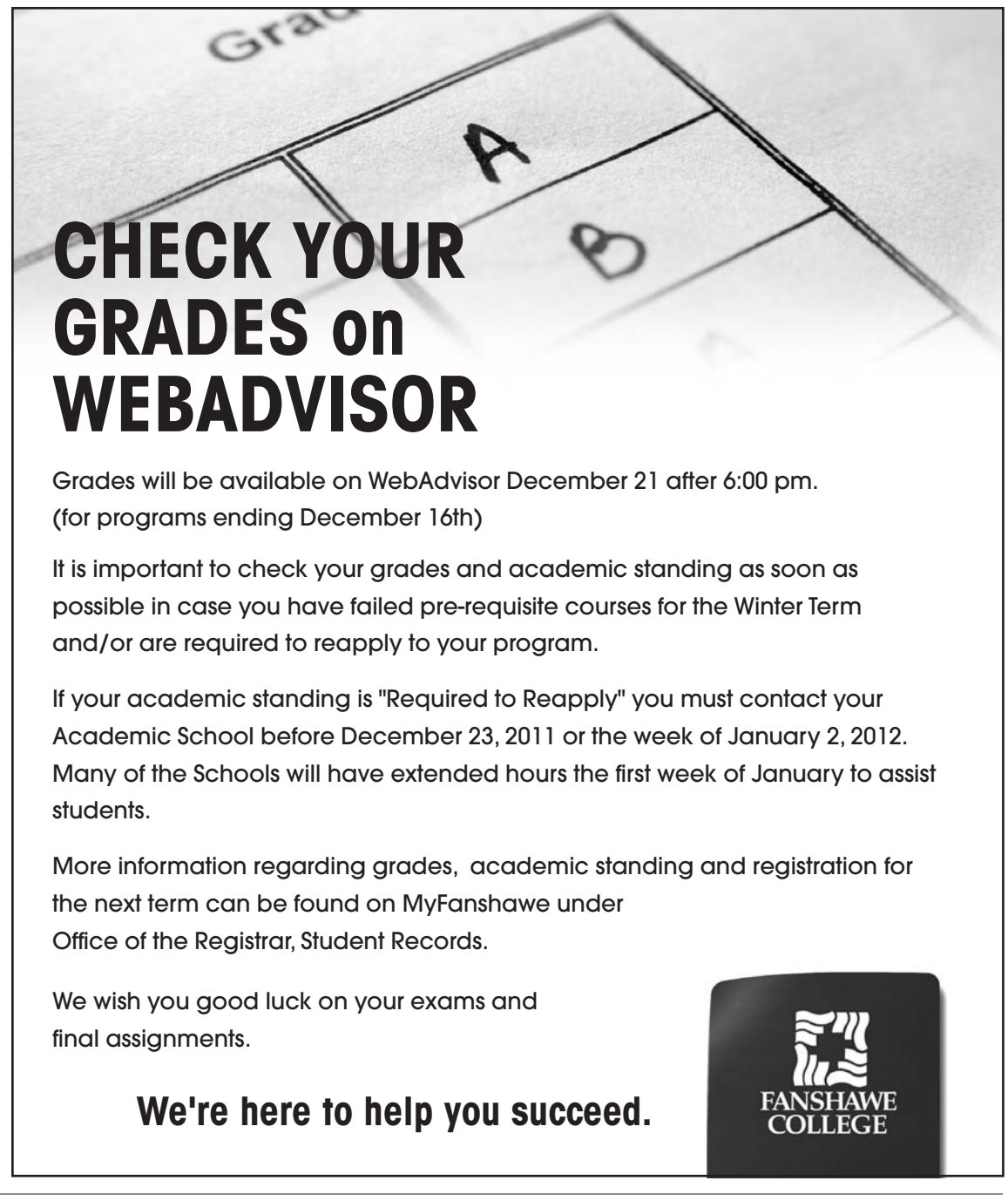
CREDIT: ÉCOLE POLYTECHNIQUE

A memorial to the victims on the exterior wall of École Polytechnique in Montréal remembers the victims of the Montreal Massacre that happened on December 6, 1989.

What can you do about it?

Acknowledge that this violence is still happening. Learn to recognize the signs of abuse and know what actions to take.

Attend the memorial on December 6 at noon in the Alumni Lounge to honour the 14 engineering students, to honour the missing and murdered Aboriginal women and to honour all of the women – our mothers, our sisters, our neighbours, our friends – who have been abused or lost their lives in our own communities through violence.



CHECK YOUR GRADES on WEBADVISOR

Grades will be available on WebAdvisor December 21 after 6:00 pm.
(for programs ending December 16th)

It is important to check your grades and academic standing as soon as possible in case you have failed pre-requisite courses for the Winter Term and/or are required to reapply to your program.

If your academic standing is "Required to Reapply" you must contact your Academic School before December 23, 2011 or the week of January 2, 2012. Many of the Schools will have extended hours the first week of January to assist students.

More information regarding grades, academic standing and registration for the next term can be found on MyFanshawe under
Office of the Registrar, Student Records.

We wish you good luck on your exams and final assignments.

We're here to help you succeed.

FANSHAWE COLLEGE

Volume 44 Issue No. 15 December 5, 2011 www.fsu.ca/interrobang/

Open your grades before your gifts

ERIKA FAUST
INTERROBANG

The holidays are on a lot of people's minds right now, but don't forget that you're still a student throughout the winter break. Part of your responsibilities as a student includes checking your grades and knowing your academic standing.

If you're in a 15-week program, your grades will be available on WebAdvisor on December 21 at 6 p.m. The college will be open on December 22 and 23, and staff will be available to help you decide what to do should you be in jeopardy of failing your program. If you see that your grades are poor and you need help, get in touch with the Student Success Advisor for your school (a full list of SSAs' names and contact information is available at tinyurl.com/fanshaweSSA) or your program coordinator for help with your next steps.

The college will be closed from December 24 to January 1, so Robert Kitchen, a Student Success Leader with the Student Success Centre, advised students to mark their calendars to check their grades and, if needed, do something about problems as soon as possible. "Block some time now to deal with this and then go enjoy the rest of your time off."

"We've done a lot for student success in recent years," said Lynne Gaudet, Associate Registrar, Registration and Records. "The college does really care about student success."

"We're certainly encouraging the students who have done poorly on their semester to check their grades and really effectively use the time between semesters," added Kitchen. "Some students decide that, because of their status, they don't want to return to their program. If they want to start in another program, start to do that stuff on December 22 and 23."

"If you're a struggling student and you start to miss classes because you're not enrolled in the right classes … it becomes a recipe for disaster," he continued. "Don't let that be you. If you can deal with it before (it becomes a problem), it's certainly much better."

Take advantage of the services Fanshawe offers to help you succeed. Don't wait – be proactive, check your grades and get help if you need it.

New group aims to help with body image issues

ERIKA FAUST
INTERROBANG

If you're feeling pressure to look a certain way, if you're unhappy with your weight or waist size or if you're just generally feeling unhappy with the way you look, The Healing Place can help.

The Healing Place is a new support group on campus that begins on January 9. The weekly meetings will take place on Mondays from 3 to 4:30 p.m. in F2010-5. It's an entirely open group, and participation is voluntary – no registration is required. Participants are not required to come every week; they just show up when they want to talk. Everything said in the group is entirely confidential. "It's a safe place where people can share things without worry of being caught in the hallways or centered out," explained Jerilyn Hurwitz, a Registered Social Worker with Fanshawe's Counselling and Accessibility Services and Founder of The Healing Place.

In the past, a local organization called Hope's Garden ran a support group at Fanshawe for people with eating disorders, but they lacked the funding to come back this year. Hurwitz said she decided to create a new group with a new name to try to be more inclusive. "I didn't want to focus just on people who have eating disorders," she said. "It's for anyone who's feeling like they're struggling with what they see in the mirror, or feel like their happiness is based on the number on the scale or the size of their pants, that type of thing."

"I've always been actively involved in eating disorder awareness (and body image issues)," she continued. "I feel very strongly about the media and the impact that it has on young people in terms of pressures that they face."

"I am a social worker and I recently got a degree in women's studies, and that really opened my eyes to a lot of different things in terms of culture, gender and that kind of thing," she said. "There's such a lack of understanding (in the area) that I feel like I want to try to give people a voice and (make the issue) more understood."

For more information about The Healing Place, contact Hurwitz at jhurwitz@fanshawec.ca or by phone at 519-452-4430 ext. 3995.

Need a place to study for exams? Head to the library

HANNAH LECTER
INTERROBANG

The Library and Media Services on Fanshawe's London campus will once again offer 24/7 access during exam week.

The 24/7 Library access begins at 8 a.m. on December 8 and runs until 4:15 p.m. on December 16. These extended hours will also include access to the print collections and photocopiers. Use your Fanshawe student ID to get in.

Please note that the Library Student Research Lab hours won't change, because it's already open 24/7.

So head to the library and shhhh! Get studying!

Bah, humbug! Christmas shishmiss

PSYCH YOUR MIND
Rose Cora Perry
www.rosecoraperry.com

I'm conflicted about Christmas. Some may even claim I'm a bit "grinchy." While I agree with its sentiments, its modern day practise frankly makes me feel like removing myself from all associated celebrations of it entirely.

My "bah humbug" attitude was solidified as I got older and everything started to feel obligatory. When you're a member of a family characterized by several broken marriages, remarriages and stepsiblings, trying to include everyone in the gift-giving escapades adds up real fast. Since when is a holiday associated with "glee" supposed to make you broke? There's nothing very fun about that.

If the above wasn't bad enough, I started to find myself in a situation with a certain unnamed relative wherein anytime they'd purchase me a gift, there'd be an additional unseen price tag attached – something I refer to as the "Trojan horse of gift-giving." Somehow just because I accepted something I thought was given out of generosity, I was manipulated into doing this or that for said individual… and if I failed to comply, I was reminded how much money was spent on me and how my non-compliance was apparently indicative of a lack of appreciation. Coined by psychologists in the 1960s as "the guilt trip," this is by far the WORST of the gift-giving practises and is nothing more than a thinly veiled attempt to psychologically control and abuse someone.

Today, my friends, we are here to speak on the art of sincere gift-giving, and in this circumstance, sincere can be taken as synonymous with "mature."

When it comes to the art of sincere gift giving, I believe Sean Connery's character in the movie *Finding Forrester* summed it up perfectly: "The way to a (person's) heart is an unexpected gift at an unexpected time." After all, doing so indicates that you were obtaining a gift for this individual purely because they happened to be on your mind and you wanted to do something to brighten their day. In this context, please note that the term "gift" does NOT simply refer to a commodity purchased at a store, but can include sending a note to someone you've fallen out of touch with recently just to remind them that even though you do not speak often, they still are very important to you or preparing someone their favourite dish after they've had an extra long day at work. Genuine acts of kindness toward complete strangers, such as helping an elderly woman or man carry their groceries to the car, are by far the most meaningful, as you have no direct relation to said individuals.

What I'm trying to get at is this: REAL gifts are given from the HEART to the recipient "just 'cause" and with NO strings attached or expectations of reciprocation. NO holiday – whether we're talking Xmas, a birthday or Valentine's – should ever make you feel obligated to do something for someone you wouldn't normally do. On the other side of the equation, a mature recipient

CREDIT: THEFORSAKENCHILDREN.ORG

acknowledges and appreciates the "effort" put forth and never maintains a price limit of what should be spent on him/her nor compares gifts from different givers. As the old saying goes, "It IS the thought that counts."

As all of you go out and spend far more than you can afford this year just to participate in a practise of an annual celebration that has lost all relation to its genesis, I ask you to remember what I've written above and perhaps try to see that the TRUE gift of Christmas is the ability to spend time with your loved ones. They may drive you crazy and have ridiculous habits, but not everyone has a family or friends to share wonderful moments with. In sum, gift-giving should NEVER define a relationship. A relationship should be defined by the gifts we do for each other WITHOUT obligation.

Rider calls for integration of London bus routes into Google Maps

Dear Editor:

I use London Transit exclusively for commuting, and I'm confused about why the London Transit Commission hasn't yet added their bus schedules to Google Maps.

I've relied on Google Maps to plan my transit routes in several cities I've lived in, including Halifax, Toronto, New York, Los Angeles and the other London (U.K.), and I can assure you wholeheartedly that the Google Maps experience is far, far, far superior to what I currently encounter when I try to plan a trip with the LTC.

First off, the LTC doesn't currently have a system that identifies the best route for getting me from Point A to Point B. I can't simply punch in my current address and my destination address and get an easy-to-understand description of how to get between the two addresses using the bus.

Here's an example of what the LTC ridership reasonably expects: 421 Adelaide St. E to 1200 Bathurst St. or http://g.co/maps/5q2pv.

Transfers, alternate routes, connection times, total travel time, walking distance to and from stops, the ability to set intended arrival/departure times, etc. – when I use Google Maps, all of this is at my fingertips in an intuitive and reliable interface on a system that's developed, maintained and continuously improved by the brightest minds and smartest engineers on the planet. And all these features are generated automatically by Google's algorithms – there wouldn't be any number crunching required by any of the LTC's engineers.

Second, the LTC's reliance on PDF and HTML timetables for each bus route is archaic and out of touch with the expectations of its current ridership, half of whom are university or college students who have grown up using services such as Google Maps on their home computers and mobile devices. I'm not suggesting that the PDF and HTML timetables should be eliminated – they're a great backup to have and should continue being available online – but they're anachronistic as a primary means of route planning.

Third, the LTC's WebWatch system, though well-intentioned, is a poorly implemented, buggy, unreliable and ultimately hollow experience without the full and complete integration of the LTC's transit data with Google Maps. For some reason, it feels as if the LTC was trying to replicate themselves what Google's entire team of Google Maps engineers had already made freely available to much better effect, a curious decision given the LTC's budget restraints.

Here's the step-by-step guide on how to add transit data to Google Maps: maps.google.com/help/maps/transit/partners. As Google makes clear, adding transit data to Google Maps is simple, but more importantly, it's free. Free! All they need to do is provide Google with the schedule for each route and the coordinates for each stop, data that they already have because of their ill-fated efforts with WebWatch. In other words, the LTC can make a substantial, tangible improvement to the daily experience of its entire ridership without adding a single penny to its annual budget.

How is this a decision that merits further debate?

What are the downsides to keeping what the LTC currently has and adding Google Maps as another route planning tool?

The top six metropolitan areas in Canada have all added their transit data to Google Maps, along with smaller cities like Halifax and even Fredericton. If they've all added their transit data to Google Maps, and received rave reviews from their ridership as a result, why hasn't London?

Pardis

Christmas versus Xmas

Dear Editor:

Does it not bother you that the whole reason behind Christmas is changing to a more worldly view?

- Crossing CHRIST out of Christmas = Xmas
- Can't say "Merry Christmas" in stores or schools anymore
- Cutting out Christmas events at school because it supposedly offends people
- "The best part about Christmas is … PRESENTS!"
- Santa Claus parade, Santa decorations, Santa movies… Santa's taking over!!
- You ask any kid about Christmas and they say/think "SANTA!"

What happened to the whole CHRIST factor… the whole reason we celebrate Christmas in the first place?!

Many Christians celebrate Christmas and discard the whole God factor.

People may have the right to do whatever they want, but to stop us from celebrating Christmas ourselves, saying Merry Christmas or having Christmas events is wrong.

I know there are still Christian families who still do the whole "Santa" thing… but I don't really agree with it. Why are you deceiving your kids for YEARS making them think he exists?! What happens when they find out you were lying to them? Maybe they'll just laugh or grow out of it or maybe they will just have trouble believing you about other things.

You spend the whole time raising them to tell the truth, while you've been lying to them the whole time.

This can even apply to non-Christians, even if you tell yourself you don't believe in God, what reason do you have for letting your child believe in something that's not true?

It is alright to have fun with the whole "Santa" thing… as long as we know the truth behind it. I'm not saying it's bad, but the more emphasis we put on it, the more it leads us away from the truth.

I just don't think it's wise to get caught up in all that… why not get caught up all about Jesus?!

Now that I see all this, I look back and I'm glad I was never raised into the whole Santa scene, it was always decorations of the Nativity Story and the Nativity movie. We had shepherd sacks filled by grandparents and parents, instead of stockings filled by Santa and elves. And before opening ANY presents we would read the story in Luke, Chapter 2 and pray... now THAT was Christmas!

I guess it's alright to have a little fun with "Santa," but don't forget the real meaning behind it and take it seriously… because it isn't just a holiday off work and school... it's celebrating our Saviour!!

We all know… Jesus is the only reason we're here!!

"The greatest gift of all wasn't found under a tree but nailed to one!"

That's just the truth with my opinion attached, and I hope you all just think about it.

Have a MERRY CHRISTMAS.

Grace Bunch

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Fanshawe's Student Voice

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Volume 44 Issue No. 15 December 5, 2011 www.fsu.ca/interrobang/

A conspiracy to destroy Christmas

NOTES FROM DAY SEVEN
MICHAEL VEENEMA

I confess. I want a new computer for Christmas. My IBM Thinkpad is still running Windows XP. It protests when I check websites, download files and play music. On the other hand, I am composing this article on it, and it will, I am sure, send it to the Interrobang in a little while.

In a fit of pre-Christmas desire, I did something I have never done before. I joined an early morning line at the local Walmart to get hold of a new Toshiba laptop advertised at $268. An early present. But the store had only five units and they went to some of the first people in line.

I felt like I was turning into a brainwashed participant in the commercialization of Christmas. Somehow, going to an early morning opening at a big-box store seemed like an endorsement of the corporate agenda to have all of us shop till we drop and max out our credit cards in preparation for Christmas. Parking myself in front of the TV later that day did not help. I watched the 2003 film, *The Corporation*. For those who haven't seen it, the documentary, among other things, warns viewers against becoming mindless consumers.

Still, I will have to replace my computer soon, hopefully this month, and I will buy some Christmas presents. But is there a way to step away from the crazy shopping that tempts us each Christmas?

A few years ago, several Christian pastors decided to do something. They decided not to try to get everyone to stop buying presents, but just fewer, maybe even just one less. They noted that in the U.S. alone, consumers spend $450 billion a year at Christmas on things that are not all that wanted. In the end, the buying and giving of unneeded gifts often leave the giver and receiver feeling empty. These pastors asked, what if just a modest fraction of that spending went to take care of people in trouble?

They started something called the Advent Conspiracy. In case you have never been in a church around Christmastime, "Advent" is the name for the month or so before Christmas when Christians try to step back and look at how they are living and what changes God is asking of them.

The Advent Conspiracy (AC) movement is a "conspiracy" to destroy the traditional, consumerist Christmas we have become used to. And on the more important positive side, it is a movement designed to put us in touch again with the teachings of Jesus, whose birth is celebrated everywhere on Christmas day. It promotes especially his core teaching (along with "love God") to love our neighbours, to care for those in trouble. AC advocates spending less on ourselves and giving more to the poor.

What does this look like in real life? For one thing, the Conspiracy has received donations from thousands of people and churches. With that money, it has provided wells for people living in parched areas in Liberia and Nicaragua.

Secondly, instead of buying and receiving an oversupply of gifts this Christmas, we can, the organization's website says, give each other time. It encourages us to make time "to love our friends and family in the most memorable ways possible … Time … no matter how hard we look, can't be found at the mall." Maybe this year we can take time to hear from an Occupy protestor what she was hoping for. Maybe we can take time to chat with the Salvation Army volunteer collecting donations in the Masonville Mall, asking him how he got into volunteering.

CREDIT: THE ADVENT CONSPIRACY

AC encourages people this year to spend more time on our relationships. And that can translate into some good things. Like spending a little more time over a coffee or drink on campus with a friend, taking the time hear how a friend is feeling after a tough loss, a disappointment, a success or some unexpected change. The possibilities are endless. And, as the AC website suggests, this can be a lot more rewarding than receiving a sweater that's two sizes out.

I still hope to get my computer replaced soon. But maybe this Christmas I can also reflect the care of God by giving to something good and by giving time to the people around me. And along the way, I may get a fresh understanding of Christmas as a gift from God. At its best, Christmas is a celebration that God was born as human – giving himself and his time to us – to live with us and to address our toughest needs.

Too little too late… again

VICTOR DE JONG
INTERROBANG

The Canadian government has come under heavy fire for their actions regarding the town of Attawapiskat. Despite an investment of $90 million to the town, there are families forced to live in tents with no running water.

If only this were an isolated case. The government historically only steps into these situations when public pressure becomes too much to ignore and this event alone has drawn international attention.

The Assembly of First Nations claims they need around 80,000 new homes in reserves across Canada to house the population. Stories of tragic teen suicide, rampant alcoholism and corruption in leadership are the sad reality of many reserves, yet little is done to improve the quality of living. Prime Minister Stephen Harper stated in the House of Commons that the funds given to Attawapiskat alone amounted to $50,000 for every man, woman and child in the town. What remained unspoken, however, was how these funds were implemented. In 2005, the government was already spending $8 billion per year funding reserves and wanted to increase it to $10 billion, yet six years later, here we are.

The money allotted by the government to improve living conditions doesn't reach the people. The money is spent on contractors to come in from outside the reserve and build structures. According to the residents of these structures, however, in many cases, the contractors do sub-par work to save costs. It's sadly typical of what our government has become. Instead of giving the money to these communities, the government spends it on programs and strategies that they think will bring positive change. It's like the old catch-22 of a parent telling their child they'll always have money if they budget and the child responding that they can't make a budget because they have no money. If we don't provide the resources for children in Attawapiskat to eat every day, how do we expect them to grow into adults who will lead the town in a direction of prosperity?

As per usual, the response to this event is too little too late. The traditional strategy of funding a problem only after it becomes a problem leads to an astronomical cost. A home with a bad roof can be repaired for a few thousand or even a few hundred dollars. A house that has burnt down, on the other hand, runs in the hundreds of thousands. There's no doubt that this latest chapter in the tragic saga of the treatment of First Nations will lead to increased funding, or a grant, or some other monetary apology, but will the cycle ever end? If we continue to fund these communities in the manner we do now, Attawapiskat will only be remembered as the first of many such towns to fall victim to government inaction. More money is a start, but there's no price tag associated with fixing the problem completely. The problems surrounding funding of Native communities are complex and require careful consideration, but by the time that happens, it will probably be too little too late, one more time.

Happy whatever, from the Interrobang

Whether you celebrate Winter Solstice, Christmas, Yule, Hanukkah, Festivus, Bodhi Day, Zartusht-Nodiso Kwanzaa, Freedom Day, Omisoka or something else, the Interrobang staff hopes you have a great one this year.

Whatever you do with your time away from Fanshawe – praying, eating, drinking, dancing, opening presents, spending time with loved ones, ghost riding the whip, volunteering, sleeping or a combination of some or all of those things – we hope you enjoy it. We'll be doing most of those things and more.

Happy whatever.
Interrobang staff

De Jong irks Occupier

Dear Editor:

It pains me to no extent to see stuff like this in my school newspaper. Although we are all entitled to our own opinions and that's exactly what this column is for. But in an educational institution, it's sad to see that the idea of equality for all is such a taboo idea.

In the November 28, 2011 issue of Interrobang, in an article titled "Out of sight, out of mind: What was the occupy thing about again?" Victor DeJong said, "The notion that there is a 'solution' is patently naïve…"

It is naïve to think that the world must stay the way it is, when we in the West have so much and third world countries are continually raped for their natural resources, including the humans in those regions.

The goal is not to end the wage gap, it is to bring participatory democracy to the people, show that they all have a say in what goes on in their community. Why should the oil from my land be sucked dry, why should all the aggregates be stripped from the earth in the name of profit? This land is my land, this land is your land, and we all deserve a fair say in what's being done with it.

Your opinion is one sided and the cartoon is a very poor representation of the movement. We are products of our environments, and for all you know those clothes could be secondhand. Students should be on the front lines of social change. Do not fear change, this world has been run by lobbyists and so-called representatives of the people at all levels of government. What is the last thing any of these people have done to better your life or that of the people around you. Stop the ignorance and actually talk to the people of the Occupy movement.

We have so much on this planet, and if we treated it right, there would be enough to support the seven billion and billions more if we correct our ways now.

Stop the ignorance and educate yourself, start an open dialogue with people to embrace positive change.

Nick Wilson

Participant in the Global Occupy Movement

December 6 is Canada's National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women

SARAH BINGHAM
MEMBER OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND ACTION COMMITTEE
ONTARIO ASSOCIATION OF INTERVAL AND TRANSITION HOUSES

CREDIT: FLICKR.COM/PHOTOS/63428572@N00/315768771

Abused women live with the emotional, psychological and sometimes physical scars of their abuse. Except when they don't. The danger escalates with the abuse and too often women are murdered.

