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## Groups want \$18 minimum wage

Page 3

# THE RECORD

THE VOICE OF THE EASTERN TOWNSHIPS SINCE 1897

## Chickens outdo technology

Page 4

\$1.00 + TAXES PM#0040007682 WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 29, 2021

## Wales Home residents isolated after employees test positive

By Geoff Agombar  
Local Journalism Initiative

The Wales Home announced Monday that two employees tested positive for COVID-19 and residents of the Central unit had been put into preventative isolation.

That made Central the sixth of Wales Home's six units to enter preventative isolation in under a week.

On Dec. 22, two employees working in units Norton 1 & 2, Shaw/Manning 1 & 2 had tested positive, triggering preventive isolation and testing. Then, a third employee who had contact with residents in Norton 3 tested positive. A fourth tested positive on Dec. 23 and five of six units have been in preventative isolation since.

CONT'D ON PAGE 3

## Quebec says some COVID positive health workers to stay on job, with conditions



FACEBOOK

The Canadian Press

Quebec's health minister says some health workers who have tested positive for COVID-19 will be allowed to stay on the job as the Omicron variant sweeps through the province.

Christian Dubé says the decision will be made on a case-by-case basis and under certain conditions.

Dubé says the province has little

choice in the matter because the health care system cannot maintain services while thousands of workers are at home isolating due to a positive COVID-19 test or exposure to the virus.

Quebec shattered its previous pandemic record with 12,833 new cases of COVID-19 on Tuesday, while reporting 15 deaths and an 88-person jump in the number of people who are hospitalized with the novel coronavirus.

Dubé said the real number of cases is likely much higher because testing capacity is limited and the province doesn't register the results of rapid tests.

He announced the province is also expanding eligibility for third doses of vaccine, beginning Wednesday with more groups of essential workers and gradually expanding to the entire adult population beginning Jan 4.



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## Weather



TODAY:  
MAINLY SUNNY

HIGH -4  
LOW -12



THURSDAY:  
PERIODS OF  
SNOW

HIGH 1  
LOW -4



FRIDAY:  
CLOUDY

HIGH 4  
LOW -1



SATURDAY:  
PERIODS OF  
RAIN OR SNOW

HIGH 6  
LOW -9



SUNDAY:  
60 PER CENT  
CHANCE OF  
FLURRIES

HIGH -6  
LOW -19

## HAND IN HAND

# Townshippers' Foundation



The Townshippers' Foundation is nearing the end of its annual Capital Campaign but we are always appreciative of donations received throughout the year. Ninety percent of monies we receive are given out in the form of project grants.

The deadline for applying for grants is January 31st. Project criteria can be found on our website listed below. These requests are reviewed by a committee during the month of February and recommendations are presented to the Board of Directors for final discussion and approval in early March. Covid 19 restrictions did not allow the Foundation to hold its annual grant giving luncheon in Magog for the last two years. We sincerely hope that the spring of 2022 will bring us together to share what our project volunteers are doing. We must point out that many of the projects were very creative and adapted their activities to the restrictions: A very positive approach.

For many years we have helped groups with their fundraising by creating Partnerships. We have three application deadlines: January 31st, June 1st and October 1st. Requests which meet our partnership criteria allow groups to give charitable receipts issued by the Foundation. We withhold a percentage of these funds to offset administrative expenses.

The Foundation and its sister organizations have had a very interesting two years. Pre-pandemic

all of the groups were forced to move due to severe water damage to the building on Queen Street. Staff worked from home and managed to maintain a positive work schedule. January 2020 saw the move to the new location on College Street and just as everyone was back, mid-March saw everything close down due to Covid 19. The one bright spot was that staff had been working from home so it was a smaller adjustment to working at a distance but now meetings took place via Zoom. The building is still closed to the public but more staff members are coming in so the building is beginning to feel like the community groups center it is.

We at the Foundation have also had a major change with the retirement of our long-time Executive Assistant, Mary Gunter, who has taken a well deserved retirement. Donors and partnership groups have working with Mrs. Gunter for many years and we know appreciate all the support she gave them. We would like to take this opportunity to introduce

our new Administrative Assistant, Fatima Pugganwala, who will be working for both the Foundation and the Townshippers' Association while pursuing her Business studies at Bishop's University.

