



Heart & Soul of Wellington

SENIORS' CENTRE *for* EXCELLENCE

11 Andrews Drive, West, Drayton, ON N0G 1P0

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December 2024

A Word from Helen

Helen Edwards SCE Seniors' Health Services Coordinator
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As we come to the end of another year, for those with family surrounding them, it can, indeed, be the most wonderful time of the year. For those whose families live far away, however, or those dealing with a chronic illness, or for those who have lost a loved one, December can truly be one of the hardest months to endure.

We encourage you to reach out to your friends and neighbours who may be experiencing a tough time. If you have grandchildren, engage them in the activity of creating Christmas cards to share with someone who might need a lift. Maybe you could do some baking and drop by someone who just might need a visit, and share some goodies.

Somedays, the world seems like a bit of a dark place. Be the light for someone you know this holiday season, someone who is lonely, feels forgotten, or is bereaved. Give them the greatest gift anyone can give—your time. We might think that our influence is small, but we can make a big difference in our community if we show compassion and think of others. We can help bring in the light!

happy holidays

Helen



AS YOU GROW WISER

Your hearing gets worse, but you listen a lot better.
Your sight gets blurry. But your vision becomes clearer.
You sometimes can't think of the right words, but you're no longer just throwing out any that come to mind without care.
You realize that your heart doesn't pump quite as well, but that every beat counts. Because every beat means that you are still here, still learning, and still loving, as time marches on.

—Doe Zantamata



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“Christmas, my child, is love in action. Every time we love, every time we give, it’s Christmas.”
—Dale Evans Rogers

Practically Speaking... **“All I want for a Holiday Gift is a 72-Hour Emergency Kit!”**



Helen Edwards SCE Seniors' Health Services Coordinator

After we have been present on this earth for many years, it seems we accumulate a lot of “stuff.” Most people tell me that most of what surrounds them doesn’t really mean that much to them anymore. When I was a teenager, I remember my dad saying, “Please, no more soap on a rope!” This perplexed me as soap on the rope was my go-to for all occasions. I mean, *couldn't he just shower more often?* ... my younger self thought.

Now that we approach another time of both giving and receiving, when someone asks what they can get you, rather than saying, “I don’t need anything” or adding to the “more stuff” pile, why not use this opportunity to build your own Home Emergency Kit?

We know that the weather is become more unpredictable of late. As I write this article, recently a tornado touched down in Fergus. Everything cowers to the power of Mother Nature when such events occur.

Wellington County Emergency Management recommends building a 72-hour Emergency Kit in case you need to shelter in place or leave your home immediately.



Your kit should contain essential items for you, your family, and your pets to survive for a minimum of three days or 72 hours at home. Perhaps it is time to start creating your kit, and a few suggested Christmas gifts just might help.

Here is a list of items you could suggest, after hearing the inevitable question:

- Three day supply of drinking water
- Non-perishable food, including for your pets
- Cash
- Flashlight
- Batteries
- Phone charger
- Can-opener
- Battery powered or crank radio
- First aid kit and emergency blanket
- Personal toiletries (tooth brush, prescription glasses etc.)
- Prescriptions and special medical supplies*
- Candles and matches/lighter
- Hand sanitizer or moist towelettes
- Important personal papers
- Extra car and house keys
- Whistle (to attract attention, if needed)
- Copy of your emergency plan and contact information



**Ensure your medications are written down and stored in an easily accessible location.*

While these suggested gifts may seem slightly boring, they are practical, and in the case of a true emergency you will be glad that you have them. Of course you could stay silent and receive more “stuff.” The choice is really yours.





If I share my eggnog that means you're "Egg-stra special" to me.



Getting Caught in a Snow Storm

Submitted by Seleda Frey

Living in southwestern Ontario means part of winter life is dealing with snow storms. I have had several harrowing experiences, but I think the worst happened one day, about 20 years ago, when it wasn't even officially winter.



My plan was to go to Listowel in the morning, then head to Waterloo to do Christmas shopping, and in the evening go to our son's home, where my daughter-in-law was going to have an *Epicure*TM home party. The weather prediction was for a storm to come up in the afternoon, and my husband's advice was to come home at noon and do my shopping another day.

But at noon the weather wasn't bad at all. Hey, it's still November, and it will probably be one of those times when they make a big fuss and it won't amount to much after all, I thought to myself.