December 6, 2011 marks the 22nd anniversary of the horrific murders of 14 women at L'École Polytechnique in Montréal. In response to the shocking gender-based massacre, Canadians have been observing this day as our National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women.

Tragically, the relevance of this day remains as more than 476 women and 57 children have been murdered in Ontario by their partners since 1990. Countless more women across Canada are murdered or missing simply because they are women, particularly among our Aboriginal communities. These numbers continue to grow daily and do not account for the tens of thousands of women and children who continue to live in abusive situations.

The most recent Stats Canada annual shelter survey, which takes a "snapshot" of every shelter across the country, shows that on April 15, 2010 there were 593 shelters in Canada offering services to abused women, up from 569 in 2008 due to rising demand. On this day, 4,645 women were residing in these shelters and 426 women were turned away from shelters due to shelters having reached full capacity (full report available at statcan.gc.ca). These numbers only reflect the women who have accessed services and do not reflect the vast number of abused women who are still trapped in dangerous relationships.

Communities across the country are coming together on December 6 to honour those women, show their support for ending violence against women and take action to make lasting change.

To effectively break the persistent cycles of woman abuse, the root causes of violence need to be addressed. Gender inequalities, poverty rates, maintaining the gun registry, access to affordable housing and childcare are all directly related to an abused woman's ability to escape the violence and live free from fear and harm.

Sustainable funding for women's anti-violence agencies is urgently needed if they are to continue trying to break the cycle of abuse, prevent violence for girls and women (and their children), and help survivors of abuse heal from their ordeals.

On this year's National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women, you can show your support by attending local events (check with our women's shelter for details), by attending a service on campus to be held at noon in the Alumni Lounge in the Student Centre, by contacting our MPP to demand immediate, concrete action to end violence and by being vocal in our community about how violence against women is intolerable. More information about the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women is available online at the Ministry for the Status of Women Canada and at oaith.ca

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Your favourite band will reunite

BOBBYISMS
BOBBY FOLEY

I write about random things a lot. I write a lot about random things. Did you know that Eric Clapton received his now–infamous nickname "Slowhand" during his tenure as lead guitarist in The Yardbirds in the early 1960s? Clapton could change broken guitar strings so quickly and fluidly that he wouldn't leave the stage to do so; the audience would simply give a slow handclap until he was finished.

There's no question that rock and roll has changed and evolved since its birth in the early 1950s, however beginning around the turn of the century, a shift occurred in the way we connect with music; much like the spell that protected baby Harry Potter from the Avada Kedavra curse, our love is protecting our favourite bands from simply passing away.

The relationship between a band and their fans used to be much more like a marriage. Once parted by death, a dark mourning period would begin, and the gaps left behind sometimes proved to be difficult to fill. In the years since 2000, mind you, a growing number of bands that have broken up or disbanded have found their way to reuniting and returning to popularity.

Take the example of Blink–182: after they released their *Take Off Your Pants And Jacket* album in 2001, they began experimenting with different sounds through collaborations and side projects, resulting in the creation of Box Car Racer, +44, Angels & Airwaves and Travis Barker's solo career, not to mention their tonally mature self–titled album in 2003 and reunion despite their sometimes-turbulent history.

And every step of the way, Blink–182 fans supported Barker, Mark Hoppus and Tom DeLonge in every one of their endeavours, whether in music, journalism or even retail. Their fans encouraged them to reinvent and rediscover themselves, and led to the band reinvigorating their love for their work together.

Death From Above 1979 found their way to performing together again this year, as did The Tea Party after spending several years apart. Bush and Jane's Addiction are both charting very well in the States right now, and even Men Without Hats reformed to do The Safety Dance all across the country this year.

Bands may break up, but the emerging trend in the last decade seems to suggest that the music they create and the connection they develop with their fans is powerful enough over time to heal the band, particularly where those bands or artists regularly network with their fans. Bands don't break up forever, and if you're patient, your favourites will return to their place in the spotlight sure enough.

At least, one can dare to hope. This year saw the unfortunate end of The White Stripes, REM, Alexisonfire, Thursday, O Pioneers, Silverchair, Landmines, Gay For Johnny Depp and planned hiatus for Thrice — not to mention Ben Gibbard's divorce with Zooey Deschanel, which is a bummer — but with a little hope and a lot of fan encouragement, perhaps they'll return to stages and music halls sooner rather than later.

For more of the latest music news, views and streams, follow this column on Twitter @fsu_bobbyisms or with Tumblr at bobbyisms.com. There's also the Music Recommendations thread in our FSU social network for student suggestions for new music to check out.

Spend some time with music this holiday; music has a great way of reminding you of great times, so have plenty of both. I'm out of words.

So your favourite band broke up

MADISON FOSTER
INTERROBANG

A few weeks ago, many of us were shocked by the terrible news that we had lost another of

Canada's great indie bands: Broken Social Scene had called it quits after a decade of making music together. I'm sure many of us can recall where we were when the news hit and what we were doing. Although this was a loss of a great band, it was not the first loss for any of us and it still does not make the news any easier.

Many of you, I'm sure, are aware of the five stages of grief: Denial, Anger, Bargaining, Depression and Acceptance. Although the loss of a band may not be the same as the loss of a family member or friend, it still causes grief and the five stages can still be seen. It usually starts with you reloading the band page waiting for the news of the breakup to disappear like it was a bad dream.

Once you accept the news you might send some time cursing their name while ripping their posters off your wall. After you've calmed down and taped all your posters back together is the stage where you send countless emails and letters to the band begging and pleading for them to get back together, stating that "you'll do anything." The next two stages are pretty self-explanatory. Depression can sometimes involves crying with the lights off (but only in severe cases) and acceptances goes without explanation. So what do you do? How do you deal with the heart-wrenching news? Sometimes all you can do is try to move on, but here are some other things you can do to try to cope with the loss.

Host a funeral/celebration of life

Take some time to grieve for the loss of the band. You could light a few candles and dress in black while listening to their music in chronological order. Invite a fellow fan to say a few words. Maybe about how hard they rocked.

Go to their last show

I put this in here even though this isn't something most people can do – especially since most of the people reading this are students in London, Ontario. Let's face it, unless the band is from London, they aren't going to play their last show here. So travelling is involved and travelling costs money. Then there's the ticket price, which, since it will be their last show, is most likely outrageous. Tickets will be expected to sell fast so the idea of a camping trip is one to consider. Pretty much the whole experience will be costly and difficult, but the decision is up to you. If you were not able to go to the last show either due to costs or ticket availability, then pay attention to the next step.

Buy all their music while it's cheap

In most cases, when a band breaks up, CD prices are going to fly through the roof. But if you're lucky and act fast, there's a good chance that there will be one record store in town where the salespeople haven't been on Pitchfork's website and therefore haven't heard the terrible, heart-breaking news. Again it might be a little costly and you might have to borrow some money or risk maxing out your credit card, but think of it as an investment.

Move on, find a new favourite band

Once you feel like you're finally better and ready to move on, then it's time to find a new favourite band. Take suggestions from friends or walk aimlessly through the record shop for anything that catches your eye.

Hopefully this band stays together longer. Just remember, you can't sit around and mope about the same band forever. They'll probably get back together anyways. Reunion tours are big right now. And if you're still feeling down about it, well, there's always ice cream.

Marine Dreams worth a listen

MADISON FOSTER
INTERROBANG

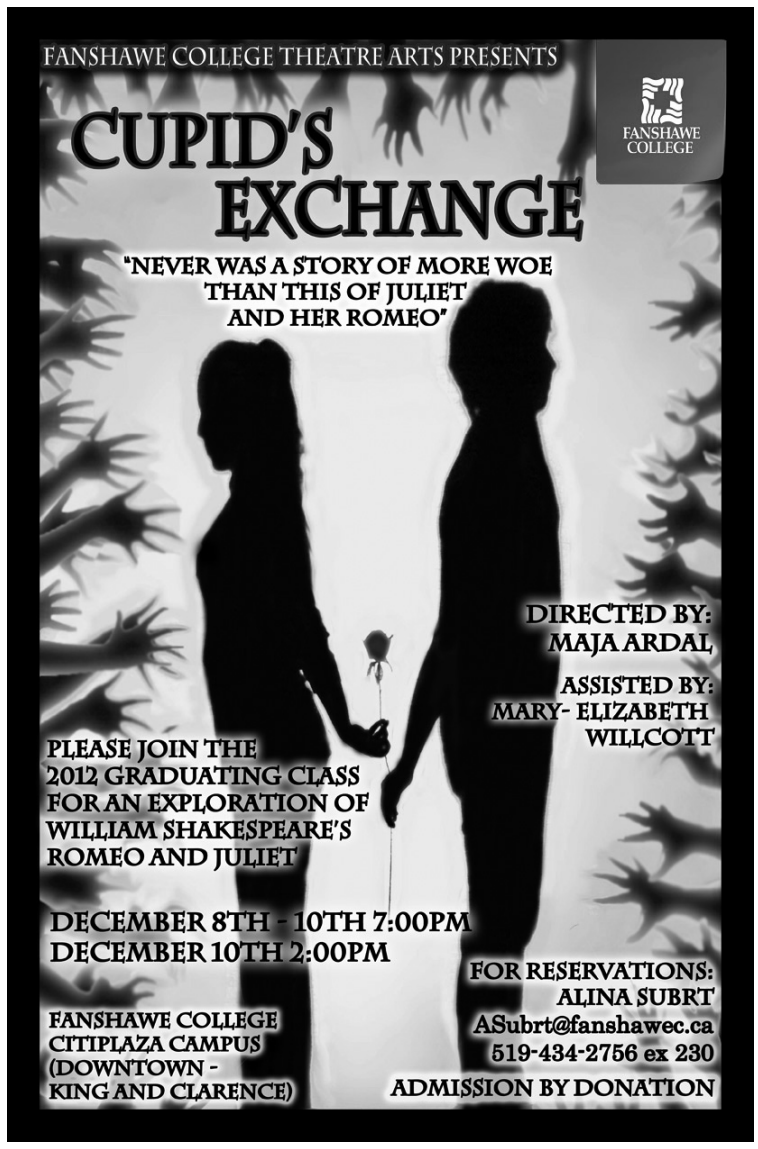
There's no doubt that the name Marine Dreams is one that will be heard often with the new release of self-titled album from the artist. The 10-track record from Sackville, New Brunswick's Ian Kehoe, which dropped on November 15, was followed by a number of release shows, including one on November 27 at London's The Brass, and has quickly seen mention and praise from sources like CBC Radio 3 and NOW Magazine.

Formerly of the Welland, Ontario band Attack in Black, Kehoe set off to create his own sound but never strayed far from the others in the band. Past bandmates Daniel Romano, Spencer Burton and Ian Romano all took the time to contribute to the new album. With the recording process taking place with two drum kits set up in the Romano family kitchen and Welland studio Tapes and Plates (the birthplace of more than one Attack in Black album), Kehoe explained that even though the songs were his own, nothing was too different or out of the ordinary. "The process felt similar in many ways but equally as exciting since I was recording with a lot of the same people."

Released under You've Changed Records, the label created by Kehoe, Daniel Romano (Attack in Black, Daniel Romano and the Trilliums) and Steve Lambke (Baby Eagle, The Constantines), Kehoe modestly describes the album as "awesome." He goes on to compare the sound of the album as "a rock and roll kind of like the Ramones." Although influences from the rock legends can be heard throughout the album, Marine Dreams definitely processes a milder and more foot-tapping indie rock sound. The overall lo-fi feel of the album and its fuzzy guitar breakdowns, as heard in the first track, "Fold The Sky," give the album that raw 1970s feel comparable to bands like The Buzzcocks and The Nerves, who Kehoe listed as influences for his music. The same lo-fi sound, when put together with the matching electric twang of the guitar and the slight twang in Kehoe's voice, almost gives the rock melodies more of a bluegrass feel. This is notable in tracks like the slower ballad "No Face" and the more beat-driven "We'll Get Her Back In Your Arms." Whether it is a more rock or bluegrass sound produced by the 10 tracks, there's no denying that Kehoe has given the debut album his own unique charm.

CREDIT: MARINE DREAMS
Marine Dreams' self-titled debut from You've Changed Records.

Marine Dream's self-titled debut is now available online at tinyurl.com/marinedreams-album and on iTunes. Check out youvechangedrecords.com for more releases from the label.



CREDIT: CANCERBATS.COM

The Cancer Bats will in London on December 15 at Rum Runners performing as Bat Sabbath.

No silent night for London

BOBBY FOLEY
INTERROBANG

When Cancer Bats arrive in town on December 15, they are bringing with them an unprecedented rock show the likes of which surely will live in local history for years to come: the band has been on tour now since December 2 as a tribute band to 1970s metal pioneers Black Sabbath.

But wait, there's more: not only will Cancer Bats perform as Bat Sabbath, but they will share the stage with local metal success story Baptized In Blood, who will grace the stage as Nirvana tribute outfit Baptized In Bleach.

In addition to the success they've enjoyed since releasing *Bears, Mayors, Scraps & Bones* early last year, this tour arguably elevates Cancer Bats to become the most notable rock tribute act in Canada. But as frontman Liam Cormier spoke to Interrobang recently from the studio — listening to the final mixes on their newly announced album *Dead Set On Living*, due in the spring — he indicated the idea had some humble beginnings.

The band first performed their tribute set to the metal giants after being approached by festival organizers at the 2011 Sonisphere festival in Bohemia who were looking for an after-party band that could play on a side stage after the headliners Slipknot finished their set at night. Cancer Bats were already on the schedule to perform that night, so organizers pitched their idea.

"They put it to us, said we could cover anything we want," Cormier recalled, indicating the organizers listed Pantera with Black Sabbath as an option for the tribute.

"We were like, 'No fucking way can we pull off a whole set of Pantera songs!'" Cormier laughed. "So we unassumingly said, 'We'll just go Black Sabbath; that'll be super easy,' and then opened a real can of worms because of how jazzy and crazy Sabbath is. It was funny for us to take it on as the easy route, but then realize it's actually really difficult."

Cormier's excitement was easy to hear over the phone, for the tour and for the new material he had to reflect on sitting in the studio. According to music sites online, the band — also composed of Scott Middleton on guitar, Mike Peters on drums and Jaye Schwarzer on bass — began recording the album in August, and according to Cormier, the album hadn't been finished for more than a couple of hours when he spoke to Interrobang.

"Every time we write a record, we always go back and listen to what we liked about the other ones," he explained. "We love our band, and we love what we do, so we're always trying to finely tune it, make it better. So it's like we go and pull out all our favourite parts from our past records and try to do it again as a new band."

"I never want to try to write a single; I want to write a really fun song we can play live, not get too far removed from why we started this band in the first place," Cormier said, indicating that a band needs to be able to laugh things off. "We're friends and we do this because we love it and it's fun. Writing your fourth record and trying to make something successful and not get too caught up in the commercial side of things, I think that's where you need to have a sense of humour."

Bat Sabbath and Baptized In Bleach are set to descend on Rum Runners here in London on December 15, with doors opening at 9 p.m. Tickets are $10 in advance, and are available online at tinyurl.com/bats-london.

For more information on Bat Sabbath or their Bastards of Reality tour, visit cancerbats.com or follow the band on Twitter @cancerbats. Baptized In Blood, who celebrated their signing to Roadrunner Records last year with a huge release party, can be found online at baptizedinblood.com or on Twitter @baptizedinblood. Further information can be found appearing on londonmusichall.com and Facebook each day closer to the event.

The Cheap Speakers crackle with life

BOBBY FOLEY
INTERROBANG

CREDIT: VIRGINIA LEBLANC

The Cheap Speakers make a stop at APK Live on December 9.

It's been a banner year for The Cheap Speakers, a power–garage rock band out of Toronto. In 2011, they've captured the attention of radio stations and music websites all over Canada, scoring enviable campus chart positions and positive press from EYE Weekly and Toronto's 102.1 The Edge online for their latest digital single "Speak."

The band, founded by vocalists Brennan Gault and Natalia Manzocco (who play bass and guitar respectively) and later rounded out by Tim Dafoe on lead guitar and David Kochberg on drums, released "Speak" late in April this year. Recorded and engineered by Dean Marino and Jay Sladowski at Chemical Sound, the single represents a lot of hard work and growth on the part of the band.

"We've grown a bunch between making our debut EP and making 'Speak,' and we spent a lot of money on it because we think it's a great song," Gault said. "Between the amount of time we spent on the recording and then having David on drums permanently, things really gelled together. I think it's definitely moving forward."

"I think the studio was a good fit for our sound," agreed Dafoe. With "Speak," the band is exploring new guitar and drum textures while maintaining their lo–fi integrity, a combination that is providing exciting new ground for the band to build upon.

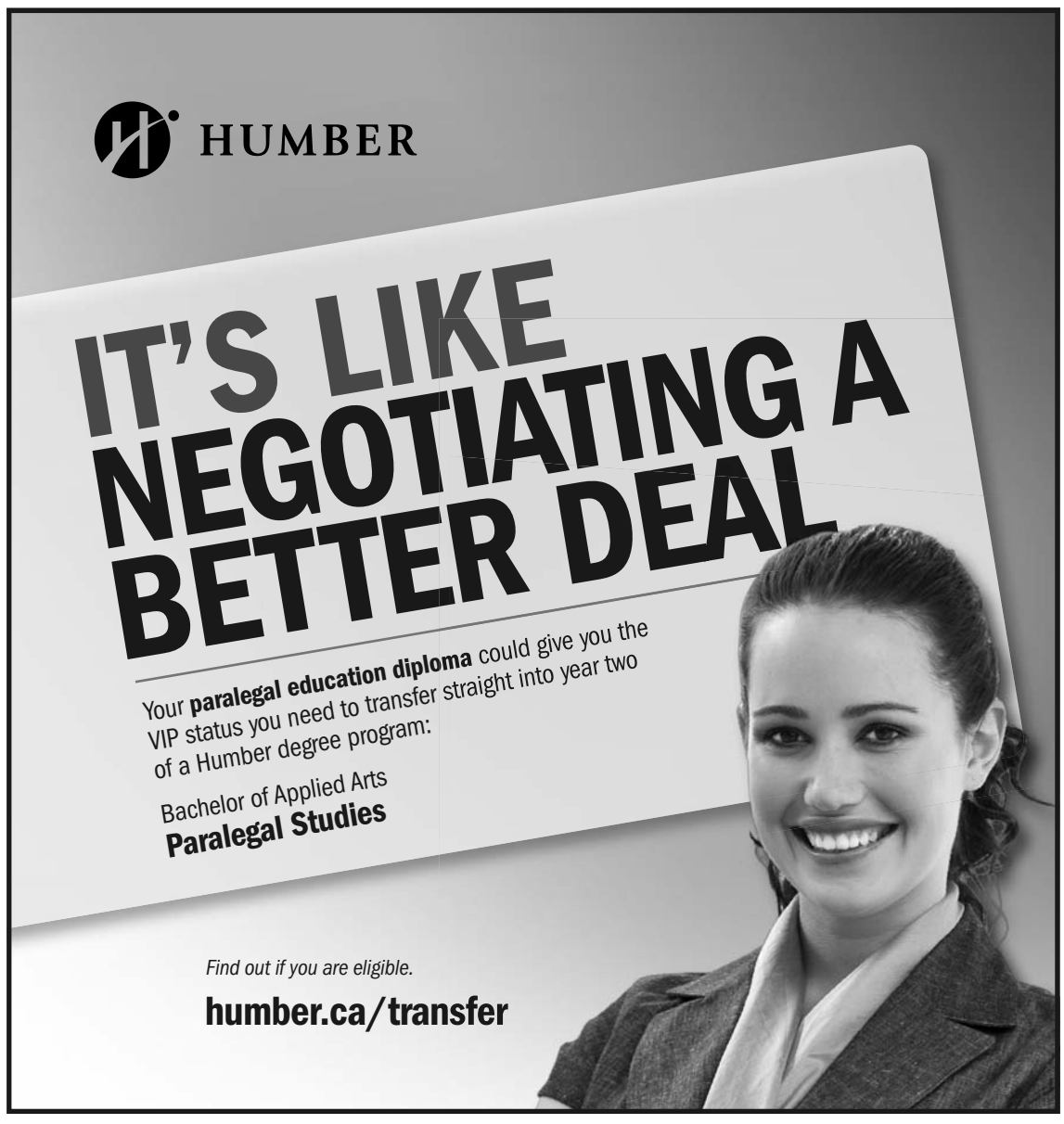
"Brennan is a songwriting machine," Manzocco said of Gault, describing the process by which the band composes their material. Although Gault is the principle songwriter, Manzocco said she serves as the band's editor and stresses that the input that they received from Dafoe and Kochberg only made them more positive that the two were the perfect complement to the band's lineup.

"His songs become even stronger once run through The Cheap Speakers arrangement machine," she continued. "We'll all come in with ideas as to where to place certain dynamics, like where to put solos or how many times to repeat certain things, and we really polish those songs into something we're really happy with and very proud of."

Known for their explosive live sets, The Cheap Speakers are excited to perform for London audiences. The band is playing at APK Live on December 9 with Paper Lions, The Balconies and The Hamptons. For more on The Cheap Speakers, visit thecheapspeakers.com or follow them on Twitter @cheapspeakers.

Paper Lions (paperlions.com, @paperlions) hail from Prince Edward Island and were last seen in London during Oh! Fest; The Balconies (@thebalconies) are a classically trained power rock trio originally from the Ottawa area; and The Hamptons are a rockabilly dance band from Toronto via Sarnia.

For further event information, visit apklive.com. Doors open at 8 p.m., and tickets are $5 in advance by emailing bands@apklive.com or $6 at the door. This is a 19-plus event.



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CREDIT: AMOS THE TRANSPARENT

Sure As The Weather available little by little

MADISON FOSTER
INTERROBANG

It seemed for a while that Amos the Transparent had almost forgotten that they had planned a new album. Luckily, the Ottawa folk rock band is back in the news with talk of the new album, and in their true fashion, they're doing things a little differently.

The band – featuring members Jonathan Chandler, Chris Wilson, James Nicol, Mark Hyne and Daniel Hay – went to work on their upcoming full-length album after the release of their *A is For Amos* EP late last year, a release that surprised fans with a much different sound than what is to be expected. The five-track album, inspired by the *Rockaby Baby* series, featured lullaby versions of a few of their songs – a treat to the children of those in the band. Now, after almost a year of recording and back to their usually folk rock melodies, Amos the Transparent still wanted to put out an album with a bit of a twist.

They began the recording process of the album to be titled *Sure As The Weather* back in the winter at the home of Wilson's mother, but the original plan to have the tracks recorded in the span of a month was quickly derailed soon after discovering the poor sound quality produced by the location and by their inability to say no when it came to playing more shows. After that, they found it difficult to get themselves back on track, but were finally able to do so after some time and were able to finish the album. Although the band will not be releasing a LP in its entirety until January of 2012, they made the first four songs available for download on November 29. After this, they plan to make four more tracks available sometime this month before the full release in the new year. This marks the second full-length release for the band after 2007's *Everything I've Forgotten to Forget*, which received praise and chart rankings from Billboard and XM Radio. Despite the success of the past, Chandler stated that they still wanted fans to get a taste of the album little by little.

Amos the Transparent just wrapped up a few shows with fellow musicians The Darcys and plan to play more in the next few months to continue to promote *Sure As The Weather*. Fans are advised to keep their eyes peeled to the band's website, coolplanet.ca for the upcoming tracks.

Ontarians sure know how to party

KIRSTEN ROSENKRANTZ
INTERROBANG

New Year's Eve is one of the most exciting and fun nights of the year. You get to celebrate (or move on from) everything that's happened over the past year and look towards a new year. Whether you're planning a family-friendly celebration or a fancy night out, here are a few ideas to help you out. Remember: New Year's Eve isn't just about what you do, it's about who you're with.

London
Rockin' New Year's Eve
london.ca
519-661-4500

Celebrating New Year's Eve in Victoria Park has become a tradition for many people in London. The night will include skating on Victoria Park's ice rink, hot chocolate and coffee, live entertainment and fireworks. Whether you're there for the whole night or just passing through on your way to your next party, this is definitely worth checking out.