We thank Global Excel and the Sherbrooke Record for giving non-profit organizations the opportunity to let the public know more about what we do. We would be remiss if we did not thank our donors who make everything we do possible. It always amazes us that we are able to help so many groups across the Townships with these donations. The Foundation wishes a Happy Holiday season to everyone.

We can be contacted via telephone at 819-822-3314 or via email at [trcf@townshippers.org](mailto:trcf@townshippers.org). Donations may be made by mailing a cheque to 3355 College Street, Sherbrooke, Qc, J1M 0B8, through CanadaHelps (accessible through [www.townshippersfoundation.ca](http://www.townshippersfoundation.ca)) or via an e-transfer at [trcf@townshippers.org](mailto:trcf@townshippers.org).



Grant recipients from a pre-pandemic ceremony held in 2017

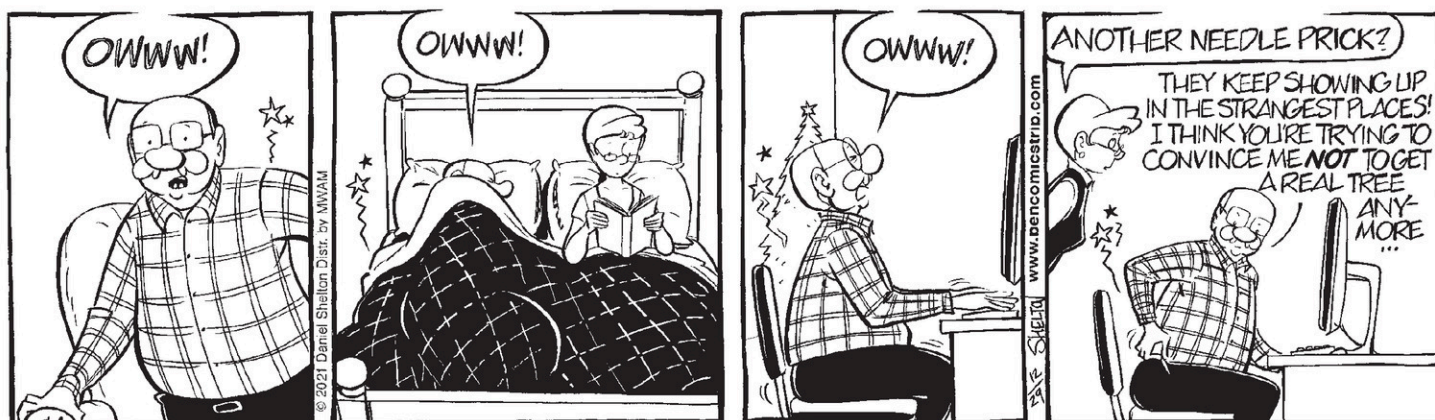
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## Ben by Daniel Shelton



## Local News

For 96 residents in the CHLSD units and an additional 60 in the residential units, today represents either a second or third test since entering isolation after last week's positive cases among employees.

## Community groups call for raise in Quebec minimum wage to \$18

By Joel Goldenberg  
Local Journalism Initiative

Community groups in the province want the Quebec government to raise the provincial minimum wage by \$4.50 to \$18 an hour.

A statement from the Syndicat de la fonction publique et parapublique du Québec (SFPQ) says that a "new consensus is emerging within the Quebec labour and community movement- the minimum wage must be raised to \$18 an hour, in order to ensure that a single person working 35 hours a week can work and escape poverty."

The other groups signing on to the statement are le Collectif pour un Québec sans pauvreté, le Front de défense des non-syndiqués, le Centre des travailleurs et travailleuses immigrants, the FTQ, the CSN, the CSD, the APTS and the SPGQ.

The SFPQ statement adds that Premier François Legault is being asked to "take into account the current economic realities when announcing the next increase in the minimum wage, expected in the days to come."

"This update became necessary due to the increase in the cost of living in recent years. Despite rendering the earlier demand for \$15 an hour obsolete, it reveals the even more inappropriate status of the current minimum wage of \$13.50."

"There is no reason, neither economic nor moral, for a person working full time in Quebec to be forced to live in poverty," coalition representatives said. "It is the responsibility of our government to ensure that all Quebecers can, through their work, live in dignity."

The group representatives added that "the pandemic revealed the essential role of staff for the food

supply chain and retail. However, a large proportion of these people, mostly women, have to hold jobs that are underpaid, but they are still unable to make ends meet to support their families. By not intervening directly through the increase in the minimum wage, the government is approving of this economic marginalization, this social exclusion of hundreds of thousands of workers, as well as that of their children."