I happily did my shopping, blissfully unaware that a storm had indeed blown in. It wasn't until I headed out to our son's home near St. Agatha that I realized how foolish I had been. Of course, the home party had been cancelled, and the host offered for me to stay overnight. I called my husband to see what the weather was like in Moorefield. He didn't use the words "I told you so," but his tone let me know what he thought. I don't think, from the shelter of our home, that he realized just how bad it was, or he would have told me to stay put. I decided to head for home.

Visibility was dreadful or nonexistent, but turning around seemed unwise, so I crept along. Sometimes I had tail lights to follow and as I turned onto the road to Moorefield I said, "Lord, I could sure use some tail lights right about now." Just then a truck that had been parked on the side of the road pulled out ahead of me, much to my relief. I followed it into Moorefield and eventually arrived home safely. After that experience, I paid more attention to weather warnings—and also my husband's advice.



The Stockings Were Hung ...



Jan Pinny, sadly, passed away on June 30 of this year. We are thankful she submitted this Christmas story to us. We are sure she would be thrilled that we published it in our December 2024 Newsletter.

At the age of 18 months in November of 1953, I was adopted in Toronto. My mother lovingly made me a red flannelette Christmas stocking with my name cut out and hand stitched across the white top. Every year it was filled to the brim. My brother was adopted the year after me. Mom made an identical stocking with his name on it. Each Christmas morning our stockings magically appeared, hanging on the fireplace screen, but the rule was that you could open your stocking and eat and unwrap whatever was there, but no touching the bigger gifts!



That gave my parents longer to sleep. Even better, we were set loose on an array of little toys, fruit, nuts and chocolate, all of which often captured our attention for the entire day.

We cherished those stockings. They were folded up and hidden away until the following year. One Christmas, though, we came downstairs to find the fireplace screen was bare. No stockings. We searched high and low until it suddenly occurred to us that we must have been so bad that Santa didn't even leave us our stockings. That conclusion set us to weeping and howling. Hearing all the ruckus, my parents came running fearing a major problem. When we explained our dilemma they began to laugh. "Dry your tears," they chuckled. "Santa thought you were so good this year that he put extra in your stockings and they were too heavy to hang on the screen. He told us he would leave them on the dining room table." Crisis averted.

Over the years my stocking began to fray and look a little shabby, but to me it was a cherished memento and I would not give it up. I was in my forties by then. I took my stocking home with me that year. I overstitched all the edges, reinforcing them. After that I continued to bring my stocking home each year to be filled. That is until I came home one year and my mother had done nothing about preparing for Christmas at all, her favourite holiday. That was when I realized she was descending slowly into dementia. After that I filled my own stocking and took it home with me, even after she was moved to a care facility. It reminded her what day it was, and even if she didn't remember, she got pleasure out of watching me open my gifts, and out of opening those in her own stocking.

After my parents passed, I tried to fill my stocking that Christmas, but it had become a sad activity by then. Every year I would bring it out as a decoration and my friends would ask about it. Last year a friend enquired about whether I still had it. "Of course," I said, laughing at my own sentimentalism. Then she asked if she could take it home with her. She and her family were coming to our place Christmas morning and we had planned on making a late breakfast. Of course I was looking forward to our socializing, but I must admit, what I was really excited about was seeing my stocking back, filled, glowing red and white, even after all these years. (Thank you, Mom.) xoxo



Homemade Hot Chocolate

(Previously Published in *The Wise & Well Calendar*, Dec. 2024)

INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups milk
- 2 tbsp unsweetened cocoa powder
- 2 tbsp granulated sugar
- 1/4 cup chocolate chips
- 1/8 tsp vanilla extract

METHOD:

1. Gently warm the milk in a saucepan over medium-low heat.
2. Whisk in cocoa powder and sugar and heat until warmed.
3. Once the milk is warm, add chocolate chips and whisk until they melt into the mixture.
4. Add a splash of vanilla extract for the perfect finish.
5. Serve immediately, garnished with your favourites: marshmallows, whipped cream, chopped chocolate, or crushed candy canes. *Serves two.*



Thinking of all our Beautiful Friends this Holiday Season!

Merry Christmas Happy Hanukkah Joyous Kwanzaa Yuletide Greetings Happy Holidays
Joyeux Noël Feliz Navidad Seasons Greetings Happy New Year Joy Celebrate Be merry



Activities Spotlight

Here's a Sneak Peek into our upcoming ...

Wisdom Series Workshops



SENIORS' CENTRE for EXCELLENCE



SENIORS' CENTRE for EXCELLENCE

Wisdom Series Workshops



December 3, Tuesday:

True Colours Discover your Personality – Arthur Library. 10:30 am – 12:30 pm

December 6, Friday:

Beautiful gifts on a Shoestring Budget - Harriston Library, 1.00 pm – 3.00 pm

ALWAYS ...