Puttin' on the Ritz: New Year's at the Aeolian
aeolianhall.ca
519-672-7950

Keep your New Year's Eve classy with a throwback to years past. The evening will include music from the '40s, featuring the vocal quartet After Four and the Aeolian Jazz band. There will also be hors d'oeuvres, dinner, dessert and champagne. Doors open at 7:30 p.m. and tickets are $60.

Club/Pub Night

There is a good chance that your favourite bar, club or pub will be having a special event for New Year's Eve. Many of them include special booths, bottle service and champagne. Visit their website or call them for more information about their celebration, and make sure you buy your tickets in advance because they tend to sell out quickly.

Toronto
Citytv New Year's Bash
toronto.ca

Nathan Phillips Square in downtown Toronto will transform into a massive New Year's party that is broadcast all across Canada. This alcohol-free event features Citytv personalities and live performances and is a fun way for everyone to ring in 2012.

The Ninth Annual New Year's Eve Family Countdown
torontozoo.com
416-392-5929

This event is perfect for families with children of all ages, with entertainment including Abbamania, the WotWots and Majinx Magic Show. There will also be meet-and-greets with Shrek and some wild animals. The event starts at 5 p.m. and will have a countdown at 8 p.m. so kids can take part in the New Year's celebrations. Tickets are $20 for adults, $12 for kids between 4 and 12, and admission is free for children 3 and under.

Customize Your Night

If you've never gone to any clubs or bars in Toronto, this is a great time to explore and try something new. Website like toronto.beforelastcall.com can help you figure out what bars or clubs will be the most fun for New Year's.

Niagara Falls
ET Canada New Year's Eve at Niagara Falls
wfol.com
905-374-1616

Entertainment Tonight Canada's Cheryl Hickey and Rick Campanelli will be hosting this year's celebration. Starting at 6:30 p.m. in Queen Victoria Park, this exciting event features fireworks and live music, including Kardinal Offishall and Barenaked Ladies. Approximately 30,000 people are expected to attend, so feel free to bring all of your friends and family.

Collingwood
New Years at Blue Mountain Village
bluemountain.ca
705-445-0231

Whether you're planning to ring in the New Year with family or with a group of friends, Blue Mountain has the party for you. The night features a buffet dinner, live entertainment, an evening family party, a nighttime bash for adults and, of course, fireworks. Tickets are $75 per person, $50 per child 12 and under, and free for children under 5.

You're ready to go home for the holidays, but is your dorm room?

TABITHA MCCARL
INTERROBANG

The most stressful part of your semester, final exams, is finally over! Now all that's left is to pack a few bags and head home, right? Not necessarily. There are a few more things to consider when preparing for the winter break.

Did you pack *everything* you're going to need for the next few weeks? It can be very helpful to sit down and make a list of all the things that you use on a daily basis and make sure that you pack everything on that list when the time comes. Coming from experience, I can tell you that it can be quite a pain in the derriere to get home and realize that you left your cell phone or laptop charger at school, or even just a favourite pair of jeans or bottle of foundation.

Is there anything in your room that could be dangerous if left unsupervised for a long time? You would be surprised at how many different things can be fire hazards, so take the time to check around before you leave. Make sure that there isn't anything covering your heating vent, such as papers, cardboard or clothing. Also be sure to unplug everything from your outlets, don't just turn off whatever is still plugged in. It's also a good idea to make sure that your window is securely shut to stop bad weather from taking over your pad while you're away.

Did you leave anything that will end up being gag-worthy to clean up when you return? Make sure there aren't any dirty dishes or half-eaten leftovers hidden anywhere in your room. If you're feeling especially productive, it would be a great idea to do a complete clean-up of your room. A clean-up will also help you find any buried personal items you may have forgotten you wanted to bring along with you. Make sure you also check the fridge for perishable food items that you either want to bring along or throw away. Speaking of garbage, it's also crucial to you (and your roomies') sanitary sanity to make sure that all the garbage pails are emptied before you leave. Oh, and one last thing: please don't leave your dirty dishes in the sink or dishwasher while you're on vacation, it's rude to your roommates and downright nasty if left to simmer alone for three weeks.

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FSU FANSHAWE STUDENT UNION www.fsu.ca

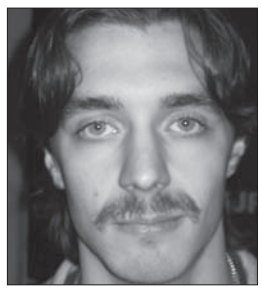
vote for your stache!

december 2nd at 4pm - december 7th at noon

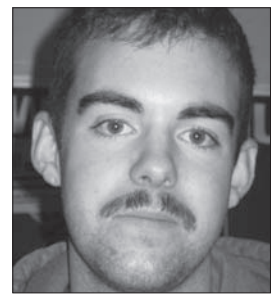
WINNERS WILL BE POSTED ON WWW.FSU.CA

best stache

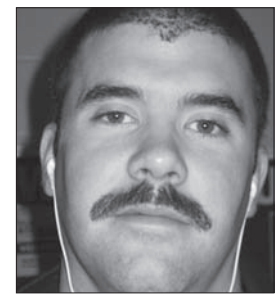
PRIZE $50 GIFT CERTIFICATE PLUS MOVEMBER SCARF



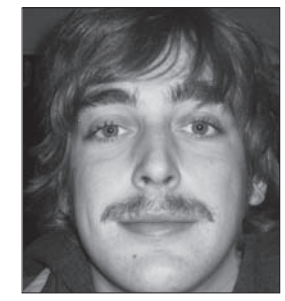
DANIEL PERRY



TOM FLEMING



ANDREW SWEIGER



DAVID LEONARD

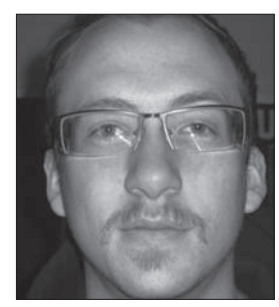
JULIEN CHANNER

seviest stache

PRIZE $50 GIFT CERTIFICATE PLUS MOVEMBER SCARF

RYAN COONEY

IAN DIMSDALE



JAMES LEE

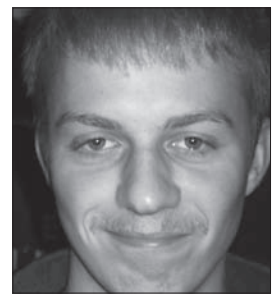
ALLAN DUNCAN

JAMES TRAYNOR

weakest stache

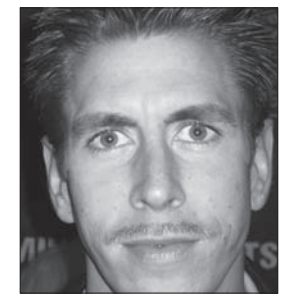
PRIZE 2 TICKETS TO DEC. 10 LONDON LIGHTNING GAME PLUS MOVEMBER SCARF

DEVIN WALSH

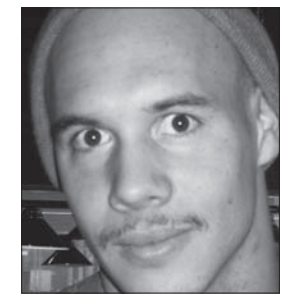


MICHAEL RUSIN

ALEX WILLIAMS



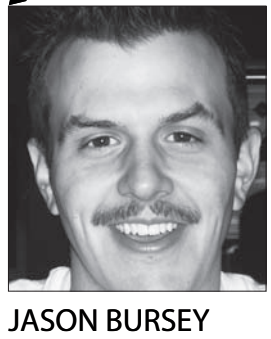
AARON ADAMSON



ZACH KILNER

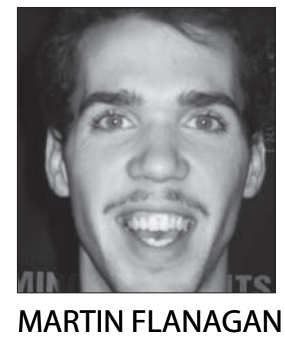
porn stache

PRIZE 2 TICKETS TO DEC. 9 LONDON KNIGHTS GAME PLUS MOVEMBER SCARF

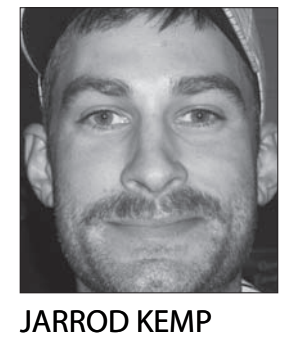


JASON BURSEY

JASON KING



MARTIN FLANAGAN



JARROD KEMP

PETER VAN STEE

www.fsu.ca/movember

Celebrity Losses

Jack Layton: Layton was the leader of the New Democratic Party in Canada from 2003 to 2011. In the 2011 federal election, he led the NDP to a historic 103 seats, making Layton the most successful leader electorally in NDP history. He died on August 22 at the age of 61 from cancer.
Amy Winehouse: Five-time Grammy Award-winner Winehouse was known for her incredible talent and controversial lifestyle. She died from alcohol poisoning on July 23 at the age of 27.
Ryan Dunn: Dunn is best known as a member of the Jackass television show and movies. He died on June 20 at the age of 34 in an alcohol-related car accident.
Steve Jobs: Jobs was the Chairman, Co-Founder and Chief Executive Officer of Apple INC. He was known, in part, for his keynote speeches and his iconic status reached far beyond the tech world. Jobs died on October 5 at the age of 46 due to complications from pancreatic cancer.
Elizabeth Taylor: This Academy Award-winning film legend spent over 50 years in the spotlight. She was known for her incredible beauty, devotion to raising awareness for HIV and AIDS research, and her many marriages. The iconic actress died on March 23 of congestive heart failure. She was 79.

Celebrity Divorces

Arnold Schwarzenegger and Maria Shriver: After 25 years of marriage and four children, the two separated on May 9. Shortly after the separation, it was made public that Schwarzenegger had an affair with their housekeeper of 20 years, Mildred Baena, and had father a child with her, Joseph, who is now 14.
Kim Kardashian and Kris Humphries: The couple began dating in October 2010, and got engaged in May 2011. Their August 20 wedding was televised as a two-night special on E! and had a combined 10.5 million viewers. After 72 days of marriage, Kardashian filed for divorce.
Ashton Kutcher and Demi Moore: After rumours of Kutcher's infidelity spread, Demi Moore announced on November 17 that she was filing for divorce, ending their six-year marriage.

The Royal Wedding

On April 29, two billion viewers around the world tuned in to watch the long-awaited wedding of Prince William and Catherine Middleton. Prince William proposed on October 20, 2010, with his mother s engagement ring, and the couple made the public announcement on November 16, 2010. One million people lined the route between Westminster Abbey, where the couple was married, and Buckingham Palace in order to catch a glimpse of the couple and Middleton s highly anticipated wedding gown.

Retirement

Steve Jobs: Jobs virtually touched the lives of everyone who has ever used a computer. He was the Co-Founder, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Apple Inc., which today makes computers, tablets, cell phones and more. Jobs battled pancreatic cancer from 2003, and resigned as CEO in August.
Oprah: She may be retired, but that s not slowing her down! On May 25, the last episode of *The Oprah Winfrey Show* aired. It ran nationally for 25 seasons and was the highest-rated talk show in American television history, according to Encyclopedia Brittanica. Her show may be over, but Oprah s got her hand in many other media, including magazines and radio.
Regis Philbin: This beloved media personality ended his tiem on the show, *Live With Regis and Kelly* (originally *Live With Regis and Kathy Lee*), with a final episode on November 18.
Pete James: Local radio host James ended his 56-year career as a sports commentator on October 31. Throughout his career, James hosted the opening ceremonies for two huge arenas in London, The London Ice House and the John Labatt Centre, and was the commentator for London Knights Hockey Club games for 40 years.

It Gets Better

This campaign aimed to convey the message that life will improve for gay teens. It was created by author Dan Savage and his husband Terry Miller in response to a rash of suicides by gay teens who had been bullied. Videos with the It Gets Better message were submitted by workers for the Pixar company, Chris Colfer from Glee and more, all showing support for gay teens. London Mayor Joe Fontanna even marched in this summer s local gay pride parade to show his support for gay rights. TV funnyman Rick Mercer took issue with the It Gets Better campaign, creating a video that stated that things need to be better for gay teens now.

Long-Anticipated Releases

From the re-releases of *Lord of the Rings* and *Star Wars* to the final *Harry Potter* film being unleashed on the big screen, 2011 had fans all over the world celebrating. The *Lord of the Rings* Blu-ray release included high-definition extended editions of the trilogy and over 25 hours of bonus material. The *Star Wars* Blu-ray collection included all six films of the saga remastered in full high-definition and more than 30 hours of in-depth bonus features. After 10 years of annual *Harry Potter* releases, the film series was finally completed with the highest-grossing film of 2011, *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows – Part 2*. In December, the complete 8-film Blu-ray collection was released.

TRIALS AND EXTREMES
MEMORIES
LOSS
MOURNING
THE YEAR OF PROTESTS {YEAR
WEDDING
2011

2011 was not only the year of the rabbit, it also had many memorable moments. Here are some of the things 2011 will be remembered for...

London, Ontario Protests

Occupy Wall Street/Occupy London: Occupy Wall Street began on September 17 in New York City, focusing on social and economic inequality, unemployment, and the greed and corruption of corporations. The movement quickly spread globally, with people camping out in tent communities in over 1,500 cities. The movement spread to London on October 22, where occupiers camped out and held meetings in Victoria Park until November 9.
Support Staff: Support staff at colleges across Ontario went on strike from September 1 to 18 after a settlement couldn't be reached during the bargaining process. After an 18-day strike, an agreement was finally reached, and support staff workers returned to work at all 24 Ontario colleges.
Beal Student Tasered: After a 17-year-old H.B. Beal Secondary School student was tasered by a police officer who was breaking up a fight the student was involved in, high school students took to the streets to protest alleged police brutality. On September 27, students took part in a sometimes-rowdy day-long protest.

Trials

Casey Anthony: After the suspicious circumstances were found surrounding her two-year-old daughter Caylee s death in 2008, Anthony was put on trial on May 24. On July 5, she was found not guilty of first degree murder, aggravated child abuse and aggravated manslaughter of a child, but was found guilty of four misdemeanor counts of providing false information to a law enforcement officer.
Dr. Conrad Murray: Dr. Murray was Michael Jackson s doctor, and was charged with involuntary manslaughter after Jackson died of acute propofol intoxication in June 2009. According to trial testimony, Jackson, an insomniac, often begged the doctor to give him powerful enough drugs to put him to sleep. Murray was found guilty of involuntary manslaughter.
Royden Wood: After accusations of sexual misconduct, London Pastor Royden Wood was convicted on November 1 of five counts of sexual assault for long-term and intrusive relationships with female members of his congregation. Wood, who founded the Ambassador Baptist Church operated at Adelaide and King Streets in London until 2007, claimed the convictions were "revenge" by his former flock.

Riots

London, England: Following the shooting of Mark Duggan on August 4, protestors organized by Duggan s friends and relatives took to the streets in a peaceful march two days later. Between 120 and 200 people ended up in front of the Tottenham Police Station, demanding to speak to a senior police officer. As more people got involved, the crowd got out of hand and the riots began, eventually spreading to other boroughs and districts of London. From August 6 to 10, over 3,000 people were arrested and over 1,000 were charged.
Vancouver Stanley Cup: On June 15, when the Boston Bruins defeated the Vancouver Canucks in game seven of the Stanley Cup tournament, citizens of Vancouver took to the streets, setting fires, overturning cars and looting stores. Over 140 injuries were reported during the riot, with at least four people stabbed and nine police officers injured. Over 100 people were arrested the night of the riot, and 16 others were arrested later. The riot caused an estimated $5 million worth of damage to the city.

Change in the Middle East and North Africa

The Arab Spring: This revolutionary wave in the Arab world began on December 18, 2010. Over the past year, demonstrations and protests have occurred in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Syria and Yemen and have spread to many more countries in the Middle East and North Africa. The results included the ousting and/or death of many leaders in the area, including ousted leader of Egypt Hosni Mubarak and the death of Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi.
Osama bin Laden: After nearly a decade of searching, American troops finally found and killed Osama bin Laden on May 2 in Islamabad, Pakistan. bin Laden was the leader of Al-Qaeda, the terrorist organization responsible for the 9/11 attacks in New York City.

Extreme Weather

London Heat Wave: On July 21, temperatures in London broke records by reaching 36°C and soaring over 45°C with humidex.
Tornado in Goderich: On August 11, an F3 tornado passed through Goderich, Ontario, leaving 37 people injured and one dead. The storm saw winds reach 300 km/hr. The tornado destroyed downtown Goderich and left the city in a state of emergency.
Tohoku Earthquake: The magnitude 9 earthquake occurred on March 11 off the eastern coast of Japan, triggering tsunami waves. The earthquake left 15,839 dead, 5,950 injured, and 3,642 missing. A state of emergency was called in Japan after the Fukushima Nuclear Power Plant cooling system failed, and surrounding residents had to be evacuated because of high radiation levels. The earthquake was so powerful that tsunami waves even reached parts of California and Oregon.

KIRSTEN ROSENKRANTZ AND ERIKA FAUST

HAVE A delicious holiday

Hosting a party this holiday season?

Be the host with the most using some of our favourite easy recipes.

Appetizers

Smoked Sausage Cups

allrecipes.com
- All-purpose flour
- 1 sheet Pepperidge Farm Puff Pastry, thawed
- 6 ounces kielbasa, diced
- 2 tbsp orange marmalade or your favorite jam
- 1 tbsp Dijon-style mustard
- Chopped fresh parsley

DIRECTIONS
1. Heat the oven to 400°F. Sprinkle the flour on the work surface. Unfold the pastry sheet on the work surface. Roll the pastry sheet into a 10x15-inch rectangle. Cut the pastry sheet into 24 (2 1/2-inch) squares. Press the pastry squares into 24 (1 3/4-inch) mini muffin-pan cups.
2. Stir the kielbasa, marmalade and mustard in a medium bowl. Spoon about 1 tablespoon kielbasa mixture into each pastry cup.
3. Bake for 15 minutes or until the pastries are golden brown. Sprinkle the pastries with the parsley before serving.

Holiday Appetizer Wreath

pillsbury.com
- 6 slices bacon
- 1/2 cup chive-and-onion cream cheese spread (from 8-oz container)
- 2 cans (8 oz each) Pillsbury® refrigerated crescent dinner rolls
- 2 cups chopped and steamed broccoli
- 1/3 cup diced red bell pepper
- 1 egg, beaten
- Your own favourite ingredients

DIRECTIONS
1. Heat oven to 375°F. Cook bacon as desired until crisp, crumble and set aside.
2. Unroll both cans of dough; separate into 16 triangles. On ungreased large cookie sheet, arrange triangles with shortest sides toward center, overlapping in wreath shape and leaving 4-inch round circle open in center. Crescent dough points may overlap edge of cookie sheet. Press overlapping dough to flatten.
3. Spread cream cheese spread on dough to within 1 inch of points. In small bowl, mix crumbled bacon, broccoli and bell pepper; spoon onto widest part of dough. Pull end points of triangles over broccoli mixture and tuck under dough to form ring (filling will be visible). Carefully brush dough with beaten egg.
4. Bake 25 to 30 minutes or until deep golden brown. Cool 5 minutes. With broad spatula, carefully loosen wreath from cookie sheet; slide onto serving platter.

DIRECTIONS
1. Mix sugar, milk and cocoa powder in a saucepan over medium heat. Heat until steaming, not boiling.
2. Add in liqueurs and pour into two mugs.
3. Top with whipped cream, if desired. Drizzle crème de menthe over whipped cream, if desired.
4. Add peppermint stick as garnish.

Alcoholic Drinks

Cocoa Minty Madness

suite101.com
- 2 tbsp. cocoa powder
- 2 tbsp. sugar
- 2 cups milk
- 1 oz. Godiva Liqueur or Crème de Cacao liqueur
- 1 oz. Crème de Menthe liqueur
- Whipped cream (optional)
- Peppermint stick or candy cane (optional)

DIRECTIONS
1. Mix sugar, milk and cocoa powder in a saucepan over medium heat. Heat until steaming, not boiling.
2. Add in liqueurs and pour into two mugs. Customize with your favourite toppings.

Christmas Jones

cocktails.about.com
- 4 fresh strawberries
- 1 part vodka
- 2 tsp superfine sugar
- 5 oz pineapple juice
- 7-Up
- Mint sprigs for garnish

DIRECTIONS
1. In a blender, mix the vodka, strawberries, sugar and pineapple juice together.
2. Pour the mix equally into two highball glasses.
3. Top with 7-Up.
4. Garnish with a sprig of mint.

How to host the perfect holiday party

Themes:

Ugly Christmas sweater parties have become popular in the last few years, and could make for a fun theme. You could also host a classy cocktail party and encourage your guests to dress their best. If you're not really into holiday-themed parties, light up the night with a tight-and-bright party or get creative with an anything-but-clothes celebration.

Music:

Think carefully about who you've invited and how you want your party to feel. Put together a couple playlists in advance so you don't have to worry about the music all night. If the party mood changes, use your backup playlist and change the music from classy to trashy.

Décor:

This is another atmospheric aspect: does your party need candles or strobelights? Are you going for a traditional holiday bash or a blowout end-of-the-semester bonanza? Visit the dollar store for inexpensive decorations for any type of party.

Games:

From *Scene It?* to Pin the Nose on Rudolph, games can liven up any party. (Hint: You can turn any game into a drinking game if you think creatively!)

Dessert

Pecan Turtle Bars

allrecipes.com
- 1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 1/2 cups packed brown sugar
- 1/2 cup butter, softened
- 1 cup pecan halves
- 2/3 cup butter
- 1 cup milk chocolate chips

DIRECTIONS
1. Heat oven to in 350°F. Combine flour, 1 cup brown sugar and softened butter in large mixer bowl. Beat at medium speed of electric mixer 2 to 3 minutes or until mixture resembles fine crumbs. Pat mixture evenly onto bottom of ungreased 13x9 inch baking pan. Sprinkle pecans evenly over crumb mixture.
2. Combine 2/3 cup butter and remaining 1/2 cup brown sugar in small saucepan. Cook and stir over medium heat until entire surface is bubbly. Cook and stir 1/2 to 1 minute more. Pour into pan, spreading evenly over crust.
3. Bake for 18 to 20 minutes or until entire surface is bubbly. Remove from oven; immediately sprinkle with chocolate pieces. Let stand 2 to 3 minutes to allow chocolate to melt; use knife to swirl chocolate slightly. Cool completely in pan on wire rack. Use sharp knife to cut into 48 bars.

Lavender Spritz Cookies

Recipe from Purple Daze Lavender Farm

- 1 1/2 cups butter
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1 egg
- 2 tbsp. milk
- 1 1/2 tsp. vanilla extract
- 3 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp. baking powder
- 1 tbsp. culinary lavender
- Food colouring (optional)

DIRECTIONS
1. Preheat oven to 375°F.
2. Cream butter and sugar. Add egg, milk and vanilla extract; beat well.
3. Stir together flour and baking powder and gradually add to creamed mixture, mixing to make a smooth dough.
4. Mix in lavender thoroughly. Add food colouring in festive holiday colours and mix well.
5. Roll dough into 1-inch balls and flatten slightly, or roll out dough and use holiday-themed cookie cutters to cut the dough. Place on ungreased cookie sheet.
6. Bake 10 to 12 minutes until lightly browned around edges. Cool on rack.

BY: KIRSTEN ROSENKRANTZ AND ERIKA FAUST

the top 5 holiday gifts

Whether the people on your shopping list are into the latest reads or the hottest games, here are some of the most popular gifts this holiday season.

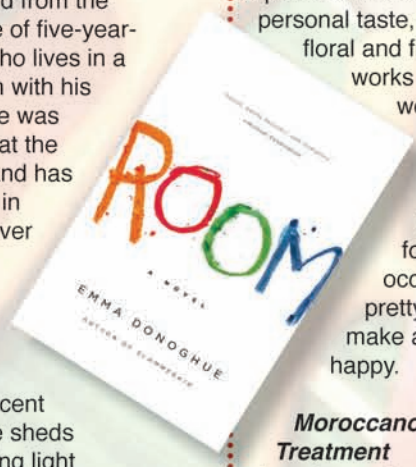
BY: ALISON MCGEE, ERIKA FAUST AND KIRSTEN ROSENKRANTZ

Books

The Help
Kathryn Stockett
This book tells the story of black maids working in white households in the 1960s, and the struggles Skeeter, a white writer, faces when chronicling the lives of these women.