The groups also said that the "current strength of the economic recovery and the omnipresent problems of shortage and scarcity of labour considerably favour such a rise in the minimum wage" adding that "the restaurant and retail trade sectors, although representing only 17 percent of total employment in Quebec, alone account for 44,000 vacant positions, or 23 percent of the jobs that need to be filled in Quebec. The average offered wages

for these positions is \$15.07 an hour, well below the average of \$21.80 for all vacant positions — and well below the average wages in all of Quebec, which stands at \$28.52."

The groups announced that "other labour and community organizations are expected to join the coalition in the coming days. This is the case with the CSQ, which will vote in mid-December."

However, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB) recently released a consultation saying that an \$18 an hour minimum wage could negatively impact nine of 10 small and medium-sized businesses.

CFIB Quebec vice-president François Vincent told the media that Quebec SMEs have had significant operating cost increases, and that half of these businesses have not regained their usual revenue amounts.

## 'Is it reasonable and why?'

### Parents sue Quebec over Covid decree banning unvaccinated teens from sports

Martin C. Barry  
Local Journalism Initiative

More than 100 families from across Quebec — including some from Laval — are suing the provincial government over a National Assembly decree which forbids their children from taking part

in extra-curricular group sports or physical activities if they haven't been vaccinated against COVID-19.

The families who have signed on maintain that the fundamental rights of their children are being violated by the government's insistence their teenage children must have vaccine passports.

National Assembly decree

The decree, which was passed by the National Assembly on Sept. 1, effectively forbids children 13 years of age and older from taking part in sports competitions, in organized leagues or in tournaments.

The claim, filed at the Montreal courthouse last month, maintains that

the decree unjustifiably impedes upon several of their children's fundamental rights and liberties and that it thus must be declared non-applicable in part.

Gatineau, QC lawyer Me William Desrochers is presenting the case of more than 100 parents from across

CONT'D ON PAGE 5

## Wales Home

CONT'D FROM PAGE 1

All positive cases were among staff, however, not residents.

In fact, Wales Home has yet to record a single positive Covid case among residents since the pandemic began nearly two years ago.

"Zero residents have tested positive," reports executive director Brendalee Piironen. "All of our residents to date, touch wood, have been negative, so we hope it continues."

Reached by phone Tuesday around 1:30 p.m., Piironen says Public Health has been on site since 9 a.m. conducting PCR tests on residents and staff. She predicts they will be finished within the hour and expects results within a day.

"When we're being tested, it's really a priority. We should have all the results within 24 hours," Piironen explains.

The Wales Home has about 200 residents and 140 active employees.

Preventative isolation means residents have to stay in their rooms, "if they are capable," Piironen nuances, referring to special cases

of CHSLD and Central residents with dementia who cannot understand the need to isolate. Employees have to wear a gown, gloves, mask, and visor while caring for individual residents in isolation, and must change gown and gloves between every resident.

A resident can name up to four primary caregivers, but in preventive isolation only one primary caregiver may visit per 24 hours, per resident. Like the employees, they have to don a gown, gloves, mask and visor, and remove them when they leave the unit.

For the 12 residents of the intermediary care Central unit, today is the first round of PCR testing. Assuming they test negative today, they are not expected to be eligible to come out of isolation for at least seven days, at which time they must test negative a second time.

For 96 residents in the CHLSD units and an additional 60 in the residential units, today represents either a second or third test since entering isolation after last week's positive cases among employees.

Previous rounds have not turned up any positives among the residents, so Piironen is eager for good news, "Then, hopefully, we can release some of the measures. Hopefully, we could release five of the six floors off of preventative isolation."

All Wales Home's residents have been triple vaccinated. "Before Christmas, they came to do the last 15 residents who did not have their third vaccine yet, and they had four extra doses so I was lucky to get one too," says Piironen. She knows some of the staff have received their booster already and others have booked appointments. They are eligible as health care workers, and the delay between second and third shots has been shortened from six weeks to three.

Piironen also feels lucky to have a dedicated team. She credits her employees for the Wales Home's success in keeping the coronavirus out. At the same time, she is nervous about the latest variant knocking at the door.