For information
or to register,
contact:

- Free Admission
- Refreshments

→ jbrown@mapleton.ca

519-638-1000



Ontario

Hospice
Wellington™
YOUR STORY MATTERS

Surviving the Holidays



- **Be self compassionate**—incorporate self care, recognize what is causing stress, only take on tasks you want to and are capable of
- **Anticipate**—this is a year unlike any other and it will feel different than years past.
- **It's ok to be sad and happy**—you have lost someone and it hurts but you also may feel some joy.
- **Share** with the people around you, how you feel.
- **Prioritize yourself**—what do you need this season? What would be comforting to you? What is important to you?
- **Say no, or yes or maybe**—recognize that some days, some moments may be easier than others. You are not obligated to do what you have in the past.
- **Ask for the support of others**—people are often looking for ways to support others, ask for help.
- **Find the beauty**—this season will not be easy, but there will be something to be grateful for.



“A little bit of light dispels a lot of darkness.”

—Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi



Pet Corner

(Sir) **KATNISS**

Submitted by Warren Brown



There's not much to be said about Katniss (a.k.a.—Kat.) He's a good looking cat and weighs 18.1 pounds. I know this, as he likes to sit on the scales.

Yes, Katniss is a big cat. To put it into perspective, I'd say a small Maine coon. His sister, Sidney, is half his size, but does manage to get the occasional swipe in to put him in his place—poor cat.

When he's not sleeping, Katniss likes to caterwaul, and if he was on the TV show, *The Voice*, he would probably get a four-chair turn. His favourite time for 'singing' is somewhere around 6 am to 8 am. Once fed though, Kat generally goes back to sleep.

He loves to lie in the sun, which usually hits the stairs around 9am, basically just in time for me to trip over him so I can go flying down the stairs.

His other passion is to go walking on his leash, and to his credit, he's really good. Even when it snows you'll see his tail showing his position while he walks in the snow. It makes his day when he sees the red leash being taken off the hook, and he even starts purring in anticipation of the excitement.

In the morning, it's boys' time and that means that Katniss and I will sit on the recliner watching the morning news. He's a very polite cat, in that he actually waits for consent to climb aboard. Not so lucky for my wife though, as he just climbs up on her chair using her legs as a ladder—bring on the Polysporin®!



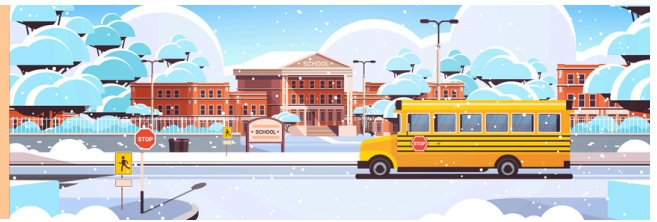
Although kind of lazy, he does like a good puzzle or two, especially if it has treats inside. He has a “treat ball” that you can fill with treats and the idea is that he rolls it around the room to release the treats as the cat plays with the ball. Not Katniss! He's figured out that if he just sits next to the ball and puts his paw on top, he can roll the ball around without all the needless exercise and the treats still come out.

I guess I'll have to take Katniss for what he is—a very smart, cuddle cat. At least he's not interested in buying and selling shares like his sister (long story), but he does like to “Zoom-bomb” my wife whenever she tries to teach on Zoom. I suppose he likes all the female attention. 😊




***PLEASE NOTE.**

In case of inclement weather, if school buses are not running in North Wellington, then our Dining and Coffee Programs will be cancelled, too.)



For more information or to register for any of the Dining Programs, please contact the office at 519-638-1000 or send an email to hedwards@mapleton.ca

DINING PROGRAM	DATE	TIME - COST	LOCATION	GUEST SPEAKER OR EVENT
Palmerston 	Wed. Dec. 18	12 pm \$20	James St. United, Palmerston	The Haywards Christmas Musical Entertainment 

Join us for Coffee!



No need to register for Coffee Hours!

COFFEE PROGRAMS	DAY	TIME	LOCATION
MOOREFIELD COFFEE	December 4 & 18	10:30 am	Maryborough Community Centre, 15 Ball Avenue
DRAYTON COFFEE HOUR	December 5 & 19	10:30 am	Selah Centre 24 Wood St., Drayton

Decluttering with Doris

Doris Cassan



Do you know about Love Languages? There are five defined by Dr Gary Chapman: words of affirmation, acts of service, receiving gifts, quality time, and physical touch. If we give the desired type of gift for Christmas, we spare our loved ones the clutter of things they don't really want and that don't make them feel loved anyway!