The Man in the Rockefeller Suit
Mark Seal
Journalist Mark Seal conducted over 200 interviews before writing the story of Christian Karl Gerhartsreiter, or Clark Rockefeller as he would come to be known. This true story depicts the life of a con man who tricked everyone into believing he was a member of the famous Rockefeller family, and kidnapped his own daughter after his wife divorced him.

Room
Emma Donoghue
Room is told from the perspective of five-year-old Jack, who lives in a single room with his mother. She was kidnapped at the age of 19 and has been living in this room ever since, with the son she had with her captor. Jack's innocent perspective sheds an interesting light on the harsh reality of his life, making this sometimes-disturbing book an emotional read.



A Song of Ice and Fire series
George R. R. Martin
The fifth book of the epic fantasy series, *A Dance With Dragons* continues the stories of the Starks, Lannisters, Targaryens and more in this fictional Medieval setting. The first book of the series, *A Game of Thrones*, inspired the TV show of the same name, launching these books into the maintstream.

Steve Jobs
Walter Isaacson
At the request of Steve Jobs, journalist Walter Isaacson wrote the best-selling biography about the Apple Inc. icon. Jobs requested that he have no control over the contents of the book, other than its cover, and did not read it before it was published.

Bath and Beauty Products

L'Occitane Shea Butter Hand Cream
Sephora, L'Occitane
With cold winter weather leaving hands cracked and chapped, this rich formula leaves hands soft and healthy. Made with honey, almond, coconut oil and 20 per cent shea butter, this hand cream is a must-have.

Maca Root Shave Cream For Men
The Body Shop
This shaving cream for men uses Peruvian maca root, creatine, Brazil nut oil, aloe vera and sesame oil to moisturize and hydrate skin. It protects skin from nicks, cuts and irritation caused by shaving.

Marc Jacobs Lola
Sephora, Shoppers Drug Mart
Though perfume tends to be a personal choice based on personal taste, this feminine, floral and fruity scent works on most women. Whether it's worn subtly for day-to-day use or saved for special occasions, this pretty fragrance will make any woman happy.

Moroccanoil Original Oil Treatment
Locate a salon near you: tinyurl.com/locateasalon
A long-time salon and celebrity favourite, Moroccanoil is taking the beauty world by storm. This leave-in treatment is argan oil-based and leaves hair shiny without any residue. With repeated use, this oil will repair hair damage caused by styling and colouring.

Spa Wisdom Morocco Black Olive & Argan Oil Scrub
The Body Shop
For radiant and soft skin, this invigorating scrub is perfect. Olive stone granules and ground argan nuts gently exfoliate skin, while organic olive oil, organic honey, argan oil and orange blossom extract soothe and condition skin.

Movies

Crazy, Stupid, Love
When his wife suddenly and surprisingly asks him for a divorce, Cal finds himself back on the dating market, but without the first clue on how to navigate it. With the help of his perpetual bachelor friend Jacob, Cal will do whatever it takes to find love again.

Midnight in Paris
This one is truly for the cinema lover. In the latest flick from acclaimed director Woody Allen, the notions of the city of romance, the truth and strength of love and the beauty of life are explored in the way that no one other than Allen himself can pull off.

The Hangover Part 2
Join Phil, Stu, Alan and Doug as they travel to Thailand for Stu's wedding. After making it abundantly clear that he does not want a bachelor party, Stu and the rest of the wolf pack wake up in a filthy room in Bangkok pondering how they let this happen again.

The Help
During the 1960s in the deep American South, racism ran rampant. A young white writer named Skeeter takes on the immense yet noble task or chronicling the experiences of black maids during that era.

Water for Elephants
When young Jacob Jankowski falls on hard times, he runs away and joins the circus as a vet and animal trainer. What he finds there is the grandiose splendor of show business, the love of a beautiful woman and the danger of her controlling and violent husband.

Makeup

Nails Inc. Magnetic Polish
Sephora
Finally, a way to customize your nail design with only one bottle of nail polish. The formula includes metallic particles that move towards the surface when the magnet on the lid of the bottle is passed over the nail. It's available in three metallic shades.

Sally Hansen: Salon Effect Nail Polish Strips
Shoppers Drug Mart
Unlike the nail polish stickers of the past, these strips are made from real nail polish and are very easy to apply. They come in a variety of shades and patterns including leopard print, lace and glitter. With just a quick swipe of top coat, these appliques will last for up to 10 days.

Sephora Moonshadow Baked Palette: In The Dark
Sephora
Get 10 sultry eye shadows in one compact palette. The In The Dark palette includes glittery shades such as White Gold, Black Purple, Cobalt Blue and Glitter Black. The versatile shades of shadows make playful holiday looks simple.

Smith's Minted Rose Lip Balm
Sephora, American Apparel
This multi-purpose balm can be used for dry lips, irritation and to relieve the sting of minor burns. With a slight minty taste, a soft rose colour and a very subtle glossy shine, this is one lip balm that everyone should have.

Stila Lip and Cheek Stain
Sephora, Shoppers Drug Mart
This versatile lip and cheek stain reacts the the natural pH in your skin, creating a perfect personalized shade. The formula contains antioxidants and vitamins A, C and E to keep lips and skin nourished. It's available in colours such as Pomegranite Crush, Coconut Crush, Cherry Crush and more.

Video Games

Assassin's Creed: Revelations
PC, PS3, Xbox 360
In the final chapter of the *Assassin's Creed* Renaissance-era story, players once again take on the role of Ezio Auditore as he battles the Templars throughout Constantinople to stop their quest for world domination. Areas of the city must be captured from the Templars, and players must defend controlled areas against recapture.

Battlefield 3
PC, PS3, Xbox 360
This first-person shooter features online play and a single-player campaign. The online portion features an unlock system, which advances a soldier's weapons arsenal.

C.O.D.: Modern Warfare 3
PC, PS3, Xbox 360, Wii
This is a direct sequel to *Modern Warfare 2*, and it is the eighth game in the *Call of Duty* franchise. Many features of *MW2* have been revamped in this game, including the Killstreak reward system, the ranking system and the unlock system. Two new game modes have been added: Kill Confirmed and Team Defender.

Skyrim
PC, PS3, Xbox 360
The fifth chapter in the *Elder Scrolls* saga, this RPG features an extraordinary amount of hours of gameplay to enjoy, as players explore the icy lands of Skyrim, complete quests and slay dragons. A new gameplay mechanic called dragon shouts allows players to harness the powers of the dragons themselves.

Skyward Sword
Wii
In the latest *Legend of Zelda* game, Link returns to once again save the princess, this time using the Wii's new MotionPlus controls, which allows one-to-one movement between the remote and in-game sword. Players hack, slash and thrust their way through new dungeons, solve puzzles and soar through the skies on the back of a Loftwing.

TOP 10 HOLIDAY FILMS

Along with spending time with family, enjoying time off from school and eating way too much, the holidays are full of great movies. In keeping with the holiday vibe, here are my top 10 holiday movies that everyone can enjoy!

BY ALISON GAZE

10. It's A Wonderful Life

What if an angel came and showed you what things would have been like if you'd never been born? Would you develop a better appreciation for life? This holiday classic answers those questions and shows one man the meaning of life.

9. Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer

Rudolph has been picked on by the other reindeer his entire life for being different, but when Santa needs a light to guide him on Christmas Eve, Rudolph leads the way in this claymation classic.

8. The Black Candle

This documentary film narrated by Maya Angelou explores the African-American experience through the celebrations of Kwanzaa. Filmed in both America and Africa, the stories of struggle and triumph stand to strengthen the seven principles of Kwanzaa and to celebrate the heritage of African-Americans.

7. Miracle on 34th Street (1947)

If Santa came to town would anyone believe he was real? It's up to a young girl to save Santa from being institutionalized in this feel-good holiday flick.

6. The Nightmare Before Christmas

Tim Burton presents you with his version of a holiday tale in this animated flick. Jack Skellington, the king of Halloween Town, discovers Christmas and tries to bring it to the people of Halloween Town, but they don't quite get it.

5. Eight Crazy Nights

This animated, musical Hanukkah adventure shows us the meaning of holiday cheer as seen through the eyes of Adam Sandler.

4. The Hebrew Hammer

After Santa's evil son Damian has managed to get his father out of the way, he sets his sights on eliminating Hanukkah. Fighting to save the Jewish holiday is Mordechai Carver, also known as The Hebrew Hammer.

3. Christmas Vacation

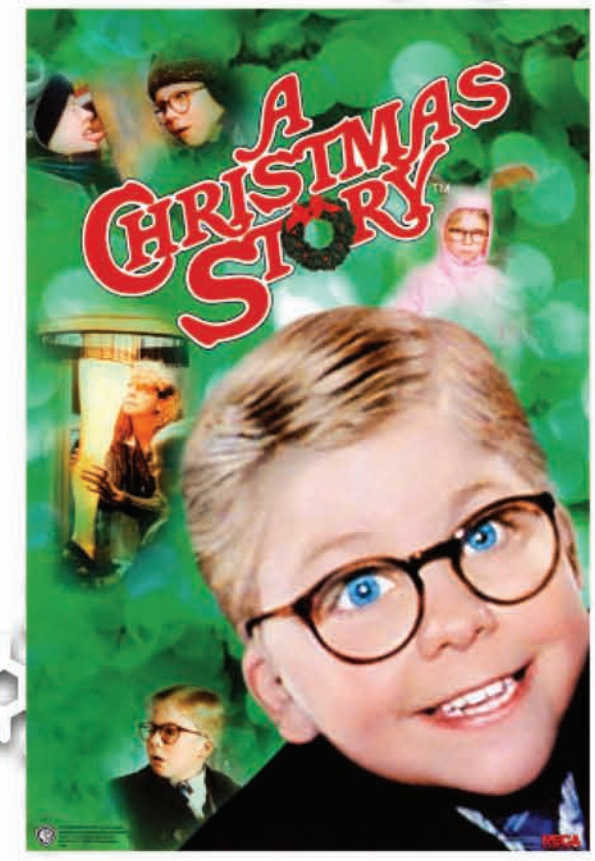
The Griswold family is back, and their plans for hosting the perfect family Christmas turn disastrous in this hilarious holiday flick that will have you laughing so hard you'll cry.

2. Die Hard

A must-see Christmas flick for any action fan, Die Hard marks the original appearance of John McClane. He fights to save his wife who is being held hostage in her office building on Christmas Eve.

1. A Christmas Story

Everything about this movie evokes feelings of the holiday spirit: from the Red Ryder BB Gun to Ralphie's snowsuit to hidden radio messages about Ovaltine, this Christmas classic is non-stop holiday fun.



KIRSTEN ROSENKRANTZ & ERIKA FAUST

the anatomy of a Perfect Christmas Stocking

UNDERWEAR & SOCKS:
You know you're an adult when you look forward to receiving staples such as underwear and socks as gifts.

LOTTERY SCRATCH CARDS:
Try your luck this holiday season. If you don't win big, at least you had fun. If you do win big, our office is located in SC1012. We'll be here.

DONATION:
In the spirit of generosity, spread some holiday cheer to those in need!

GOLF BALLS:
Have a ball this season. Heck, have three balls.

INDIVIDUAL FACE MASKS:
Available at many drug stores, a face mask can be a soothing way to wind down from the hectic holiday season.

MINI BOTTLES OF BOOZE:
Whether it's to liven up your holidays or just to get through, mini bottles of booze are a welcome addition to any adult stocking.

MAGAZINES:
Whether you're into sports, wood, music, knitting, fashion, cats or celebrity gossip, there's probably a magazine devoted entirely to your favourite subject.

CANDY:
With your New Year's resolution creeping up, stuff your face while you still can.

GIFT CARDS:
If you know someone really well, you know where they shop. A gift card to one of your favourite stores or restaurants, or for something more practical like gas and groceries, makes for a much-appreciated gift.

GIFT SET SAMPLERS:
Stores like Sephora and Shoppers Drug Mart offer a variety of sample packs and gift sets for both men and women. Many sets include various perfumes, lotions and makeup samples so you can find your new favourites.

SCHOOL SUPPLIES:
Another boring necessity, but who doesn't need another USB stick or fresh printer ink for the new semester?

RAZORS:
They may not be the most exciting stocking stuffer, but it sure is nice not to be the one buying these expensive necessities.

ORANGE:
Traditionally, receiving an orange in the toe of your stocking was a real treat, as those fruits weren't readily available during the winter season in colder climates. Today, it's a symbolic gesture that harkens back to those times.

12 Bars of Christmas

KIRSTEN ROSENKRANTZ & ERIKA FAUST

Molly Blooms
700 Richmond St. | 519-675-1212 | mollyblooms.ca

ON THE FIRST DAY OF CHRISTMAS, MY TRUE LOVE GAVE TO ME A **GUINNESS BEER**

Barney's Lounge
671 Richmond St. | 519-432-1425 | barneyslounge.com

ON THE SECOND DAY OF CHRISTMAS, MY TRUE LOVE GAVE TO ME A **SEA BREEZE**

Martini Bar/ Outer Mongolian
645 Richmond St. | 519-645-6400 | mongoliangrill.com

ON THE THIRD DAY OF CHRISTMAS, MY TRUE LOVE GAVE TO ME A **MARTINI**

The Barking Frog
209 John St. | 519-850-3764 | barkingfrog.ca

ON THE FOURTH DAY OF CHRISTMAS, MY TRUE LOVE GAVE TO ME A **BUTTERY NIPPLE**

Joe Kool's
595 Richmond St. | 519-663-5665 | joekoolsrestaurant.ca

ON THE FIFTH DAY OF CHRISTMAS, MY TRUE LOVE GAVE TO ME A **CAESAR**

Wink's
551 Richmond St. | 519-936-5079 | winkseatery.com

ON THE SIXTH DAY OF CHRISTMAS, MY TRUE LOVE GAVE TO ME A **BEER**

Jim Bob Ray's
585 Richmond St. | 519-663-5466 | jimbobrays.com

ON THE SEVENTH DAY OF CHRISTMAS, MY TRUE LOVE GAVE TO ME A **BLOW JOB**

Jack's
539 Richmond St. | 519-438-1876 | partytown.ca/Jacks

ON THE EIGTH DAY OF CHRISTMAS, MY TRUE LOVE GAVE TO ME A **THREE WISE MEN**

THESE DRINKS AND BARS ARE JUST OUR SUGGESTIONS. KNOW YOUR LIMITS – MAYBE ORDERING WATER AT EVERY OTHER PLACE IS SMARTER FOR YOU. MAKE SURE YOU EAT. TAKE A CAB. HAVE FUN AND STAY SAFE.

Moxie's
441 Richmond St. | 519-936-0745 | moxies.ca

ON THE NINETH DAY OF CHRISTMAS, MY TRUE LOVE GAVE TO ME A **BELLINI**

Poacher's Arms
171 Queens Ave. | 519-432-7888 | poachersarms.ca

ON THE TENTH DAY OF CHRISTMAS, MY TRUE LOVE GAVE TO ME A **RICKARD'S RED**

King West
93 King St. | 519-204-4044 | kingwestbarandgrill.com

ON THE ELEVENTH DAY OF CHRISTMAS, MY TRUE LOVE GAVE TO ME A **MERRY CHRISTMAS** (GIN AND CRANBERRY JUICE)

Thorny Devil
398 Talbot St. | 519-433-2200 | robinsonhall-thornydevil.ca

ON THE TWELTH DAY OF CHRISTMAS, MY TRUE LOVE GAVE TO ME A **POLAR BEAR**

RICHMOND ST.

QUEENS AVE.

TALBOT ST.

KING ST.

kw

LOUNGE FOOD PUB DANCING

Winter FUNDERLAND

frolic on outdoor skating rinks

Victoria Park

Corner of Richmond Street and Central Avenue
519-661-4500
london.ca

The City of London has a long-standing tradition of turning the area in front of the bandstand in Victoria Park into a free public skating rink for as long as the temperatures are cold enough. People of all ages and skill levels come to this beautiful rink to enjoy the fun of skating and the pleasures of the great outdoors.

Covent Garden Market

130 King St.
519-439-3921

The Covent Garden Market is never a dull place, with tons of delicious food and unique vendors. In the winter months, the fun atmosphere expands outside.

The free outdoor skating rink, which is sponsored by the Rotary Club of London, offers a fun, energetic outdoor experience. When you're tired out from skating you can head into the market and enjoy a snack from one of the many food vendors within.

glide inside

Indoor Skating

Stronach Community Recreation Centre
1221 Sandford St.
519-661-4426

For those of you who just can't brave the outdoor cold weather and blistering winds, there are plenty of indoor arenas all across London with public skates. Visit london.ca to find a list of indoor arenas near you.

not a participator? be a spectator!

Synchro in the City

99 Dundas St.
519-667-5700
johnlabattcentre.com

If you're more the type who enjoys watching people skate as opposed to actually being the one skating, then Synchro in the City is just the event you're looking for.

Taking place December 27 to 29 at the John Labatt Center, Synchro in the City is London's first-ever synchronized skating competition. The festival will see the world's top synchronized skating teams from all over the world, including Russia, Finland, Canada and the United States, compete for a hefty cash prize. Check out johnlabattcentre.ca for ticket information.

throw yourself down a hill

Boler Mountain

689 Griffith St.
519-657-8295
bolermountain.com

Boler Mountain offers skiing and snowboarding for all skill levels and runs beginner workshops for those who have never donned a set of skis or a board before. Though the hills aren't the most challenging for more experienced skiers or snowboarders Boler is an excellent place to learn these sports and really find your footing with them.

Boler also offers tubing, for those who are somewhat less athletically inclined. People of all ages will find endless fun in sliding down a huge hill on an inflated tube.

Circle R Ranch

3017 Carriage Rd. Delaware, Ontario
519-471-3799
circlerranch.ca

For those of you who don't like the idea of going very fast down a steep, snowy hill, you should try cross-country skiing. Circle R Ranch, located just outside of London, has beautiful cross-country skiing paths that weave and wind through forests and fields. This is a great way to get outdoors and enjoy the winter without the fear of breaking bones.

light up your life

Victoria Park

519-661-4500
london.ca

Each year, the City of London goes all out, dressing up the huge evergreen trees that are scattered around Victoria Park. The trees are decorated in every colour imaginable, and other festive decorations are draped on lampposts and signs. A beautiful Nativity scene provides the centerpiece to this holiday wonderland in the park.

During the holiday season, Victoria Park is a great place to go with friends and family, or for a romantic stroll with a date. Grab a warm holiday beverage from one of your favourite downtown coffee shops and enjoy the beautiful snow-filled park.

Saskatoon Street

Where Second Street hits Dundas Street, it changes names to Saskatoon Street, so it's not too far of a walk from Fanshawe. Traditionally, the residents of this street go all out on decorating their homes and yards for the holiday season. The lights and animatronic characters are a sight to behold, and most years nearly the entire street is lit up with a holiday glow.

stay cozy

Tunes To Chill Out To

londonmusic.ca

If you'd rather spend the long, cold months of winter inside enjoying some great live music, then londonmusic.ca is all you need to find the best shows in town.

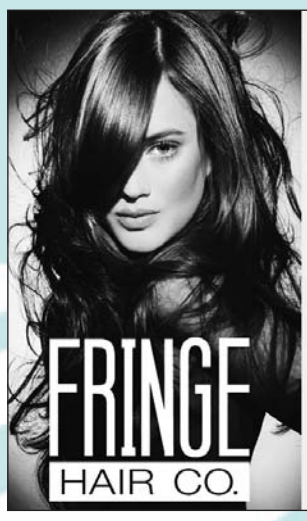
This website features all of London's venues and live shows for months in advance laid out in a simple, concise manner. Simply find the day on the calendar that you're looking to see a show on and click on one of the acts performing that day. That will give you all the information you need about show time, tickets and venue.

be a kid again

For many children, winter is an exciting time of year with an endless list of fun outdoor activities. Put on your snow suit and your mittens, gather up some friends, and play outside like you used to. Build a snowman, have a snowball fight, make a fort or find a great hill for some tobogganing. When your hands are frozen and your cheeks are rosy, warm up with a delicious hot chocolate. Winter used to be fun, so stop dreading it!

ALISON MCGEE AND KIRSTEN ROSENKRANTZ

Backstage Masonville Place 519-679-4505
Music Tees
Superhero tees
the BIG BANG THEORY
LRG
WE WILL ROCK YOU



Come experience our trend-setting team of
Professional stylists
Phone: (519) 452-7137
Room: SUB 1011
Hours: Monday – Friday 9:30 am – 6 pm
Located in Fanshawe

A HOLIDAY FOR EVERYONE

BY INTERROBANG STAFF

SCIENTOLOGY

Although Scientologists don't necessarily celebrate anything on December 25, they do celebrate Freedom Day on December 30. Freedom Day celebrates the official recognition in 1974 of the Church of Scientology in the United States.

SOME ABORIGINAL GROUPS

Many tribes accepted Christianity over 400 years ago, and have put their own stamp on Christmas traditions. It is custom to have a dance on Christmas Eve, where gifts are offered at the Christmas Crib – the manger. This idea comes from the many depictions in aboriginal culture of the great Thunderbird bringing glad tidings to braves in the fields. Scenes with the wise men of the traditional manger image are replaced by the chiefs representing the great Nations.

KWANZAA

Kwanzaa is a non-religious African- American holiday focusing on traditional African values of family, community responsibility, commerce and self-improvement. It is celebrated for seven days from December 26 to January 1, with each day representing a different principle: unity, self-determination, collective work and responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose, creativity and faith.

Despite some misconceptions, Kwanzaa is not a substitute for Christmas. The name Kwanzaa is derived from the phrase "matunda ya kwanza" which means "first fruits" in Swahili. The kinara (candle holder) is the centre of the Kwanzaa setting and represents the seven principles of the holiday.

OMISOKA

On December 31, Japanese families get ready to welcome the New Year. They clean their houses from top to bottom (Ôsouji), and then install the decorations for New Year's Day. A kadomatsu is placed on each side of the front door. This decoration is made of pine branches (pine is a symbol of longevity, prosperity and purity), bamboo and straw and is said to have the power to attract good fortune inside the house.

ZARTUSHT-NO-DISO

On December 26, Zoroastrians commemorate the death of their prophet, Zarathustra. Religious services are devoted to his memory and to the fravashis, the spirits of the dead. The Zoroastrian religion was founded in ancient Persia (modern Iran) by the prophet Zarathustra, who taught that there was one god, Ahura Mazda (wise lord), symbolized by a living flame.

HANUKKAH

Hanukkah is a Jewish festival celebrated on eight successive days beginning on the 25th day of Kislev, the third month of the Jewish calendar. This year, Hanukkah takes place from December 20 to 28, beginning at sunset on December 20. Hanukkah commemorates the rededication of the Temple in Jerusalem after its desecration under Antiochus IV. Spiritually, Hanukkah commemorates the Miracle of the Oil, when one day's worth of consecrated oil burned for eight consecutive days – enough time to prepare more oil for burning.

The most important Hanukkah ritual is the candle lighting. Each night, a candle is lit in a special candleholder called a menorah or a hanukkiah. The middle candle, the shamash, is lit every night, and is used to light each of the other candles.

CHRISTMAS

The history of Christmas dates back over 4,000 years. Though Christmas is currently thought of by many as a celebration of Jesus' birth, many Christmas traditions were celebrated centuries before Jesus. Traditions such as the 12 days of Christmas, feasts and the Yule log, gift-giving, carnivals (parades) with floats and carolers who sing while going from house to house can all be traced back to the early Mesopotamians.

WINTER SOLSTICE

Although Atheists don't believe in a higher power, many of them celebrate the Winter Solstice, which is the shortest day of the year. This year, the solstice falls on December 22 at 12:30 a.m. EST. Romans, Babylonians and ancient Greeks originally celebrated this day as a rebirth of the sun, sun god or saviour man-god and the beginning of a new year.

Today, Atheists spend this time with friends and family, share a meal and exchange gifts. It is seen as a time to set aside the religious divide of the season and portray the Winter Solstice as a universal, secular holiday with ties to nature.

YULE

Wiccans celebrate Yule in late December during Winter Solstice. Yule is a celebration of the rebirth of the Sun God and a time to honour the Horned God. Wiccans celebrate by decorating a tree, exchanging presents, hanging mistletoe and caroling. The traditions are similar to Christmas because both holidays are rooted in the Nordic, Celtic and Roman traditions. Many Wiccans burn a Yule log for 12 hours for good luck.