"I think we have been a role

model," Piironen says. "We put in measures before the government recommended the measures, and our employees have been extremely vigilant."

"I don't know how long our success record will last," she admits. "There might be a little guardian angel up there, but I believe our employees, because of their due diligence, because of their dedication and hard work, they're the ones who've kept the covid out of the building."

"With the new variant, which seems to be the real coronabeast, it could be out of our control. I spoke to the two employees that just tested positive last night, and they have no idea how they caught it," Piironen says. "They've been at home for two days. They had their Christmas statutory holidays on the Thursday and Friday, and they came in on the weekend (and tested positive)."

"We're doing the best that we can, and it's so much work. Our employees already had a very heavy workload, and now it's just added to that."

# Nature Conservancy of Canada suggests leaving your Christmas tree in your backyard

## Spread year-round holiday cheer to backyard wildlife

If you'd like to prolong the holiday spirit and share the gift of giving with wildlife, then the Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC) has a suggestion. This year, instead of bringing your local, native Christmas tree to the curb, the not-for-profit, private land conservation group suggests putting it in your own backyard.

Samantha Knight, national conservation science manager for NCC, says leaving it in your backyard over the winter can provide many benefits for backyard wildlife. Your tree can provide important habitat for bird populations during the winter months, especially on cold nights and during storms.

It is one of the Nature Conservancy of Canada's ideas to help nature in your backyard – in its Small Acts of Conservation program.

The first step in letting nature help you recycle your Christmas tree is to put it anywhere in the backyard. Prop it up near another tree, against a fence or lay it in your garden. You can even get the family involved by redecorating it with pinecones filled with peanut butter, strings of peanuts and suet for birds to enjoy. These delicious decorations will provide food for birds while they find shelter in the tree.

“Evergreens offer a safe place for

birds to rest while they visit your feeder,” says Knight.

“Another benefit is that if you leave the tree in your garden over the summer, it will continue to provide habitat for wildlife and improve your soil as it decomposes.”

By spring, the tree will have lost most of its needles, resembling a Charlie Brown Christmas tree. Simply cut the tree branches, lay them where spring flowers are starting to emerge in your garden and place the trunk on soil, but not on top of the flowers.

Knight says the tree branches and trunk can provide habitat, shelter wildflowers, hold moisture and help build the soil, mimicking what happens with dead trees and branches in a forest. Toads will seek shelter under the log, and insects, including pollinators such as carpenter bees, will burrow into the wood.

“By fall, the branches and trunk will begin to decompose and turn into soil,” says Knight. “Many of our Christmas trees, particularly spruce and balsam fir, have very low rot resistance and break down quickly when exposed to the elements. The more contact the cut branches and trunk have with the ground, the quicker it will decompose. Drilling holes in the tree trunk will speed up



COURTESY

that process.

Our backyards are ecosystems of their own and provide an opportunity to learn about forest ecology. By leaving our Christmas tree in our backyard, we can understand its life cycle and observe its impact on backyard biodiversity.

There are other uses for Christmas trees. Several municipalities have drop off sites where trees

are chipped up and composted or used as trail bedding. Some communities place the Christmas trees on shores to help prevent coastal erosion. And some pulp and paper companies collect and burn them for a fuel alternative to oil.

Submitted by The Nature Conservancy of Canada

## The chicken and the automated door

There once was a young, you might say adolescent, chicken who was purchased by a kindly man who thought it would be nice to have his own eggs from his own chickens. He would build a nice house and fence in a yard and have all the best things for chickens who would lay nice eggs for him and his “blond”, that's the kindly man's female partner.

To make it really special and a bit more automatic, and to not have to open a door for the chickens in the morning and close it at night, he found and purchased an automatic door for his custom-made chicken coop, which he designed and made all by himself with the best of materials.

This automatic door was expensive, but very sophisticated with the latest technology. It had a light sensor to know when the sun came up so it could open the door to let the chickens out to play in the grass and find bugs to eat and do other things that chickens do. When the sun started to go down and the light got dimmer, it would also close the door.

So as not to hurt a chicken who was part way through the door when the door was shutting, the

door had another sensor ( a pressure transducer) to detect if the door hit an obstacle, and if so would not continue closing and cut the chicken in half, but would make it stop and make the door open again.