**For the Love of Words . Wednesday, December 18.
7 pm via Zoom**

Do you love words? Come join us. We are a non critiquing group of creative writers. Once a month we meet and spend about an hour reading our work to each other and then we do a spontaneous writing exercise in real time.

If this sounds like something you'd like to do, please email Doris Cassan at 4luvwrds@gmail.com to receive the ZOOM link for the upcoming meeting.

December Writing Prompt



Christmas Past

- Do you have memories of Christmases that are hard to forget, for good reasons or otherwise?
- Any funny Christmas memories?

Describe those times and the lasting impact of them. Then dwell in the present and enjoy Christmas 2024.

Doris 



L.O.S.T. Phone Tips

(Part 1)

by Michael Meunier



Here are four steps you can take BEFORE your phone goes missing:

L is for **LOCK-DOWN**

At minimum, you should require a password to unlock your phone. You can also add similar requirements to important individual apps – like your Banking Account or WhatsApp – to protect your personal finances or private chats.

O is for **OPEN** the “Find My” Feature. This feature is available for both Apple and Android.

For Apple phones:

- Open the Find My app.
- Choose Devices or Items.
- Select your lost device or item to find it on a map. If you belong to a *Family Sharing* group, you can also find a family member's device or shared item. Choose Directions to open its location in Maps.

For Android phones:

- On another Android phone or tablet, open the Find My Device app.
- Sign in.
- From the listed devices, select the device you want to locate.
- You may be prompted to provide the lock screen PIN

S is for **SAVE Important Information**

You probably have many precious photos saved on your phone’s camera roll. It’s a good idea to back them up, along with contacts, calendar items and other files.

Google and Apple offer cloud-based backup services, although their free versions have limited storage space. You can also back up your files to an external hard drive, memory card or a laptop.

T is for TAKE NOTE of your Phone's Serial Number.

Also known as an IMEI number, this number can prove your ownership of the phone if it does eventually get recovered. You can retrieve this number, with your phone in hand, by typing *#06# on your phone's keypad.

Next month, we'll share four steps you can take AFTER your phone goes missing, especially if you suspect that it's been stolen...



SENIORS BUS TOURS

MOOREBAND HOLLY JOLLY CHRISTMAS SHOW

Drayton Reformed Church

**For
Seniors
55+**

**Wednesday,
December 18**



Cost: \$25, includes ticket to show and bus transportation
Bus pick ups in Mount Forest (5:30 PM) and Arthur (5:50 PM)
Tickets must be booked by December 9 on Eventbrite



For more information, contact
Janice Benson at 519-314-7579 or
jbenson@wellington-north.com

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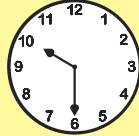
ZOOM with us!



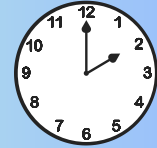
SENIORS' CENTRE for EXCELLENCE

To get on the ZOOM list, contact gbelec@mapleton.ca or call 519-638-1000

Tuesday



Thursday



December 3, 2024

Mike McGill WCMA

Christmas Traditions in Wellington County



December 5, 2024

Lynda Alexander

Christmas Crafts on a Budget



December 10, 2024

Marlene

New Hope Cat Rescue



December 12, 2024

Rachel Benning.

Christmas "Past" Fashion



December 17, 2024

Juliana Van Osch Registered Dietitian

Cooking with Julianna



December 19, 2024

TBA

Thank you!



As we look forward to the holidays, we want to take a moment to say a collective thank you to **YOU**, our friends, for all the support and encouragement.

Your friends at the Seniors' Centre for Excellence look forward to serving you well in 2025!



The Tale of the SCE Holiday Hours

T'was a few weeks before Christmas
And all through the county
The Seniors were thankful for their SCE bounty.
They'd enjoyed some good programs from dining to fairs
They'd learned at a workshop how to stay safe upon stairs.

But then the big question, they shuddered to say
When are you closing for your holiday?
"We're happy to help and so glad that you asked
On Christmas Eve day we'll perform our last task.
Then we'll be off until the new year
On January 2 - we'll all reappear!"



**Office closes Noon on December 24, 2024
Office opens January 2, 2025**

Helen, Johanna, Glynis →



REMINDER

Harriston Dining Program is changing from the last Friday to the last Thursday of the month in 2025.



If you want to check out past issues of our Heart & Soul Newsletter Archives, click [HERE](#)