FESTIVUS

Festivus started in 1966 with former Reader's Digest editor Dan O'Keefe. It was not popularized until 1997 when O'Keefe's son, Daniel, a writer on the television sitcom *Seinfeld*, wrote the tradition into the script.

Festivus is celebrated on December 23 (although the original was celebrated in February) with a Festivus (aluminum) pole, instead of a Christmas tree. Those in attendance generally participate in Airing of Grievances. The celebration does not come to an end until the host of the party is wrestled to the floor and pinned, also known as The Feats of Strength. Festivus has caught on throughout Canada and the United States for those wanting to celebrate what was termed "a Festivus for the rest of us" without religious denominations or materialism attached to Christmas.

BODHI DAY

Bodhi Day is celebrated on December 8 every year by Pure Land Buddhists, who are mainly found in Japan and the United States. The original Bodhi Day was in 596 BC when Siddhartha Gautama, the historical founder of Buddhism, reached the founding principles of the faith, also known as the Four Noble Truths. Those principals include: Suffering is universal; The cause of suffering is Ignorance; Ignorance can be overcome; and the way to overcome Ignorance is the Eightfold Path.

If we have missed your specific holiday celebration let us know in a letter to the editor, fsuletters@fanshawec.ca, and we can include your festivities in an upcoming issue.

staying sane during the holidaze

BY: ERIKA FAUST & JESSICA IRELAND

Happy Holidays! Or... not. We all know that drunken family members, awful gifts, living at home again and other holiday "traditions" can overshadow the magic of the season. However, you don't have to write off this time of year entirely. Here are some tips to prepare you for a hectic – but still jolly – holiday break:

HEADING HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS

Your holiday break will likely be the longest you've been home since leaving for school. One thing you may not realize about heading home: it's going to be weird. You're going to feel like you've matured and grown up a lot since you've been at college, making your own decisions and taking care of yourself. Your parents are still going to see you as a seven-year-old who needs a hand to hold to cross the street. This can cause a lot of stress.

"It doesn't matter whether you're in your 30s, 40s, 50s or 60s – if there's a parent around, they will still treat you like a child! It's a built-in nature," said trained professional organizer Heather Burke, owner of the Ottawa-based Smart Space Organizing.

Try talking to your family before you head home to discuss what each of you expects from the holiday, she advised.

And when tensions run high – as they always seem to during the holidays – it's okay to step out for a bit. "Go out to neutral territory," said Burke. Taking some time away from a tense or awkward situation can help diffuse anger and can make for a more peaceful holiday.

Just keep expectations realistic. Rather than focusing on the perfect decorations, the perfect table and the perfect meal, focus on having fun, helping out and spending time together – that's really the reason for the season, isn't it?

GRACIOUSLY ACCEPTING A TERRIBLE GIFT

It'd be nice to think you're old enough to not get upset when you receive a gift that's less than stellar, but if you're still a pouter when it comes to presents, we say this in the nicest way possible: get over it. It's time to adopt an attitude of gratitude, friends.

"The focus should never be on the gift," said Louise Fox, owner of EtiquetteLadies.com and MannersTV.com. So suck it up, say how nice it was that the individual thought of you and deal with it later. Think about it: regardless of how silly the gift may seem, someone actually thought to get you something, so remember your manners.

MEETING YOUR SIGNIFICANT OTHER'S FAMILY

Maybe you've already met your partner's parents, but it may be time to meet everybody, and that can be overwhelming. Think of it as a job interview. Take steps to brush up on your table manners and get educated about the family you're about to meet. Are there any out-of-bounds topics? What's Aunt Ethel interested in? Who's the troublemaker? The more you know, the less interrogation you'll get because you'll be so busy asking wonderfully insightful questions.

"How you shine is by putting the spotlight on others," said Fox. Still get hit with an intrusive question? Call on your sense of humour and change the topic.

If you want to score some brownie points, remember to bring something for the host of the gathering – extra points if it relates to their interests, but a vase of flowers will be just as thoughtful.

DEALING WITH FAMILY FEUDS

If some of your Christmases have ended with holes in the wall or tears, you're not alone. There are also those great questions that family members always like to ask around this time of year, such as "When are you going to get a boyfriend/girlfriend?" and "What are you doing with your life?"

First, get prepared. You know this happens every year, so come up with appropriate but not offensive replies, said Fox. Answers like "Why do you ask?" or "Wouldn't you like to know?" coupled with a cheeky sense of humour can put the other person on the spot.

It doesn't hurt to look at your own attitude too, so check yourself before you wreck yourself. Avoid alcohol if it triggers confrontation, and if all else fails, remember you may have little nieces and nephews looking up to you, so set a good example. You can only control your behaviour, anyway.

party overload

BY: ERIKA FAUST

You thought Reese Witherspoon and Vince Vaughan had it bad in that movie *Four Christmases*? Those chumps have got nothing on me. I had seven Christmases to attend, spanning over eight days.

My boyfriend and I both have divorced parents, plus he has a huge extended family on both sides. We visited all four sets of parents over four days, which meant driving from London to Port Stanley to Delhi (east of Tillsonburg), finally ending up in Cambridge for my mom's extended family's Christmas. That's a lot of turkey.

You might not be in the same situation — maybe you only have one or two holiday celebrations to attend — but I've come up with some tips that can be used by everyone to avoid feeling overwhelmed this holiday season.

FUNK-IFY YOUR ROAD TRIPS

It may sound like a simple suggestion, but making a special playlist or mix CD for the car can make your travels a whole lot smoother. Skip the usual holiday songs, because you'll hear enough of those at the parties. Pick some classics and some new favourites to keep your car groovin' — it's how we ended up with the Beastie Boys' "Intergalactic Planetary" as our Christmas theme song that year.

DON'T PIG OUT

The first party was an all-you-can-eat extravaganza of turkey, mashed potatoes and other seasonal delights. Totally delicious the first time around, but by the time we made the buffet rounds in Cambridge, the sight of foods that had been my favourites just a few days prior made me want to hide under the table. Planning to pace yourself and not gorge on your favourites can save you a few tummy aches and ensure you'll enjoy those dishes every time. Making an effort to try something new at every party can also really spice up your usual holiday fare and can help keep you from piling your plate with the same thing every time.

FEEL GIFTED

Rather than trying to buy individual gifts for each member of your extended family – whom you may not know very well – why not buy a "family-sized" gift? This doesn't mean you have to spend a lot of money; donating in the family's name to a charity that may be meaningful to them makes for a much better present than a box of chocolates.

KNOW WHEN TO GO

Part of my party problems stem from the fact that I just don't know when to leave. My boyfriend and I have worked out a secret signal that lets the other know we're ready to head home. It'll make us feel like spies, plus we won't burn out on parties so quickly because we won't feel as though we're trapped there.

Another bit of advice is something I picked up from a blog: the best way to leave a party is to look as though you're having the time of your life. Heading out the door with a big smile will leave the host feeling as though you've had a great time.

SPEND TIME ALONE TOGETHER

One of our biggest problems that year was that, despite spending virtually every moment near each other, my boyfriend and I hardly spent any real time together. Every minute was spent hanging out with other family members. Making some time to spend with just your significant other – or alone – is a great way to relax, take a little break and de-stress, even if it's just for a few moments in the guest bedroom with a cup of tea.

CATCH SOME Z'S

There's no faster way to party burnout than not getting enough shut-eye. Getting plenty of time to sleep will keep you chipper no matter how many parties you have ahead of you. Don't let party time cut into your sleep time.

As stressful and exhausting as the holidays can be, it's fantastic to be able to spend so much time with our families. Whenever you get overwhelmed or just need a break, this is the best tip I can offer: remember you're surrounded by love.

Between finding the ugliest sweater for the Christmas party, the pressure to find the perfect presents and cooking a delicious holiday meal, it can be tough to get through the holidays without a major meltdown.

But not to fear — Heather Burke is not only an organizational wizard (she owns the Ottawa-based Smart Space Organizing and is a member of the Professional Organizers of Canada), she also has plenty of tips on how to keep a cool head this holiday season.

Before heading home for the holidays, Burke recommended coming up with a plan to pack smart. "If you have room (in your suitcase), take back anything you're not using so your room doesn't get too full," she said. "You'll want to bring more winter clothes (back to London with you)."

"When you're using those cafeteria trays as sleds, you'll want your long underwear," she laughed.

Since December just began, it's already time to start planning out your break from school."Take your calendar and start marking in the days that have been planned for you," advised Burke. This means writing down the dates of holiday dinners and parties you know you have to attend. That way, you can plan ahead to make time for seasonal fun, said Burke, such as special holiday shows, skating and other winter activities.

While you're planning ahead, it might be a good idea to plan some gift time as well. Burke strongly recommends giving "event" gifts — such as a day at the spa together or a fancy coffee treat. "Really look at who you want to give gifts to and generally try to do it as an experience. People don't remember the gifts they got; they remember the times they had with the people they love."

She cautioned, however, that these types of gifts might require a little extra planning. "Anything that you think is going to happen, you have to book (time for) it, especially during the holiday season. It gets so crazy."

If you're planning on giving material gifts, Burke has a solution that will avoid some irritations typically associated with wrapping presents, such as choosing the proper colours and designs — not to mention the cost. "Go to Staples or the bookstore and get a big roll of white paper." To make it colourful, Burke suggested using colourful ribbons. "That way you've got gift-wrap for all year round." If you're feeling like you need to spice the package up — and you have some extra time — get crafty and decorate the paper with markers, crayons or even stickers.

For those students who love spreading holiday cheer by sending out cards, Burke recommends sending e-cards instead to save on postage and paper.

Parties can be another source of holiday stress. One way to ease party pressure, Burke said, is to "pick out a few favourite outfits and make sure they're always clean." Having a few outfits on hand can save you time when getting ready.

And when it all becomes a bit overwhelming, Burke had some tips on how to blow off some steam. "Yoga, a nice walk or any form of exercise" will help. Instead of turning to alcohol when you feel the need to relax, snuggle up with a warm beverage like herbal tea or hot chocolate instead. "Alcohol is a stressor," said Burke.

Don't let holiday stress get the best of you this year. A solid plan and a smart schedule will leave you cool and calm all month long.

AVOIDING HOLIDAY SHOPPING STRESS

BY: BROOKE FOSTER

The holiday season is quickly approaching. People all over the world will celebrate with family gatherings and dinners, gift giving and decorations. But along with these celebrations comes stress, particularly during the shopping season.

Kelly Bragg normally shops for around 20 people and said she doesn't start her holiday shopping until sometime after mid-November. Having too many people to buy for and starting late are typical problems many people face during this time of year. She added that it's easy to start late because "Christmas sneaks up on you."

"I enjoy the holiday season except that it's always so rushed," she continued, adding that she believes that if she started shopping in July, she would enjoy the season more.

Credit: kickitback.com

A GOOD WAY TO AVOID HOLIDAY SHOPPING STRESS IS TO KEEP ORGANIZED.

Though she does experience some stress, Bragg shared a few techniques that help her keep a bit more relaxed during the season.

"Try to break up your shopping into workable chunks so you only do a little bit of shopping at a time." Bragg makes lists for the people she is buying gifts for to keep her on track and focused during her shopping trips. Bragg's key tip is to stay organized and have a plan!

The holiday season can be an extremely emotional time for everyone. When you do feel the stress, it's helpful to remember that the holidays are about spending time with family and friends, not about gift giving. If that doesn't calm your nerves a bit, "a nice latté might do the job," Bragg added.

Carolan Prior, a student at Fanshawe, said she believes that the holidays have become too commercial. She has over 10 people to shop for, and as a college student, that can mean tight budgeting. "The holidays are about being with your family, but there's also the stress of trying to get everyone the perfect gift and not spend too much money."

Prior said that lack of budgeting and the commercial appeal of the holidays are some of the causes of her shopping stress.

Prior said she wants to make budgets but has little time to do so, because she doesn't start shopping for gifts until well into December. She added she often ends up spending more than she can afford to because she is unorganized.

This year, Prior is keeping organized, making a budget, and starting her shopping early. She also added, "Spend time with friends and family and try to buy gifts with sentimental value rather than dollar value to avoid stress."

The main causes of holiday shopping stress are budgeting, procrastination and lack of organization. Tackle these problems by making sure to start your shopping weeks in advance (next year, try starting even earlier, like months in advance), make budgets and lists, and talk to your friends and family if you're having trouble overcoming the stress of the season.

Remember that the holiday season is about happiness and spending time with friends and family. The less time you spend stressing over finding the perfect gifts, the more time you'll be able to enjoy with your family.

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Sparkle and shine

CHRISTINA KUBIW KALASHNIK
FASHION WRITER

It's that time of the year again! The holidays will soon be rolling up and, well, the fashion world is going crazy. I find the holidays a difficult time of the year because shopping needs to be done, baking and cooking needs to happen, decorating needs to be finished up and generally people like for their look to reflect the happy season.

There are plenty of non-conventional ways to enhance an outfit. Personally, I think the best way to make a look more special is with accessories. Clothes reflect our style, and accessories help enhance our look to reflect what we're trying to convey without necessarily talking about ourselves. I feel as though people don't look to accessories as a form of self-expression as much as they do with clothing, and therefore accessories aren't used to communicate who we are. Personally I find that accessories help to express how formal you wanted to look, therefore they're great tools for Christmas.

Since you will soon be shopping for others, and maybe yourself, I felt you might need a little inspiration.

Blowouts: A lot of people only consider getting their hair cut and coloured to spice up a new look. A new trend called tinseling is increasing in popularity. Tinseling involves having little pieces of tinsel placed into your mane. Whether they're the same colour as your hair or contrasting colours, tinseling is a good way to add shimmer and shine. It's noticeable but doesn't scream "try-hard." Gold is nice for blondes, copper for brunettes, red for gingers and silver is great for black hair.

Frosting: if you've ever seen *How to Lose a Guy in Ten Days*, you should be very familiar with frosting yourself. Diamonds (fake or real) are a very good way of dressing up any outfit. I personally find that Aldo Accessories stores have some great frost. Colourful or clear sparkle will make you shine. Big cuffs are a great way of adding as much bling as possible – but if you do a necklace, don't do bracelets, do rings. And if you do earrings, you can do bracelets. The trick is to draw attention to more than just one region; it allows the eye to look up and down, which lengthens your silhouette. I also recommend staying away from any long necklaces if you're doing a belt or any type of scarf, as it tends to cut you up. Diamonds aren't just for your mother, they're meant to be playful; layering them and playing with different colours is sometimes what'll take your outfit to the next level – definitely recommended.

Shoes, Shoes, Shoes: The shoes we usually admire the most are the crazy ones. I always find I love shoes that I am the least likely to wear. I always like the wild-coloured shoes with the flowers and feathers and sparkles and buckles, but I usually end up buying the plain black Mary Janes. We usually buy what we're most comfortable with, but realistically that gets you nowhere. This year, buy a fun pair of heels or wedges with sparkly shine and maybe a little feather that you'll admire. Get them in a fun colour – red, green, gold or royal blue; it's the holidays, you're supposed to wear bright colours.

CREDIT: ALDO.COM

The TREJOS shoe by Aldo is a great addition to your current shoe collection, a lovely holiday pick!

During the holidays, just about anything goes: purples, greens and gold. Just have fun and try things you normally wouldn't – that is my best advice to you. Happy Holidays.

Imperfection is perfection

BEAUTY BOY
JOSHUA R. WALLER
joshua.r.waller@gmail.com

What: An abstract showing of makeup artistry painted on live mannequins. (19-plus event, no cover)

Where: Lavish Night Club (238 Dundas St.)

When: Friday, December 9. Doors open at 9, show starts at 11 p.m.

Who: Joshua R. Waller's makeup creations.

Models Outfitted By: Megin's Leggins and Nidia Martinez

Hair Styling: Joclyn Millard and Marissa Guichelaar

What is perfection and who gets to decide what is perfect? Are there really concrete beauty guidelines and rules that we must follow to be considered perfect? Are we not all beautiful in our own ways? The reality is that our imperfections are what truly make us beautiful. Imperfection really is perfection.

The media likes to portray what they deem to be "perfect" as a skinny woman with an airbrushed complexion who has "plastic-like" features. In other words, perfection (in the eyes of the media) is a mannequin. But why would we want to idolize something that is an inanimate object? This became the main inspiration behind The Imperfect Mannequin; the idea of taking something that is deemed so "perfect" and destroying it, deconstructing it until it is finally imperfect.

The night will consist of a runway show combined with an art showing of live mannequins (real people). The extreme makeup artistry incorporates beauty, body art and special effects to truly represent imperfection and to make you view "beauty" in a different light. Fourteen creations will walk the runway and in their statuesque poses, will stand as art pieces throughout Lavish.

All models will be outfitted in Megin's Leggins, beautifully crafted and vibrant leggings, as well as Fanshawe's own Nidia Martinez's theatrical and breathtaking garments. All the imperfect creations are completed with the hair design done by the extremely talented Joclyn Millard and Marissa Guichelaar of Cutz Salon Professionals.

With a night filled with such surreal creativity and imagination, it is the perfect event to not only be inspired but a place to meet other industry professionals (photographers, models and artists of all talents). Anyone in the artistic industry knows that the people you network with is the most important aspect to moving forward and gaining more experience.

After the show is over there is of course an after party featuring Lady Finesse, spinning the best in the top 40s/remixes/house. On top of that, live makeovers and body art will be happening! So if you come with a clean canvas, you have a chance to become an imperfect mannequin as well!

One of the most beautiful women who ever lived, Marilyn Monroe, stated, "Imperfection is beauty, madness is genius, and it's better to be absolutely ridiculous than absolutely boring." Step out of the guidelines, and enter the world of The Imperfect Mannequin.

Presents that keep on giving

FASHION WRITER
AIMEE BROTHMAN

CREDIT: LOOSEBUTTON.COM

Luxebox might just be the perfect gift for someone special on your list.

Surely I can't be the only one intimidated and dreadful of the chaotic and dizzying season of Christmas and the shopping habits that come with it. Walking down the busy streets of Toronto is usually hard enough to maneuver, and when holiday strollers stop to admire the stunning displays and sip their cocoa, it can be nearly disastrous. (Hey, I've got a train to catch!) Luckily, for people like me, online shopping sites have eased the pain of weaving through throngs of people strolling down Bloor Street or clumped together inconveniently above an escalator in the Eaton Centre. Unluckily for me and the rest of the world, we – somewhat foolishly – rely on a postal service and can be disappointed by delays and not having packages delivered on time. This is where I usually try to become a little more creative in hopes of giving something that will be loved, arrive on time and spare me the trouble of hustling through shops.

In previous years, my love for reading anything printed in the glossy pages of a publication led me to both give and receive magazine subscriptions as gifts. Part of the requirements of a good gift in my books is something that a person would really love, but would never shell out for on their own. As much as I love French Vogue, I would rarely buy a copy of it, let alone a year's supply, so you can imagine my delight when month after month I received my holiday gift. Awesome, right? Loving the idea of a gift that keeps on giving, I looked more and more into subscriptions of different sorts and last year, I stumbled upon a site called Birchbox.com.

Based in New York City and founded by two MBA-holding Harvard-educated gals, Birchbox was created back in September of 2010 and has a whopping 45,000 subscribers today. The monthly box is filled with four or five customized sample-sized beauty goodies ranging from makeup to fragrance to skincare. After filling out your beauty profile, certain products are selected especially for you. The Birchbox site also sells full-sized versions of the samples and a point reward system is used to encourage sales of the products. Shipping strictly to the U.S., beauty junkies around the world simultaneously sighed in frustration, once again being excluded by geographical boarders.

Purchasing a six-month subscription to Birchbox for my American gal pals last year left me feeling a little empty inside, and not with the feel-good gift-giving vibes you're supposed to get. Truthfully, I was a little (okay, a lot) jealous. Recently, while reading one of my last gifted issues of Flare, attempting to stay focused on gift ideas and not selfishly swoon over fur coats and glittery nail polish, my eyes nearly popped out of my head when I came across an article featuring Luxebox by Loose Button (loosebutton.com): a Canadian version of the Birchbox! I immediately signed up for a year's subscription for myself (it's the best value; you get two months free) after filling out my beauty profile to get the products best suited for me. Luxebox differs slightly from its American counterpart as Luxebox doesn't sell the products it sends out, but it does tell you where to purchase them if you choose to do so. I loved my Luxebox so much, gift-giving this season just became a piece of cake.

Survival guide to meeting her parents

Love, Lust & Lies
Patricia Cifani
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It's never easy meeting the parents, especially for guys, because before the dad meets you, he already hates you. Mothers tend to be the opposite; they will like you before they meet you. The key is making the dad rethink his opinion of you and reassure the mom's intuition.

The first thing you should do before you meet the parents is shower. Most of you might be thinking this is pretty obvious, but I have a feeling there are a few guys out there who need to be reminded. First impressions mean everything when meeting your girlfriend's parents, so dress nicely. I'm not saying bring out the tux and tie, but clean underneath your nails and treat this as an interview for whether or not you are good enough to date their daughter.

Since it's the holidays, you should bring the parents a gift – maybe a bottle of wine or some flowers. It doesn't have to be something big, especially if you are a student. Just something small to thank them for having you over that will show them how thoughtful you are.

Topics to avoid when meeting the parents should include politics, religion, partying stories and past relationships. No parent wants to hear that their daughter is dating a 21 year old who was engaged to his high school sweetheart or that he holds the record in his fraternity for the most one-night stands. Her dad isn't one of your buddies – there's no need to brag about this one.

The question that you should be prepared to answer is "What do you want to do with your life?" This is important. If you have no goals in life, they will take it as a sign of laziness and lack of ambition. It's understandable if you are in college or university and still don't know what you want to do with your life – most people don't. That being said, for this night if you have no ambition in life or goals, you should make some up!

Your actions speak volumes, so you need to show the parents that you have respect for them and their daughter, and there are two ways you can do this. First, do not use pet names in front of parents. No dad wants to hear his daughter being called "babe" or "princess." Secondly, keep your hands to yourself! Yes, deep down, her dad knows you do more than just hold hands, but you do not want to remind him of that or make that thought resurface, especially on an occasion when you know he is going to have a knife in his hand at some point. If you don't treat the parents with respect, why would they think you are treating their daughter with respect?

Now, being a bit more specific, how to make sure the mom loves you more than she did before she met you. One word: flattery. Moms love compliments, especially about how good or young they look. I should add a disclaimer here: You are complimenting Mom, not hitting on her. Remember, Dad already hates you for taking one of his girls.

CREDIT: THEDAILYGREEN.COM

If you want to go above and beyond, you could always find something the mom likes and get it for her. For example, my mom LOVES candy, especially anything sour. When she sees someone has candy her face lights up like a Christmas tree. So I always tell the guys I'm dating when they meet my mom bring her a bag of candy and it always works.

If you want to go that extra mile to win over the dad, unfortunately it's not as easy as saying "You look too young to have a child in college," but what I have learned over the years is that dads like it when their daughters bring a guy home who has the same interests as them. Find out as much as you can before you meet him so you can find some similar interests. For example, if her dad loves sports, you'd better know something about sports. If not, there's this new crazy thing called the Internet – use it.

I could give you all the tips in the world to help you survive meeting the parents, but no matter what, it's never going to be easy. Although it may be difficult, I hope these tips will help you get out alive.

Tips on watching your Christmas spending

TALKING CASH
JEREMY WALL

For those of you who can't get enough eggnog and yuletide and reindeer and so on, I'm sure you can't wait for Christmas to come. For those of you who are nauseated by merely the smell of eggnog, well, December 26 is coming up too, so it will all be over soon. Whether or not you're full of Christmas cheer, the holidays can be a huge drain on your finances. Let's go over some tips to help you avoid overspending this holiday.

First, Christmas is hard to budget for, largely because travel is expensive (someone needs to explain to me why it costs so much to fly within Canada, because airline tickets are beyond ridiculous) and no one wants to be known as the person that buys cheapo gifts. There are about a million reasons to splurge and far fewer to budget, but you do have to watch what you spend around this time of year, as it will make a huge difference in your finances come the new year. Sit down and figure out what you're going to spend ahead of time, just to make sure things don't get out of hand too quickly.

Second, watch what you put on credit cards. Or, if you are spending on a credit card, make sure you don't overspend so that you have enough in the bank to pay your credit card off quickly. The most painful part of holiday spending can be dropping a ton of money on travelling, food, gifts and all that other stuff, and putting it all on a credit card that charges 20 per cent annual interest. Don't be the person who is still paying off this Christmas's expenditures next Christmas.

Third, avoid expensive vacations. This can be tough if you really, really want to spend this Christmas on a beach somewhere, but you have to realize what you can and cannot afford. If you can't afford a tropical Christmas vacation, then don't get in over your head by taking on an expensive vacation that you're going to spend ages paying for. Of course, if your parents are covering the bill, that's a different story – just don't show them this article.

There are usually lots of bargains to be had on the shopping front at Christmas. Black Friday (and Cyber Monday) are now past us, but if you're savvy (not to mention willing to line up at 6 a.m.), there are some deals that can be found on Boxing Day. I'd be impressed if I met a family who decided to hold Christmas on December 27 and did all of their Christmas shopping on December 26, getting the Boxing Day bargains. Perhaps you could just skip Christmas altogether. I've heard Festivus is a more inexpensive holiday.

Jeremy Wall is studying Professional Financial Services at Fanshawe College. He holds an Honour's Bachelor of Arts from the University of Western Ontario.

The holidays don't have to be lonely

LONG DISTANCE LOVE
Alison McGee
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It's that time of year again: holiday season. There are so many special days to celebrate all within a few months of each other: Thanksgiving, Christmas, Hanukkah, New Year's and a whole host of others. Believe me, I know that it can be tough to get into that holiday spirit when your significant other can't be with you.

While nothing can really replace physically having your partner there with you to celebrate the holidays, there are a number of things that you can do to make each and every special occasion work long distance style.

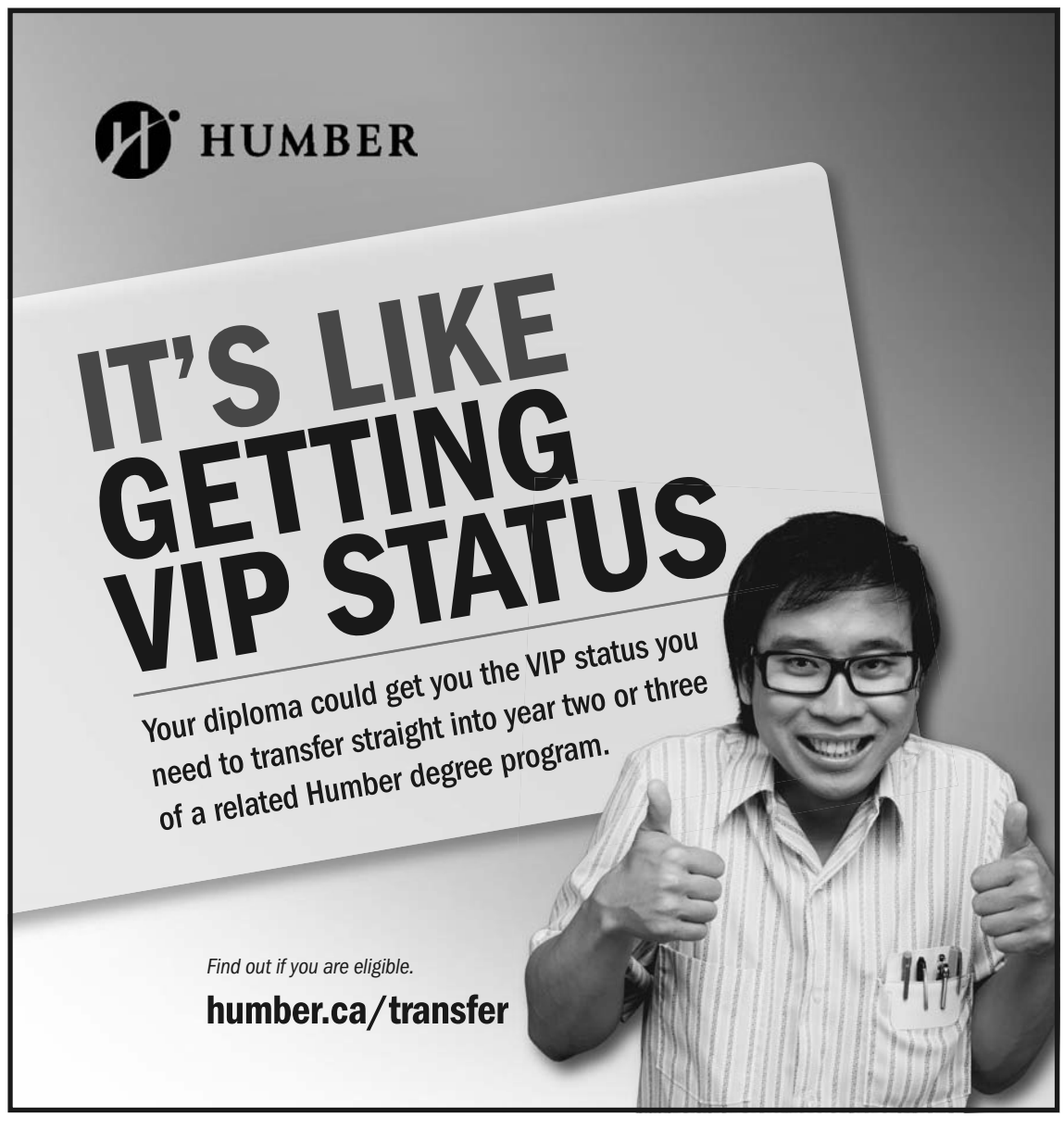
• Celebrate early or late. This year, my husband was away for Thanksgiving (which just so happens to be my favourite holiday), so instead of missing it, we celebrated early! Who cares if you have a full turkey dinner with all the fixin's on Labour Day weekend? If you really want to spend a certain holiday with your partner, it doesn't matter what calendar day you do it on – what matters is that you celebrate together.

• Spend holidays with your family or friends. It can be tempting to throw yourself a big pity party on holidays just because you're by yourself but that is never a good idea. Go to the big family dinner or make plans with your friends. Whatever you do, make sure to be around people who care about you and who make you happy. This will make getting through holidays on your own so much easier.

• Make time to talk to your partner on holidays. Make sure that when a special holiday rolls around when you can't actually be with your significant other that you set aside time that day to talk to each other. Even if it's a quick text or a five-minute phone call, taking the time to say "Happy New Year, I wish I could be there with you," will mean a lot to both of you.

• Do something for yourself. Do you have a holiday tradition that your partner was never really into, like watching a certain movie or putting up decorations? If you're spending a holiday without them, you have the perfect opportunity to be a little selfish. Do everything that you want to do to mark the occasion, instead of having to worry about what you both want to do. I, for instance, put up my Christmas decorations the day after Halloween this year, because there was no one around to say, "Don't you think it's a little early?"

I hope these tips help you make it through this festive time of year, even if that special someone can't be by your side.



Volume 44 Issue No. 15 December 5, 2011 www.fsu.ca/interrobang/

A Christmas bore-y

Cinema Connoisseur
Allen Gaynor
www.cinemaconn.com

A Christmas Story (1983)

Merry Christmas, everyone. It's the most wonderful time of the year, when people of all different backgrounds and beliefs come together to celebrate the birth of *Passion of the Christ* star Jesus of Nazareth. And nobody celebrates Christmas more than big-time Hollywood producers. Every year, we get classics like *Santa's Slay*, *Santa Claus Conquers The Martians* and *Santa With Muscles* to unwrap. Now, I've reviewed the aforementioned films in the past (read the articles on cinemaconn.com, I'm trying to crack triple digits in visitor traffic this year), and I was hoping to review a film that was on par with those superb efforts this year. Unfortunately this year's film, *A Christmas Story*, simply is not on their level.

A Christmas Story is a little-known 1983 film that I had quite a bit of trouble tracking down. I eventually managed to find a retailer based in New Zealand that had a copy. So for a whopping $113.49 with shipping, I nabbed a copy. I'm going to be so pissed off if they end up showing this film on TV over the next month.

For those who have never heard of this film, here is a brief synopsis. The lead character of the film is nine-year-old Ralphie, and the film focuses on his obsession with the one gift he wants at Christmas: a Red Ryder BB Gun. Though the film was released in the 1980s, it takes place several decades earlier. Kind of like *Happy Days*. Unfortunately, there is no Fonzie present to save this utter dreck.

CREDIT: A CHRISTMAS STORY

A Christmas Story stars Peter Billingsley as Ralphie.

Throughout the film, Ralphie lies and manipulates at every turn in order to score the present. Spoiler alert, his parents actually buy it for him! Someone call child services! They buy him a gun. I'm surprised they didn't throw in a bottle of Jack Daniels, some unfiltered Marlboros and the phone number of Miss Kitty, the town whore. A gun, seriously, great parenting. My daughter is three years old, and I won't even let her use a fork. Do you know how hard it is to eat chicken breast with a spoon? She does. Sure enough, Ralphie nearly shoots his eye out after just a few minutes with it.

The film's worst sequence is one of its last. After the family's Christmas dinner is ruined by a pack of dogs run amok, the family is forced to dine at a Chinese restaurant. The waitstaff attempts to sing some Christmas carols, and here the writers choose to mock their culture by having them sing "Fa-ra-ra-ra" instead of "Fa-la-la-la." How deliciously racist. I don't know why the filmmakers thought they had to go down this route. They could have made this scene more positive by showing the staff excelling by solving complex mathematical equations or doing some wicked Kung Fu moves, but instead decided to belittle these people.

Peter Billingsley, who played Ralphie, never amounted to much after this role, and rightfully so. His portrayal of Ralphie was loathsome. Every year when Vince Vaughn stars in a movie, he insists that his best pal Peter receive a small role. So as long as Vaughn still has some stroke, Ralphie won't need to hang out in the unemployment line.

Christmas is a time of joy, and this fine holiday does not deserve to have its name besmirched by appearing in the title of this lump of coal in all of our stockings. The cast, the director, the screenwriters, hell, even the on-set caterers deserve a permanent place on Santa's naughty list. I wish my parents had bought me a BB gun so I could have shot my eye out and not have had to watch this turkey. To all those who are unaffiliated with this motion picture, may I say Merry Christmas. To those who did have something to do with the production of *A Christmas Story*, then may I draw your attention to the mistletoe hanging directly above my ass.

Who can resist *The Muppets*?

REEL VIEWS
Alison McGee
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The Muppets (2011)

Remember when you were a kid watching Kermit, Miss Piggy, Gonzo, Fozzie and all the rest of the Muppets on *The Muppet Show*? Or maybe you remember their feature films like *Muppet Christmas Carol* or *Muppet Treasure Island*? No matter where you saw them or which was your favourite, all Muppet fans can now rejoice; *The Muppets* are back!

In the newest release from director James Bobin, whose previous work includes *Flight of the Conchords*, all of Jim Henson's lovable muppets are back in a hilarious, feel-good, family-friendly musical. *The Muppets* tells the story of two brothers, Gary and Walter; Gary has a beautiful girlfriend, Mary, while Walter is suspiciously muppet-like. The trio journey to Los Angeles to tour the old Muppet studio (as in the movie, much like real life, the Muppets have been out of the spotlight for more than a few years), but after finding the place in dire disrepair, Walter overhears an evil oil tycoon's plans to teardown the studio and drill for oil. Gary, Mary and Walter track down Kermit and convince him to get the old Muppet gang back together one last time to raise enough money to save the studio.

The cast of *The Muppets* is simply spectacular! Jason Segel takes on the leading male role (at least in terms of the human cast) as Gary. Segel truly never ceases to amaze as he manages to flawlessly pull off both good old family values and dry, witty humour with absolute precision. Amy Adams plays opposite Segel as Mary, and in typical Amy Adams fashion is

perky, delightful and charming every moment she spends on screen.

While Segel and Adams both give amazing performances, they are continually upstaged by the Muppets. Kermit, Miss Piggy, Gonzo, Fozzie, Chef, Animal, Scooter and countless others are brought to life by the voice talents of Steve Whitmire, Eric Jacobson, Dave Goelz, Bill Barretta, David Rudman and Matt Vogel. Not enough can be said about these talented men who do a minimum of five characters each.

Chris Cooper brings to life Tex Richman, the evil oil tycoon, and Rashida Jones plays a TV executive who gives the Muppets one last shot. Both prove hilarious to watch. There are also a number of celebrity cameos – so watch carefully or you just might miss them!

The beauty of *The Muppets* is that it is aimed at adults as much as it is at children. Characters consistently refer to the lunacy of breaking into song and dance numbers out of nowhere, speak directly to the audience and make countless clever self-references.

Whether or not you have kids, you need to see *The Muppets*. You will laugh out loud at this intelligent, entertaining, all-around good time of a movie. And I dare you not to tear up during Kermit and Miss Piggy's rendition of "Rainbow Connection."

Bringing back a classic

BROOKE FOSTER
INTERROBANG

The Grand Theatre is hosting a modern musical twist on the classic fairytale *Cinderella*. The musical offers an exciting evening for both children and adults. The musical runs November 23 to December 31.

Cinderella is a story we all know. A prince holds a ball that Cinderella desperately wants to go to. When her evil stepmother and stepsisters do not let her go, Cinderella's Fairy Godmother comes to the rescue. The Fairy Godmother transforms the poor, young girl into a beautiful, charming 'princess.' A pumpkin and her mouse friends become a carriage led by horses. Cinderella is now fit for the ball, but the Godmother warns her to be back by midnight. At the ball, Cinderella catches the attention of the Prince, but she must leave before the clock strikes 12. With no name and only the glass slipper she left behind, the Prince starts his search across the land for the mystery girl who was at his ball.

Rodgers and Hammerstein's version of *Cinderella* holds true to the fairytale's key elements with a few added twists and turns, including a slightly more modern atmosphere. Every element of this musical helped to enhance the audience's experience. The acting, set design and costumes, music and singing kept the audience entertained and glued to every moment.

Both Alessia Lupiano and Kyle Golemba made their Grand Theatre debuts in the roles of Cinderella and Prince Christopher. The cast of young, skilled adults also found room to include Danie Dixon and Justin Eddy, both of whom are currently only grade seven students. The acting, while a bit on the hammy side on occasion, was clearly intended to entertain all age groups. Director Heather Davies obviously wanted this to be a performance for adults and teens as well as children.

The set design featured many detailed sets including the village's streets, Cinderella's home and the Prince's palace. The crew made good use of every set piece by using each piece multiple times. The transition between scenes was flawless and was rarely distracting. The cast's costumes reflected the classic version of *Cinderella* while keeping in theme with the modern performance. In particular, Cinderella's dress stole the breath of everyone in the audience.

If nothing else, the music and singing are the key selling point in *Cinderella*. Every actor contributed their voice to at least one song, which made for a colourful and full sound. The solos by Lupiano and Golemba were beautiful and made the evening unforgettable. *Cinderella* features songs including "The Prince is Giving a Ball," "In My Own Little Corner" and "Impossible."

Overall, *Cinderella* is a phenomenal show that will entertain, captivate and amuse audiences of all ages. While it was clear that parents and children made up most of the audience, this is a musical that teens and young adults can enjoy as well.

Cinderella runs until December 31. For more information on ticket prices and show times, visit grandtheatre.com.

Shop local this Christmas – head downtown

MADISON FOSTER
INTERROBANG

It's important to support local businesses and shops, and what better time to do so than at Christmas? Downtown London has many great locally owned stores to make shopping easier.

Since many of you reading this may not be from London, you may not have had time to explore all that downtown has to offer. Here are some downtown shops that have something for everyone on your Christmas list.

Eye Candy
eyecandylondon.tumblr.com

I'm sure most of you have walked by this shop at 609 Richmond St. a thousand times but never really noticed anything about it other than the fact that it's a lovely shade of Pepto Bismol pink. When you look past the colour, you'll find that inside is a cute accessory store. It may be small, but it doesn't lack in selection. The store started when Elizabeth Noel owner Veronica Hosszu ran out of space for all her jewellery, which she designed herself and made at affordable rates. Since then, it has become a home for all sorts of other interesting gifts ideas and accessories. From necklaces to earrings, handbags to scarves, there's bound to be the perfect gift for any woman on your list.

Heroes
heroescomics.ca

Although London may have a handful of comic book shops around the city, there is no denying that Heroes, located at 186 Dundas St., has the best selection. It can almost be overwhelming when walking into the shop to see a large number of comics and figurines and to look up and only see more stacked up to the ceiling. Heroes has tons to offer, including independent graphic novels, manga, comic books, figurines and more; there's no doubt that this store is the best stop for any comic book collector this year.

City Lights Bookshop
twitter.com/citylightslondn

If you have never been to City Lights Bookshop, where have you been? It's a staple of downtown that has been around since the 1970s and has even become a bit of a tourist attraction. London's primary used book, CD, DVD and vinyl shop at 356 Richmond St. definitely doesn't skip on the cool – they even opened up a second floor for vinyl, interesting reads and classic literature. City Lights is practically guaranteed to have what bookworms or music lovers have on their list, but if they don't, there's bound to be something else hiding on the shelves. You could even just pop in and see Captain Kirk, who is always there in the Science Fiction section.

Kiss the Cook
kissthecookonline.com

Tucked away at 551 Richmond St. in between Kent and Albert is the culinary store that, although it looks small on the outside, has plenty of space for its vast selection of kitchen wares inside. There's even a section for cooking class (a possible gift idea). The chance of Kiss The Cook not having the piece you're looking for is slim, and their prices are comparable to those of the Bay and even Wal-Mart. You're guaranteed to find a gift in this store, whether it's for a culinary master or someone who needs some help in the kitchen.

Commander Salamander
commandersalamander.ca

A little blue shop off the beaten track at 360 Talbot St., around the corner from the Covent Garden Market, is the self proclaimed "Altar of Pop Culture" – and it's a well deserved name. This store has everything from lunchboxes to coffee mugs to pens, posters and knick-knacks, featuring anyything and everything from The Beatles to *Star Wars*. And who can forget all the tin robots? They also carry a selection of accessories and clothes from brands like Sailor Jerry and Betty Page. It's hard to list all the interesting and creative gifts available at Commander Salamander since they're constantly bringing in more. The best way to know is to check it out yourself. You won't be disappointed.

There you have it. Just remember that there is plenty that downtown has to offer and these are just a few of the great shops in the area, including Richmond Row and the Covent Garden Market. During the month of December, two hours of free parking will be offered all through downtown. So if you make the trip this holiday season, keep in mind that there are many great gifts to be found right in the heart of the city.

Student architecture design exhibit

TABITHA MCCARL
INTERROBANG

On December 8 in Fanshawe's G building, sixth-semester architecture students will be putting on an exhibit of their 'sustainable living' structure designs, viewable from 12 to 2 p.m.

There are five groups of students, each presenting their own unique architectural model and computer animated 'walkthrough' of their structure. The students have been working on this project all semester and have come up with some very innovative ideas that have strong potential in the real world.

The displays will include a disaster-proof home, an eco-friendly sustainable cottage, an "eco farm," a "HiTech Home" and a house made from 87 to 90 per cent recycled materials.

The "eco farm" project is designed to be a full-sized farm and fully self-sustainable business. According to Travis Reid, one of the students in the group, this idea is completely new, and is "not like the smaller urban farms talked about in sustainable design." By harnessing energy sources such as manure, wind power and solar power, the farm is designed to produce enough energy and product to also help support its respective community by selling the produced energy and goods.

Using concepts such as elevation, tempered glass, concrete and lateral support, one group has come up with a disaster-proof home. This home is designed to withstand natural disasters such as earthquakes, tsunamis, wildfires and tornadoes.

The designs of the sustainable cottage, "HiTech" and recycled materials homes include solar panels, ground-source heating systems, rainwater collection, "earth tube" heating and cooling systems, postconsumer materials and recycled building materials.

The elements of the designs that allow such ideas to become reality are quite extensive and can't be given justice in a newspaper article such as this. The beauty of these ideas can only be fully illustrated by the minds that created them, and that is exactly what they plan to do.

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SERVICES

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GENERAL

CAR POOLING - I am looking for any other students that live in the Cambridge, Kitchener-Waterloo areas that are students at Fanshawe and commute to London every day and would be interested in car pooling, even if it is just a few days a week. Email me Jaimie at jlaurence14@gmail.com

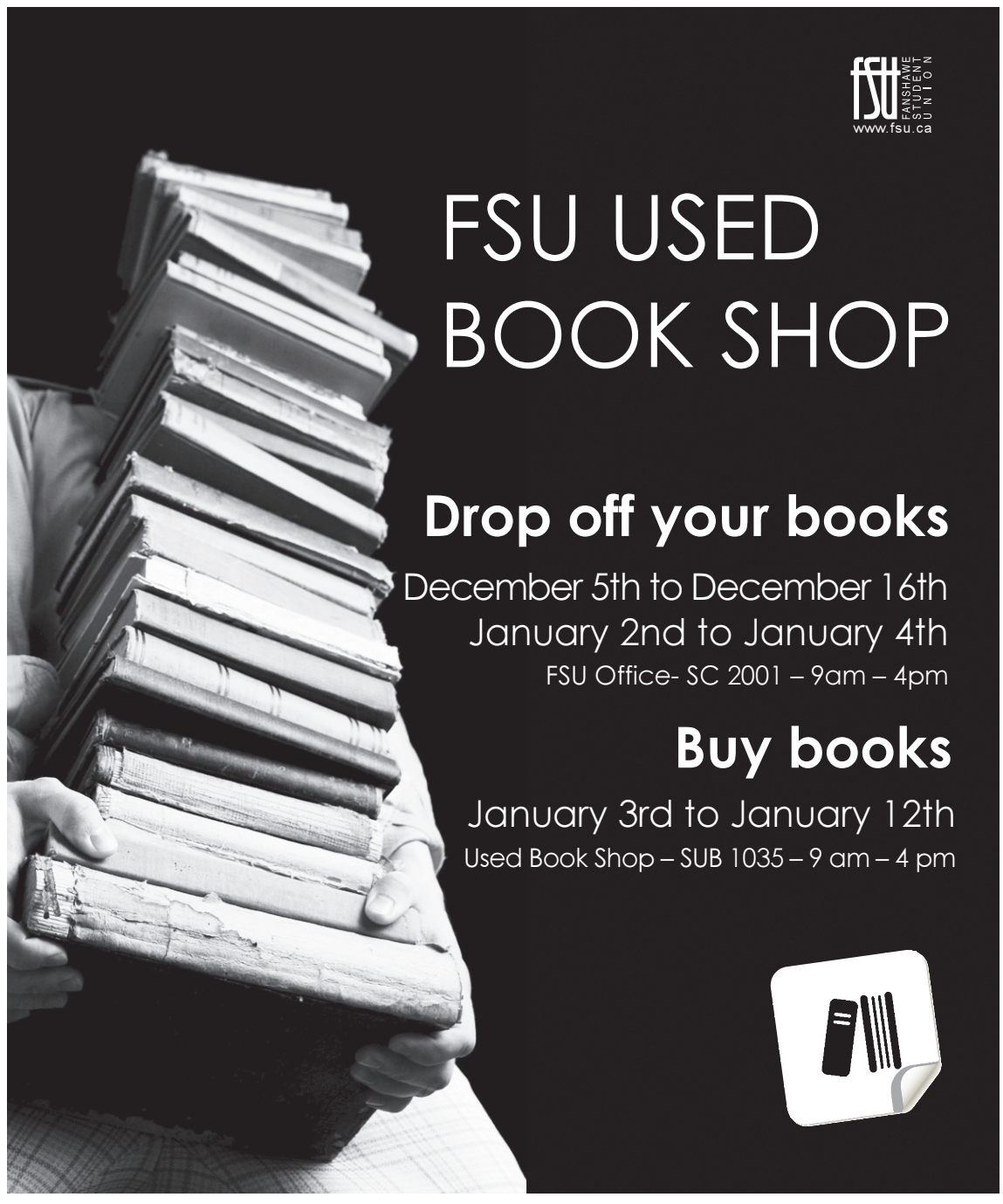
WE NEED YOUR HELP! Couple seeks egg donor. You are self-assured, vibrant, caring, generous and willing to help another in any way. Giving the miracle of life would be the utmost gift known. Please respond in strictest confidence to pat@soft-infertility.com

Going to St. Catharines/Niagara?? DO THE SHUFFLE!! Twice as fast as the train or bus! Thursdays, Fridays and Sundays. FASSSST!! $44 each way. 2.5 hours or less... DIRECT! Reservations required. www.niagarashuffle.com

FOR SALE

NINTENDO WII games for sale - TNA Impact ($3), Mario Strikers Charged ($8). Email me at acgaynor@hotmail.com

WWE HARDCOVER BOOKS for sale, all in very good condition. Hardy Boyz Exist 2 Inspire ($3), The Rock Says ($3) and Mick Foley: Foley is Good ($4). Email me at acgaynor@hotmail.com



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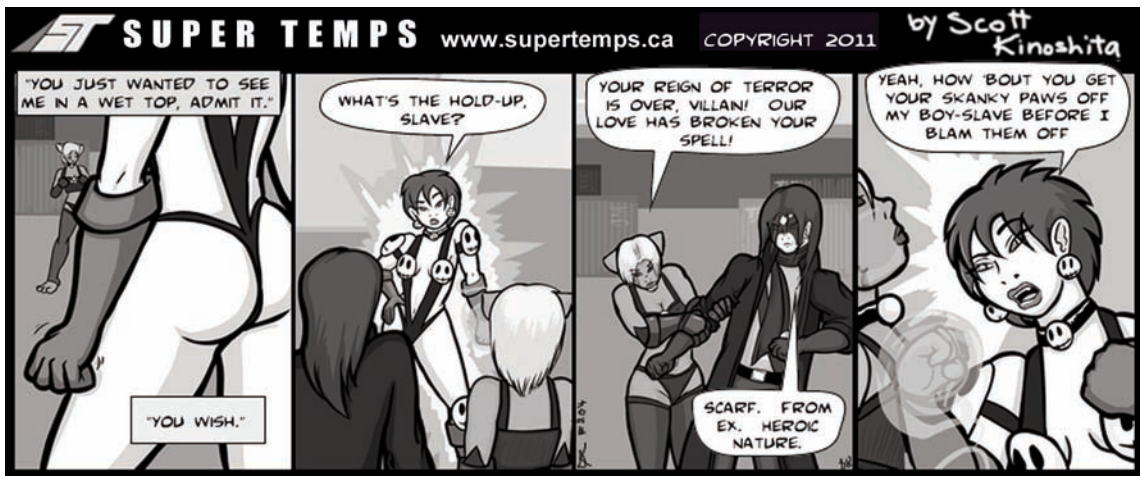
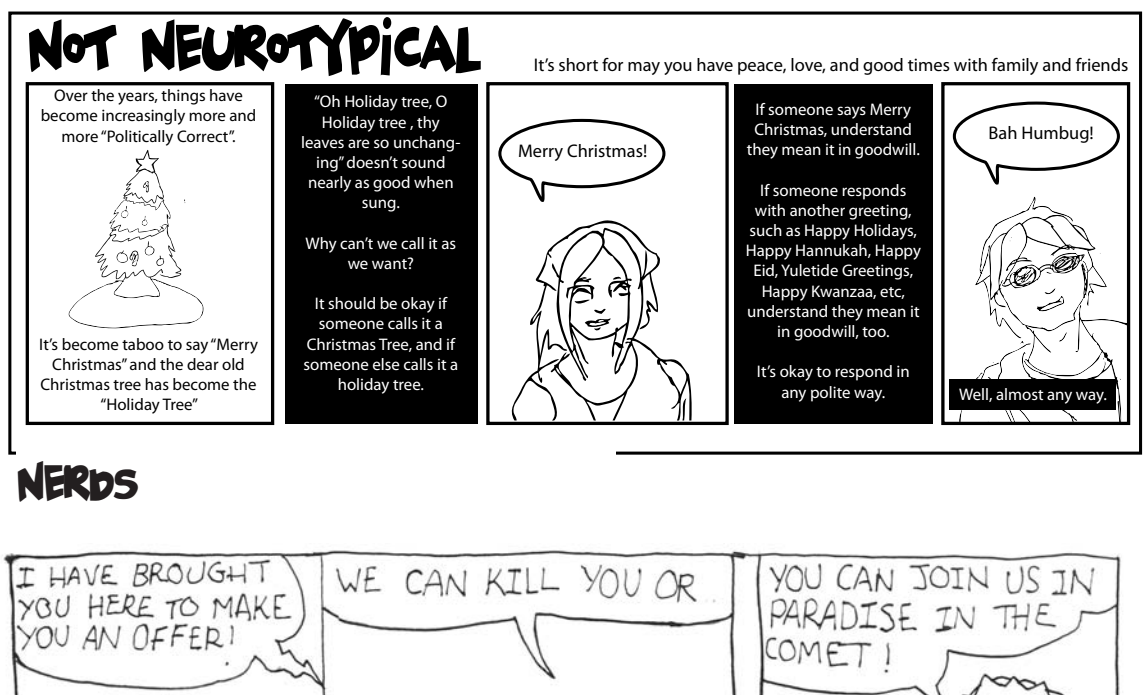




BEST IN LATE NIGHT COMIC RELIEF

LATE NIGHT with Jimmy Fallon

Over the weekend, President Obama took his daughters to a bookstore. Barack bought Malia *The Phantom Tollbooth*, while Malia bought Barack *Economics for Dummies*.

Sunday, Chargers kicker Nick Novak was caught on TV urinating on the sidelines during San Diego's overtime loss to Denver. Marking the only time fans were really glad a player didn't go for 2.

A man in Georgia was arrested for burglary after he left his Facebook account open on the victim's computer. But this is nice: He's only been in jail a few hours, and his status already says "In a Relationship!"

JIMMY KIMMEL LIVE with Jimmy Kimmel

Contrary to what people seem to believe, Regis Philbin did not retire. He was fired after they caught him stealing.

Cyber Monday is a day that every store online puts everything on sale. It's basically Black Friday for people too lazy to put on pants.

Another woman came forward with allegations about Herman Cain. I think she's number 9-9-9 now.

The food industry says the new rules give schools the flexibility to increase nutrition. The same way elastic waistbands give us the flexibility to keep in shape.

In a world where Kardashians are celebrities, maybe pizzas can be vegetables. And Twizzlers are a fruit.

THE TONIGHT SHOW with Jay Leno

This is what I love about America. In the Middle East, they take the revolution into the streets. They topple governments. They liberate the oppressors. We riot for a $2 waffle iron.

A woman claims she had a 13-year affair with Herman Cain. You know what that means? While he was fooling around with those four other women, he was cheating on his mistress.

Well, the inside talk is that Sarah Palin is going to endorse Newt Gingrich. If you think Newt is happy, you should see Mitt Romney.

As you may have heard, Conrad Murray sentenced to four years in the L.A. county jail. Or as Lindsay Lohan calls that, about a week and a half.

CONAN with Conan O'Brien

I went back to Boston to visit my family for Thanksgiving, and I cannot tell you how good it is to be back in a room full of total strangers.

It's Cyber Monday, when everyone shops online. As soon as I woke up I pepper sprayed myself.

This is a crazy story in Greenwich, Connecticut, three wealthy investors who were already worth millions won the $254 million power ball jackpot. Yeah in a related story, everyone's head at Occupy Wall Street just exploded.

A photo from one of Saturn's moons shows it may have the elements necessary for life. Isn't that cool? Yeah, the three elements found there were nitrogen, methane and Red Bull.

BUS STOP

zodiac stargazer HOROSCOPE

Aries (March 21 - April 19)

Discussion for its own sake is inspiring, but it wastes time. Work with what you know. Transform something uncertain into a finished product. Once you show, no further telling is necessary.

Taurus (April 20 - May 20)

Keep the mood light and the compliments flowing. Business happens easily when everyone is comfortable. Put on a happy face even if you have to explain something for the tenth time.

Gemini (May 21 - June 20)

You could sell coal in Newcastle or sand in the Sahara, if either sale seemed necessary to you. Gemini is convincing. Use your power for the good of the world instead of squandering it on practical jokes.

Cancer (June 21 - July 22)

Get that grievance off your chest right now. A reasonable tone and rational words will have colleagues taking you seriously. Many hands unravel a complex issue more easily than a single, tentative finger.

Leo (July 23 - August 22)

You're a leader but don't let visions of success ruin your effectiveness. Good teamwork looks a lot like a party in progress. Turn up the heat so that you can roll up your sleeves.

Virgo (August 23 - Sept. 22)

Just when you thought you'd seen the last of something useless, here it comes again. The cooperation of others is the key to your success. Try to make your case one last time, but keep it fresh.

Libra (Sept. 23 - Oct. 22)

Caring people are here for you. It's a relief and a blessing to get the respect that you deserve. You'd cheerfully spend this time soul searching, but you suddenly have guests to entertain.

Scorpio (Oct. 23 - Nov. 21)

No matter how lucky you may feel, the odds could be turning against you. Even if the game takes you far afield, never lose sight of the rules. Temptation is more exciting when you resist it.

Sagittarius (Nov. 22 - Dec. 21)

You must decide whether both sides will end up polarized or merged. A superficial approach is far from perfect, but it's better than none at all. If this whole process fails to interest you, you're probably asleep.

Capricorn (Dec. 22 - Jan. 19)

People looking for a sympathetic ear should go elsewhere. You have problems of your own, and you're not ready to whine about them. The only room that's available here is for those who pull their own weight.

Aquarius (Jan. 20 - Feb. 18)

People in search of a good time recognize each other on a primal level. Grab an opportunity with both hands and never look back. The Gemini Moon inspires recklessness, but you're still accurate as ever.

Pisces (Feb. 18 - March 20)

The view may be painful, but shying away from what's coming won't prepare you for it. Pisces gets extra points for tactfully discussing a delicate matter.

QUIRKY FACTS

1. The word Christmas is Old English, a contraction of Christ's Mass.

2. The first president to decorate the white house Christmas tree in the United States was Franklin Pierce.

3. Electric lights for trees were first used in 1895.

4. The first Christmas cards were vintage and invented in 1843, the Victorian Era.

5. *It's a Wonderful Life* appears on TV more often than any other holiday movie.

6. Rudolph was actually created by Montgomery Ward in the late 1930's for a holiday promotion. The rest is history.

7. *The Nutcracker* is the most famous Christmas ballet.

8. *Jingle Bells* was first written for Thanksgiving and then became one of the most popular Christmas songs.

9. If you received all of the gifts in the song *The Twelve Days of Christmas*, you would receive 364 presents.

10. The poinsettia plant was brought into the United States from Mexico by Joel Poinsett in the early 1800's.

11. Holly berries are poisonous.

12. Contrary to common belief, poinsettia plants are non-toxic.

13. In 1843, *A Christmas Carol* was written by Charles Dickens in just six weeks.

14. Coca Cola was the first beverage company to use Santa for a winter promotion.

15. Clearing up a common misconception, in Greek, X means Christ. That is where the word X-Mas comes from. Not because someone took the Christ out of Christmas.

16. Traditionally, Christmas trees are taken down after Epiphany.

17. More diamonds are sold around Christmas than any other time of the year.

18. Christmas pudding was first made as a kind of soup with raisins and wine in it.

19. The Christmas turkey was imported to France by the Jesuits and it is still known in some French dialects as a Jesuite.

20. Christmas Pudding originates from an old, Celtic dish known as frumenty.

21. The first Christmas stamp was released in Canada in 1898.

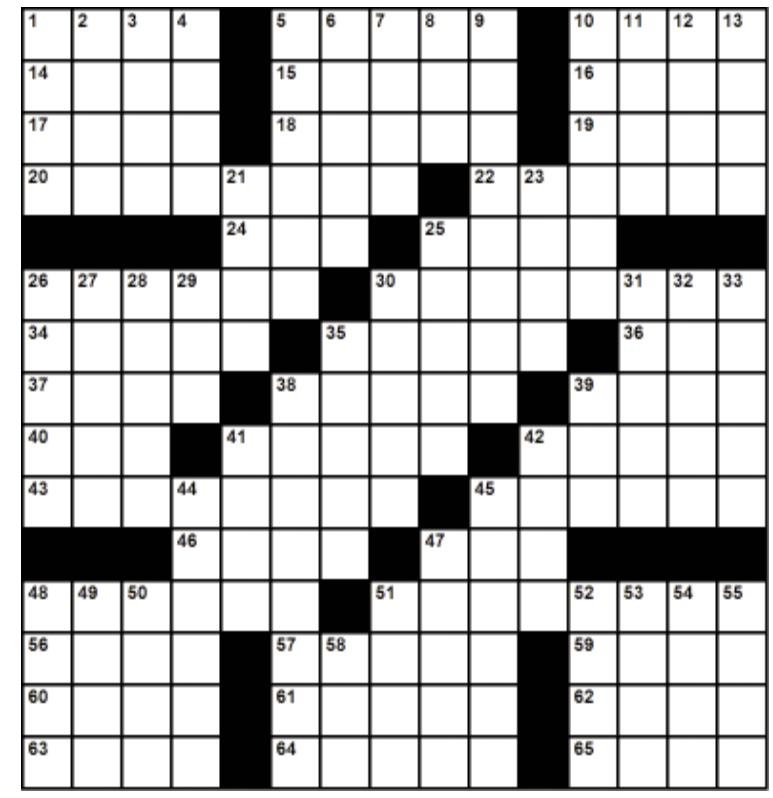
22. In Germany, Twelfth Night is known as Three Kings Day.

Sudoku Puzzle

	7				5	6		
5		3			4			9
		2	8					
		1		5	2			
	3		4		8		6	
			7	6		8		
					3	2		
3			9			5		8
		6	5				4	

puzzle rating: medium

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 grid contains the digits 1 through 9. That means no number is repeated in any column, row or box. Solution can be found on page 31.



Across

1. Square root of 81
5. Jamaican sect (abbr.)
10. Former world superpower
14. City in Oklahoma
15. Group of islands in the Gulf of Bothnia
16. Soft leather
17. Skin condition characterized by pimples
18. Short story
19. Iraq's neighbour
20. Expressing gratitude to
22. Observing
24. Compass direction
25. Excellent (2 words)
26. Edible round clam
30. Entangles in
34. Not achieved (said of a goal)
35. Operatic songs
36. Biblical priest
37. Last word of a prayer
38. Wines (informal)
39. Portend
40. ___ Diego: California city
41. Fabric of silk with a glossy surface
42. Senseless
43. Example of
45. Sports buildings
46. Accompanying
47. In the past
48. Capital of the Philippines
51. Forsakes
56. In ancient Greece, a contest for prizes
57. To a large extent
59. City in N.E. Sweden
60. Make music vocally
61. Biblical character who did not die
62. Soon
63. Leg joint
64. Capital of Yemen
65. Part of a poem

Down

1. Tidy
2. Unit of length
3. One of Columbus' ships
4. Location of first garden
5. Participating in a speed contest
6. By oneself
7. Made music vocally
8. Dynamite (abbr.)
9. Gland-like benign tumours
10. Joins together
11. Hindi dress
12. Bridge
13. Activated a bell
21. Small sandpiper
23. Change for a five
25. Negatively charged ions
26. Seemingly (comb. form)
27. Discourage
28. Endings of prayers
29. Female bird
30. Sesame Street character
31. Particularly strong man
32. Feminine name
33. Trigonometric functions
35. Name of the letter H
38. Places affording good views
39. Five minus four
41. Type of boat
42. Press
44. Sudden sharp physical pain
45. Author Christi
47. Manila hemp
48. Disguise
49. Against (informal)
50. Not any
51. A very long time
52. Twofold
53. All (comb. form)
54. Sign gas
55. Of sound mind
58. Genetic carrier (abbr.)

Solution on page 31

Word Search

B	A	W	R	E	D	D	E	H	O	L	L	Y	A	O
L	I	N	G	N	A	C	K	Y	S	C	I	V	C	N
O	S	R	T	E	M	A	N	R	N	A	U	A	G	E
E	L	P	U	C	N	I	H	R	O	S	R	A	E	O
K	S	D	R	A	C	K	S	C	W	O	P	I	O	T
A	E	F	K	A	N	Y	N	D	L	C	X	O	S	E
C	T	S	E	R	E	V	F	S	U	T	M	I	N	L
T	O	T	Y	D	E	D	A	V	N	A	V	G	I	T
I	I	N	O	N	S	H	T	A	E	R	W	K	I	S
U	R	E	N	A	B	E	P	R	E	S	E	N	T	I
R	T	M	I	L	E	A	S	T	R	O	S	V	R	M
F	A	A	E	R	I	R	T	S	A	E	U	O	S	T
L	P	N	T	A	E	G	A	N	L	S	A	Z	L	A
X	R	R	A	G	X	Y	A	D	A	R	F	R	A	B
H	R	O	N	O	T	I	U	S	U	S	E	J	N	G

SIGNS OF THE SEASON

(Words in parentheses not in puzzle)

Cards
Carols
Fruit Cake
Garland
Jesus
Holly
Mistletoe
Ornaments
Present
Santa
Snow
Tinsel
Tree
Turkey
Wreath

Volume 44 Issue No. 15 December 5, 2011 www.fsu.ca/interrobang/

Easy and festive Christmas tree brownies

ELISE COPPS-SMITH
INTERROBANG

Holiday party season is finally here and I couldn't be more excited. I'll take any excuse to get creative in the kitchen, but Christmas-themed baking really gets me going. Here's a simple, festive recipe to impress your guests without spending hours in the kitchen. You'll need:

For brownies:

- 1/2 cup butter, plus 1 tbsp.
- 1 cup white sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1/3 cup cocoa powder, plus 1 tbsp
- 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- 1/4 tsp. baking powder

1. Preheat your oven to 350°F. Grease an 8-inch round cake pan with 1 tbsp. of butter and dust it with 1 tbsp. of cocoa powder until it's coated.

2. Cream together the remaining butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Add the eggs one at a time and stir until just combined.

3. In a separate bowl, whisk together the remaining ingredients. Stir the flour mixture into the butter mixture until completely combined. Be careful not to over-mix or your brownies will be too fluffy.

If you're short on time, use a brownie mix and follow the directions on the box.

For decoration:

- 1/2 cup green chocolate wafers (you'll find these at most bulk stores)
- 1/4 cup sprinkles or small candies (again, try the bulk store)
- 8 small yellow chocolate candies

4. When your brownies have cooled, cut them like a pie into eight equal slices.

5. Put your green chocolate wafers into a resealable bag and microwave them on high for 30 second bursts. Between each blast, squish the chocolate around to help it melt. This should only take about two minutes.

6. Working one brownie at a time, snip a small hole in the corner of the bag and drizzle the chocolate back and forth across the brownie. Before it cools, sprinkle decorations into the chocolate. Put a little dab of chocolate on the back of your yellow "star" and stick it to the top of the brownie tree. Repeat this with each of your eight slices.

CREDIT: ELISE COPPS-SMITH

Festive Christmas tree brownies are a treat that is easy to make, and will surely be a hit at any Christmas party.

These will keep for a few days in an airtight container, though I can't imagine they'll last that long. But hey, they are so easy to make that you may as well whip up a forest of Christmas tree brownies!

CREDIT: NEWS.DISCOVERY.COM

Silent night? After your last exam, you can finally sleep in heavenly peace.

The All-Nighter Before Christmas

Nutrition Ambition
Emily Nixon

'Twas the night before exams, when all through the dorm
Not a student was sleeping, with essays to form;
The books were open by the laptops with care,
In hopes that ideas soon would be there.
The teachers were nestled all snug in their beds,
While visions of holidays danced in their heads;
And I in my slippers and Fanshawe sweats,
Was starting to have some study regrets.
Three hundred words written, and most of them wrong;
Why did I procrastinate for ever so long?
So much still to do for such a slow writer,
I knew that this meant pulling an all-nighter.
Empty cups of coffee litter the floor,
My roommate rolls over and gives a loud snore.
When, suddenly, what should I hear?
But a low rumbling sound, caught by my ear.
A quarter past 12, the sky is black,
The time has come for a midnight snack;
Without hesitation I head out my door,
Throw open the fridge and cutlery drawer.
A slice of pizza or left-over cake?
I suddenly had a decision to make;
Give in to temptation, or choose to be smart?
I knew what was right to do in my heart.
Some berries, granola makes a yogurt parfait,
To keep those nasty hunger pains away;
Energy restored and stomach content,
Back to the stack of books I went!
So take heed this semester,
Don't get left behind,
Eat healthy; be good to your body and mind.
And soon you will be filled with holiday cheer,
It's the end of the semester, see you next year!

Food For Thought

Prepare the ultimate holiday feast

JESSICA AND MARK WILKIE-FACCHIN
INTERROBANG

Christmas and the holiday season are upon us once more, and already dreams of sugarplums dance in our heads. Well, not really; most likely you're beginning to think about exams and getting bus tickets purchased. I've been thinking recently about all of this and I've come to realize that Christmas, while a stressful time, can be the perfect opportunity to unleash your inner foodie.

When a holiday comes around, family gathers and inevitably food is prepared and served. This year, make a splash with your family by suggesting some interesting ways of spicing up the traditional holiday feast.

The following recipes are an interesting take on some traditional dishes that are usually found on your table around the holidays. We hope this inspires you to be creative and see that sometimes even the most routine dish can be made new!

Awesome Sausage, Apple and Cranberry Stuffing

From allrecipes.com

Note: This recipe is for a 10-pound turkey.

Ingredients:

- 1 1/2 cups cubed whole wheat bread
- 3 3/4 cups cubed white bread
- 1 pound ground turkey sausage
- 1 cup chopped onion
- 3/4 cup chopped celery
- 2 1/2 tsp. dried sage
- 1 1/2 tsp. dried rosemary
- 1/2 tsp. dried thyme
- 1 Golden Delicious apple, cored and chopped
- 3/4 cup dried cranberries
- 1/3 cup minced fresh parsley
- 1 cooked turkey liver, finely chopped
- 3/4 cup turkey stock
- 4 tbsp. unsalted butter, melted

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Spread the white and whole wheat bread cubes in a single layer on a large baking sheet. Bake for 5 to 7 minutes in the preheated oven, or until evenly toasted. Transfer toasted bread cubes to a large bowl.

2. In a large skillet, cook the sausage and onions over medium heat, stirring and breaking up the lumps until evenly browned. Add the celery, sage, rosemary and thyme; cook, stirring, for 2 minutes to blend flavours.

3. Pour sausage mixture over bread in bowl. Mix in chopped apples, dried cranberries, parsley, and liver. Drizzle with turkey stock and melted butter, and mix lightly. Spoon into turkey to loosely fill.

Oranged Cranberry Sauce

From allrecipes.com

Ingredients

- 2 (12 ounce) packages fresh cranberries
- 1 orange, zested
- 3 cinnamon sticks
- 2 cups orange juice
- 2 cups packed brown sugar

Directions

1. In a medium saucepan, combine cranberries, orange zest, cinnamon, orange juice and brown sugar. Add enough water to cover, and bring to a boil over high heat.

2. Immediately reduce heat, and simmer for about 1 hour, or until the sauce has thickened. Taste for sweetness, and adjust with additional sugar if necessary. You cannot overcook, so continue cooking until you have a good thick consistency. Let mixture cool, then refrigerate in a covered container.

Angeletti Cookies

From realsimple.com

Ingredients

- 8 tbsp. (1 stick) unsalted butter, melted
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 1/2 tsp. pure vanilla extract
- 2 large eggs
- 2 cups all-purpose flour, spooned and leveled, plus more for rolling the dough
- 2 tsp. baking powder
- 1/4 tsp. kosher salt

Glaze:

- 1 1/3 cups confectioners' sugar
- 1/2 tsp. pure vanilla extract
- 2 tbsp. multicolor nonpareil sprinkles, for decoration (optional)

Directions

1. Heat oven to 375°F.

2. In a medium bowl, whisk together the butter, granulated sugar, vanilla and eggs until blended. Add the flour, baking powder and salt and mix until just combined (do not overmix).

3. With floured hands, roll level tablespoonfuls of the dough into balls and place on parchment-lined baking sheets, spacing them 2 inches apart. Bake until puffed and the bottoms are pale golden, 7 to 8 minutes. Transfer to a rack to cool completely.

4. Make the glaze: In a small bowl, whisk together the confectioners' sugar, 2 tablespoons water and the vanilla until the mixture forms a thick but pourable glaze (add more water if necessary).

5. Dip the top of each cookie into the glaze and let set, rounded side up, on a rack set over a piece of parchment paper. Sprinkle with non-pareils, if using. Allow the glaze to set, about 20 minutes. Store the cookies in an airtight container at room temperature for up to 5 days.

From both of us, we'd like to wish you a Merry Christmas and a happy holiday season. May the best of what life has to offer always find its way to your table. Until next time, happy eating!

Have questions, comments or suggestions? Feel free to e-mail us at foodforthoughtfc@gmail.com

Yummy street food in India

SHIVANI DHAMIJA
INTERROBANG

Some people eat to live, while others live to eat. That second group comes to mind when I think of Indian food. A lot of people think Indian food is just curry, but it's not – it is a variety. Every part of India has its own specialty in food items.

Part of the joy of India's rich cuisine is that it consists of thousands of regional cuisines. If we fly to North India, the specialty is Butter Chicken Curry and spicy food; South India has Idli (savoury cakes), Sambar (vegetable stew) and Dosa (rice batter and black lentil crepe); East India has Fish Curry and Momos (dumpling); and in West India you can find Vada Pav (similar to a burger), Guju food and Hyderabadi Biryani (basmati rice and goat meat). They might have unusual names that you've never heard before, but these are the specialties of India that no Indian or even a foreigner can resist.

Cuisine across India is a result of different spices, vegetables, herbs and fruits. The extensive use of onions, ginger paste and garlic paste makes the food awesome – the exotic flavours of India can make you gain a lot of weight! You don't have to step inside an air-conditioned restaurant to enjoy the flavours of India; look to the streets, where hungry citizens and visitors can grab a plate of food for just a few rupees (less than a Canadian dollar) and fill their tummies with delicious food.

To beat the exotic heat of summer, there are variety of drinks like Chuski (similar to a snow cone) in Delhi; Banta in Hrishikesh (lemon soda); Sugarcane juice in rural Bengal; Tender coconut water on Marina Beach, Chennai; the rich creamy Lassi (a savoury yogurt-based drink) of Jaipur; and many more.

The preparation and timing are very important in Indian cooking as the process is long and elaborate, but it is worth it in the end. Knowledge of India's many different cuisines is growing internationally. Check out restaurants in Brampton or Toronto, or look online for some new recipes to bring the taste of India to Canada.

Catching up with Alexa McAllister

MARTY THOMPSON
INTERROBANG

Alexa McAllister is currently a first-year student here at Fanshawe College in the collaborative nursing program with the University of Western Ontario. She is a member of the UWO Women's Lacrosse team, a team that won the Ontario University Athletics championship in October. Not only that, but the team also went undefeated all while having eight freshman on the team. McAllister was a part of a successful defense (only allowing a league low 45 goals all season) and a successful team while attending a different school.

I caught up with her to discuss how playing a university sport while not attending the university was for a first-year student.

What were those weeks like when you were training?

"Very busy. I had to bus to Western every day from 5 to 7 p.m., so I would miss half an hour at the beginning of practice. The training was basically through the practices; we would do training sessions once a week for the practice. It was a lot of travelling – pretty much every weekend we were away – so that made it really busy for me also."

What was the hardest thing about playing athletics at a different school?

"Really just the transportation, it was very inconvenient. But it was worth it in the end."

Are you happy you got to do that in your first year?

"Yeah, very happy, for sure. First of all, it was a great experience because we won the OUA championship, which was a great experience as a rookie, and I got to play a lot this year, which was also very exciting."

Do you have any advice for students looking to play athletics in their first year?

"Don't be intimidated when you go out there. I talked to the coach before to the season (started), just to discuss what it was like playing on the team. But for sure just try out and give it your best out there."

Like you said, the Western Mustangs Women's lacrosse team won the OUA Championship this year, a team you were a part of. How do you plan you do any better after your freshman year?

"Just by doing the same thing, really! Next year, the team really isn't going to change too much, so we have a really, really strong team. Hopefully we can get the same result as last year."

Best of luck for Alexa as she is still training with the lacrosse team at Western and still commuting there on a regular basis.

CREDIT: WESTERNMUSTANGS.CA

Fanshawe first-year student Alexa McAllister helped the Western Mustangs win an Ontario University Athletics championship this year. McAllister is in the collaborative nursing program.

Use your imagination to help you achieve

KIRSTEN ROSENKRANTZ
INTERROBANG

In mid-November, Dr. Natascha Wesch of Elite Mind Performance came to speak at Fanshawe about the illusion of sport. Wesch is a Mental Skills Coach and Sport Psychology Consultant for various varsity, provincial, national and international athletes.

She obtained her Ph.D. in Sport Psychology after completing a Master's degree in Exercise Physiology/Biochemistry and a Bachelor's degree in Exercise Science. Her extensive athletic history as an international rugby player, varsity hockey player and competitive gymnast has given her the practical knowledge necessary to help her support other athletes.

During her presentation, Wesch gave students advice on how to improve their physical athletic performance by taking time to focus solely on training their mind. "One of the things that happens in sport, and I think in other areas of performance, is that we spend so much time training the technical, the tactical and the physical side, and we leave the mental side to chance," she said.

One of the most useful ideas she offered students was by comparing the mind to a GPS. "If (I) want to go to Windsor, what do I plug into the GPS? Where I want to go. Do I plug in 'Don't go to Sarnia?' I could, but it's not going to take me to Windsor, it's just not going to take me to Sarnia," she said, comparing this scenario to that of a gymnast on a balance beam. "If you plug in 'I don't want to fall,' you will fall, because you're not telling your mind and body what you want it to do to get to the destination that you want," she added.

CREDIT: JACKIE NOBLE

Dr. Natascha Wesch

When imagery is used to improve mental performance, Wesch said it is like packing down a pathway in the snow. "The more you pack it down and walk the same path over and over, it becomes the last thing to melt … Imagery will do the same thing as if I were actually practicing or doing something. It will pack down the snow, make it more concrete and it will stick in my mind."

Wesch said that one of the best ways to continue packing down the snow in your mind, so to speak, is to practice imagery before you sleep because you are more likely to dream about it during the night. As Wesch puts it, you will get "More bang for (your) buck."

The techniques offered by Wesch can easily be applied to anyone. She suggests that you use imagery every day in order to improve whatever it is you are hoping to do better. "If you imagine something, then you can believe it because, essentially, that's your reality."

Ford works to Focus on the improvements

MOTORING
NAUMAN FAROOQ
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The last generation of the Ford Focus model sold in North America was, in a word, awful. It didn't look very good, had terribly uncomfortable seats and had the performance and handling of a UPS truck.

Internally, Ford knew they were about to serve the buying public a mish-mash curry made from bits and pieces of some of their other old models, and tried to dress it up with a heavy sprinkling of technology (like the SYNC system) to make the product look good.

Did it work? For a lot buyers, it did. The last Focus was not a huge seller, but it sold in big enough numbers for the production line to stay open.

However, Ford North America knew they could not pull off the same trick again with their next new Focus, and collaborated with their European division to come up with the model you see on this page today.

This model is now a Global model. Some technical and mechanical changes vary for different markets, but in general, anywhere in the world where Focus is sold, this is essentially the car you'll see.

From a visual perspective, it looks very nice. It is an attractive compact car in both its sedan and hatchback form. Personally, I much prefer the look of the hatchback version to that of its sedan sibling. My favourite design touch on this car is actually the fuel-filler door on the hatchback model and how beautifully it is integrated into the lines of its rear light cluster. Someone at Ford had their thinking cap on.

The interior is not as convincing. It looks fine and it has a lot of room, but the quality of the fit and finish is not great. It felt like they saved money on clips that hold pieces in place – not what I like seeing in a brand new car.

Thankfully, the seats have improved quite a lot over the old model, so they are fine on a long drive.

For driving you to your destination, the new Focus is currently only offered with one engine, a 2.0-litre, four-cylinder motor that produces 160 hp and 146 lb/ft of torque. This motor can either be equipped with a five-speed manual or a six-speed dual-clutch automatic gearbox.

CREDIT: FORD

The 2012 Ford Focus is sure to please buyers.

My tester hatchback came with the manual gearbox. This gearbox has a nice feel to its throws and the clutch is very easy to use, but its engine is just not very willing. Honestly it felt like the car had half the power its manufacturer quoted. Progress on the road will not be very rapid.

Thanks to its excellent chassis and suspension set-up, the new Focus handles very well, and you can certainly carry a lot of speed through twists and turns – I just wish the powertrain would compliment this car's handling abilities, but with a turbo model on the horizon, that will address this issue.

Most people who buy cars like this are more interested in fuel economy rather than power. I averaged 8.6-litres/100km in my week, which is decent, but not a class leader in this category.

Prices for the new Focus start at $15,999 for the sedan "S" model, while the base hatchback is a better-equipped "SE" trim and it starts at $19,899. In general, a similarly equipped sedan is $900 cheaper than the hatchback model.

So what is the final verdict? The new Focus is much improved over the model it replaces, but some of its competition is better still. It's not bad and it's worth a close look if you're in the market for a compact car that looks good and handles well. Good job, Ford, now hurry up with the turbo model.

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CREDIT: NATHANIEL S. BUTLER/GETTY IMAGES

Lebron James and the Miami Heat came up short in their bid for an NBA Championship, losing to Dallas.

Top sports stories of 2011

CHRIS LETHBRIDGE
INTERROBANG

Packers win the Super Bowl as a six seed

The Green Bay Packers were expected to compete for the NFC North division title in the 2010/11 season, but many were overlooking them when Brett Farve decided he was going to play one more season for the Minnesota Vikings. This team went through a lot of adversity. Five starters on defense missed most of the regular season and all of the playoffs, along with two top offensive players, running back Ryan Grant and tight end Jermichael Finley. The Packers had to win their final two games of the regular season just to make the playoffs, before winning three road games and defeating the Pittsburgh Steelers in Super Bowl XLV. It was Green Bay's fourth Super Bowl title and quarterback Aaron Rogers was named Super Bowl MVP. After starting this season 11-0 their win streak is now at 17 games.

The Miami Heat

Much like the NCAA's Michigan Wolverines of the early 1990s and their "Fab 5," the Miami Heat and their "Big 3" were expected to dominate the NBA with anything less than a championship being considered a fail. In the 2010 off-season, the Heat signed arguably the three biggest names on the free agent market: Lebron James, Dwayne Wade and Chris Bosh. These three players took a lot of criticism from analysts, fans and players for agreeing to play for the same team. For the most part, those who were not Miami fans were cheering for this team to lose. Early season struggles had this team holding a 9-8 record and it looked like their lack of depth would prevent them from being the great team they were made out to be. After a players-only meeting, the team went on a 12-game win streak and ended up finishing the regular season in second place in the east with a record of 59-24. They ran through the first three rounds of the playoffs, winning four games to one over Philadelphia, Boston and Chicago. They went on to lose four games to two in the Finals to Dirk Nowitzki and the Dallas Maveriks, making Lebron have to wait at least one more season for his first championship.

Texas Rangers' Game six collapse

Something the Texas Rangers will never forget is how close they were to winning the 2011 World Series. In the ninth inning, the Rangers had a two run lead with two outs and two strikes to Cardinals batter David Freese. Freese managed to tie the game on a triple that sent the game to extra innings. St. Louis' celebration was short lived after Josh Hamilton gave Texas the lead back with a two-run homer in the 10th inning. The Rangers had St. Louis down to their final strike once again, with two outs and two strikes, Lance Berkman hit a game-tying single, keeping the Cardinals alive. Freese would be the hero once again, hitting a walk off home run in the bottom of the 11th. The Cardinals would then go on to win game seven 6-2, capturing their 11th World Series title.

Jets return to Winnipeg

After 15 long seasons for Winnipeg hockey fans, NHL commissioner Gary Bettman confirmed on May 31 that rumours were true and the Atlanta Thrashers would relocate to Winnipeg for the 2011 season. The price was reported at $170 million, made by True North Sports and Entertainment. The team played its first game at home against the Montreal Canadiens on October 9.

Sidney Crosby's concussion

On January 1, in the fourth edition of the NHL Winter Classic, David Steckel of the Washington Capitals blindsided NHL superstar Sidney Crosby. In Crosby's next game on January 5 against the Tampa Bay Lightning, he suffered yet another hit to the head, this one delivered by Victor Hedman. After these two hits, he experienced several concussion symptoms that ended his season. There was ongoing coverage of Crosby's progress throughout the year and many wondered if he would be the next Eric Lindros and never be the same. Crosby has so far silenced his critics. As of November 29, Crosby had two goals and seven assists in just four games since returning from the injury.

Gift ideas for the hockey fan

JEREMY WALL
INTERROBANG

Christmas is fast approaching. Here are a handful of gift ideas for the discerning hockey fan in your family (or just for yourself, perhaps). All of these gifts are available for sale at nhl.com (though they can probably be found cheaper elsewhere).

Are you looking forward to the 2012 Winter Classic between the New York Rangers and Philadelphia Flyers? Well, you could always be watching it in style. There are a ton of different men's and women's shirts featuring both teams available on the Shop NHL website, everything from t-shirts to long-sleeved thermals. In fact, the NHL site has a ton of memorabilia no matter what your team is. Hate both the Rangers and the Flyers? Try a Winnipeg Jets tie. You can also customize tees, hoodies and long-sleeved shirts, personalizing them with your own name and number. Number 69 is reserved for only those with good taste.

Are you mad for Monopoly? Try the NHL-themed version of this classic board game. A zamboni instead of a car, a Stanley Cup instead of a thimble – what's not to love? Curious about which team is Boardwalk? Think most Stanley Cups. The board, however, features the Atlanta Thrashers instead of the Jets. It would have been greatly amusing if the Thrashers were Baltic Avenue, but that dubious distinction goes to the Washingon Capitals. Not a Monopoly maniac? Try Detroit Red Wings-themed Yahtzee.

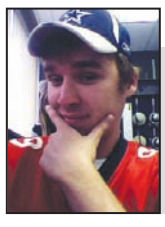
Speaking of the Jets, does the return of the NHL to Winnipeg leave you missing a few of the other teams that the NHL has passed by? Well, you could always keep the dream alive by sporting a Quebec Nordiques t-shirt or a Hartford Whalers jersey. The Nordiques shirt is $28.99 and the retro Whalers jersey is $69.99. Are you a Toronto fan, but looking for something different from the commonplace Maple Leaf? Try a Toronto St. Pats fitted hat for $29.99. Montreal fans have the option of a Montreal Maroons hat for the same price. There is a lot more retro stuff out there. I've never seen anyone sporting a Kansas City Scouts or Cleveland Barons shirt, if such things exist. Find me a California Golden Seals retro shirt and I'll be impressed.

CREDIT: HALLOFFAMEMEMORABILIA.COM

There's seriously tons of stuff available for sale on Shop NHL's website. How about Tampa Bay Lightning beer mugs? Or an Anaheim Ducks bar stool? Habs shooter glasses? Some of the most ridiculous stuff can be found in the site's "Toys & Games" section (as if Red Wings Yahtzee isn't ridiculous enough). How about a Columbus Blue Jackets garden gnome? Seriously (and it would be seriously awesome if these gnomes were autographed). Or for the serious collector in your family, a '72 CCCP puck autographed by Vladislav Tretiak.

Best advice? Ignore all this stuff and get your skates on and head outdoors for the holidays. Although if someone sent me a Tie Domi autographed Leafs garden gnome, I wouldn't complain.

Put up or shut up



NFL CZAR
JUSTIN VANDERZWAN

The NFC East was supposed to belong to the Philadelphia Eagles. With several high-powered free agents and returning stars, the Eagles were heavily favoured to win the Super Bowl as well. As it turns out, they just weren't very good, and the division will belong to either the Giants or the Cowboys.

A lot of questions will be answered in week 14 when the Giants visit Dallas to face the Cowboys for the first time this year. The Giants are trying to avoid their trademark second-half slump, and their recent losing has a lot to do with quarterback Eli Manning. His turnovers are up from earlier in the year and these mistakes are leading to points for the other team.

The Cowboys come in red-hot, with a chance to grab a stranglehold on the division with a win. This matchup will happen again in week 17, so expect a pair of very good games from these teams.

Key Matchups

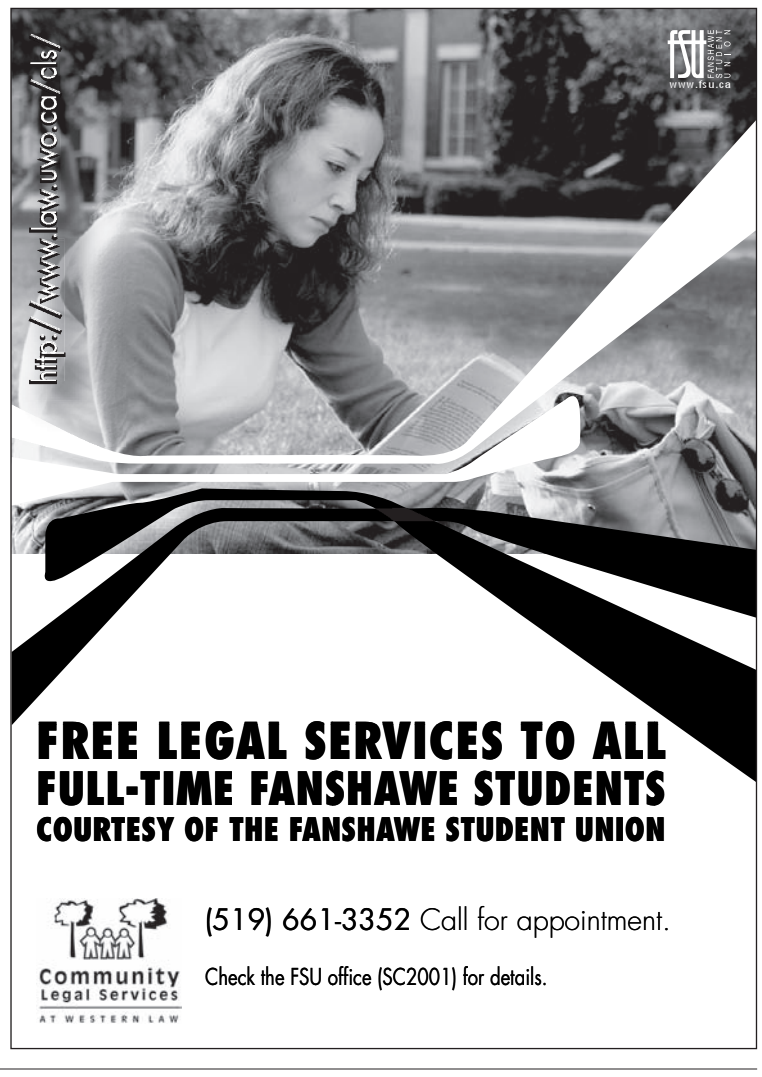
1. Giants Defensive Line vs. Tony Romo: In case you forgot, it was the Giants that injured Mr. Romo a year ago. In order to keep their run going, the Cowboys must keep Romo on the field, and that means slowing down this Giants pass rush.

2. Giants vs. Second-Half Slumps: I have no idea what happens to the Giants after week 10 or so. They just seem to lose their confidence late in seasons, and it has cost them several division titles. In order to avoid another such crumble this year (and save their coach's job), they need to stop turning the ball over and start scoring lots of points again.

3. Ahmad Bradshaw vs. DeMarco Murray: The Giants NEED Bradshaw back at 100 per cent in this one. The Giants haven't been able to run the football at all without him, and that's the main reason for Manning's recent struggles. Murray, on the other hand, has exploded onto the scene. The rookie out of Oklahoma has run over, around and through most of the opposition, and his play has helped spark Tony Romo's recent run as well.

The Rundown

This has must-win written all over it for both teams. Barring an Arizona miracle, the Cowboys will come in on a five game winning streak, so they will have all of the momentum. I think it gives them the edge, as does playing at home. I'll take the hotter quarterback (Romo) and the Cowboys 34-24.



CREDIT: OHL IMAGES

Dale Hunter coaching the London Knights beside son and Assistant Coach Dylan Hunter.

Hunter's Captial gain

AROUND THE OHL
RYAN SPRINGETT
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On November 28, the Washington Capitals had a press conference to officially announce that London Knights Coach Dale Hunter would be the new Head Coach of the Capitals. The rumours had finally been confirmed: Boudreau out, Hunter in.

Hunter finished his hockey career as a player with the Colorado Avalanche in 1999. He began his career with the Quebec Nordiques in 1981, playing seven seasons with the Nordiques. At the peak of Hunter's hockey career, he played in Washington as a Washington Capital, playing in 12 seasons with the Capitals from 1987 to 1999. His career stats, including playoffs: GP: 1593, G: 365, A: 773, Pts: 1138, PIM: 4294.

Hunter has coached the London Knights since 2001, and he has brought: one Memorial Cup (2004/05); seven Holody Trophies, Midwest Championship; two Wayne Gretzky Trophies, Western Conference Champions. His OHL Records: Most wins (59), Most Points (120), Fewest Goals Against (125). He also won the Hamilton Spectator Trophy (2003 to 2007). He won OHL coach of the year in 2003/04, 2004/05 and 2009/10, and won CHL coach of the year in 2003/04.

Without a doubt, Hunter has brought a lot to the London Knights organization; with 459 wins as Head Coach for the London Knights, he is a fitting choice for the head coaching job in the Washington Capitals' organization. Now he faces his biggest test as a head coach: how is he going to get Alexander Ovechkin going?

With a number of speculations that Ovechkin isn't performing to his potential – or for his contract for that matter – Hunter's effective power-play he brought to London for years will now be tested in Washington. His five-forward power-play is something he has done in London for years. They keep scoring and leading in the power-play goals per cent and it was a game-changer in the OHL, but how will it fit in with Washington? The fact of the matter is that they already use four forwards, with Ovechkin replacing one defenseman the huge offensive threat from the point, Mike Green. This is something Hunter shouldn't change; the chemistry is all there, and chemistry is something you do not try to change, especially when it has had so much success in the past. What Hunter needs is a new strategy for the power-play. What he has done for London is work the puck down low in the offensive zone on the power-play. This is something he may fall back on if the shots from the point are not coming.

The other side of the situation is back in London: who is going to take over as the head coach for the London Knights?

Mark Hunter was the 2003/04 OHL Executive of the Year and now former Assistant Coach to his brother Dale Hunter, and is going to be coaching the Knights until the end of the season. This will be very interesting to watch and as a hockey analysis; not only is Mark Hunter now Coach of the London Knights, he is also the Co-Owner and General Manager for the organization. This means he can do exactly what he wants to do with this club and really he has no one to answer to. Mark is a very smart hockey businessman and you can look for big shake-ups with the organization within the next two years as he tries for another push for the Memorial Cup.

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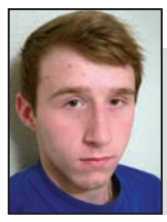
Liverpool still contending



FANSHAWE FC
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With the race for the fourth spot in the English Premier League thickening in the last couple seasons, it would be easy to dismiss the former member of the 'Big Four' Liverpool as a contending force for a spot of Europe. However, don't count out the Reds as a team that can seriously challenge in the current bottleneck between third and eighth.

A spirited Liverpool side challenged Manchester City and grabbed what was a deserving point at home on November 27 to continue an unbeaten streak of two months. Slowly, this side has been amassing points against teams like Chelsea and Manchester United without much applause. In the City game, Luis Suárez proved his worth against a difficult (to say the least) Manchester defense. He has time and time again been the best Red on the field and that match showed it once again. But it doesn't stop at the front. Dirk Kuyt is having some form of resurgence this season. Always a favourite of the Kop, he has since moved on less chances and worked more as a supporting force for either Suárez or Andy Carroll. This has worked for all parties because Kuyt has become legendary for his physical skills with the ball, yet his six-foot stature doesn't necessarily warrant him as a target man. Having him dominate one side of the field and, in the case of the City game, out play opponents on his own side of the field, makes him an asset to the squad.

CREDIT: PAUL ELLIS/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Lucas is just one effective player on this team on the rise.

The purchase of Charlie Adam seemed to be inevitable last season, and Liverpool was lucky to be a part of the deal. With the absence of Steven Gerrard, Adam has provided some creativity out of the midfield to the extent that he can dictate the game a little bit; something with Blackpool he was unable to accomplish versus the big boys. However, Adam is only the second part of the skill that this club has creatively in the middle of the park. Jordan Henderson is only 21 and has shown with his former clubs that he is a proven playmaker. His vision is like no one else's, even on this side.

Lucas is one of the best stopping midfielders in the English Premier League. According to The Guardians Chalkboard application, Lucas made 11 tackles in the match, all of which were successful. He is constantly giving great cover for both the forward band of midfielders in Adam and Henderson, but he also sits back in a way that he can cover plenty of the pitch. His tackles and interceptions officially recorded span from both sides of the pitch, all in the area between the 18-yard box and the centerline. Considering the City offense were limited to only seven opportunities on goal, Lucas played a crucial part in deconstructing any Manchester City attacking move.

Liverpool has slowly climbed back into contention for a chance in Europe. Manager Kenny Dalglish has brought this team some stability and consistency. Look for this team to consistently climb the title to a European spot in the coming months.

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