The time eventually came when this adolescent and curious chicken laid her first egg. She was now a happy full female chicken ready to do just what she wanted to do. She loved her wonderful handmade, custom designed chicken coop with its automatic door, but she loved the outdoors too, especially on cool refreshing evenings when the stars were about to shine.

It just so happened that one evening when she was just a teeny bit late walking up the ramp to the door of her automatic custom built chicken home, the door closed on her a bit as she was going through. It didn't hurt and it happened again another evening as she was not quite all the way through the doorway. It again stopped closing and opened up and she walked on into her custom designed and handmade chicken home for the night, safe away from predators like coyotes, etc. But she did not know anything about them like the kindly man did.

And so it happened that as the sun

was going down and as she went up the ramp to her nighttime home and through her automatic doorway, she stopped to sit right in the doorway and admire the evening.

The last chicken outside, sensing the time was coming when the door would close, hurried up the ramp and into her custom designed chicken coop with its automatic door. It had happened once before. She had been not paying attention, chasing bugs and doing things chickens do, and when she was starting up the ramp, the door closed. She was stuck outside while her two adolescent girl chicken friends were inside. She was afraid to be separated from her friends and ran around wondering what would become of her. Luckily the kindly man saw that she was stuck outside and caused the door to open especially just for her.

So on this particular night as the sun was going down, she ran up the ramp only to find her now fully female friend who had just laid an egg that morning, sitting in the doorway. What to do? She knew the door would close shortly and if so, she would be stuck outside. She had to go inside, so she just walked over her newly mature friend who had just laid an egg that morning and

was enjoying the evening sitting in the doorway.

The technological and miraculous door obeyed its sophisticated programming and began to close for the night. When it hit the sitting chicken, gently, it stopped as it was programmed to do. It was not designed to cut a poor defenceless chicken in half, and so it opened up again. It then began to close again as it was programmed to do, and once again hit the newly mature fully female chicken who was sitting enjoying the evening air in the doorway.

This chicken noticed that it had been hit by this automatic and expensive door before and not been hurt, and so decided to just sit in the doorway and enjoy the evening. The door started to close and reopened several times, and then stopped and never started to close again.

And that is how the newly mature chicken who didn't go to school or get a graduate degree outwitted the latest human designed door technology.

The end.

Submitted by George Weller Stanstead

# Resurgent pandemic, holiday triggers could lead to spike in overdoses

## Harm reduction funding has flatlined under Quebec's government, despite a huge increase in overdose deaths

By Christopher Curtis  
Local Journalism Initiative

It's Christmas 2019, the first one since Sara-Jane died.

Everyone gathers around a candlelit buffet where steam wafts from platters of meat, vegetables and gravy. The room fills with the scents of a holiday feast — butter and garlic, burning wax and a hint of red wine.

Her ashes rest on a red tablecloth next to a porcelain Santa Claus at the edge of the table. A wooden chair where Sara-Jane would have been is empty, sitting under her portrait. She looks stunning: a perfect smile, piercing eyes and shoulder-length hair off to one side.

Just a few months earlier, while studying at the University of Ottawa, Sara-Jane was in her dorm, alone, when she took a drug spiked with fentanyl.

"That first Christmas without her, it was important for us to create a ritual," said Isabelle Fortin, Sara-Jane's mom. "The first one is almost always the hardest. So we got everyone together and we raised a glass to her. We spoke to her, shared memories of her, bought her and her brother Gabriel Christmas decorations with the year inscribed on them.

"Just like when they were kids."

With the latest variant of COVID sweeping across Quebec, Fortin's Christmas ritual will have to be stripped down to the bare essentials. She said she'll spend it alone "with Netflix and a bottle of wine."

"Family and the holidays are a big trigger"

Fortin is one of hundreds of Quebecers who will grieve for a child lost to the fentanyl crisis, which kills more than one person every day in this province.

Some 923 people have died of an opioid-related overdose since the COVID-19 pandemic began nearly two years ago, according to the Institut national de la santé publique du Québec. And that's not counting the months of October, November and December, which the coroner's office have not yet recorded.

"There's no way around it, the holidays are a motherfucker," said

Alexandra de Kiewit, who has lost her share of friends to the crisis. "My first serious boyfriend died in Jonquière recently. That was a lot. I've lost people in Montreal, one of our volunteers died, it feels like an everyday thing now.

"It's hard on the survivors but it's just as hard on those who still use drugs."

The only Christmas she ever spent away from her family was when she was living on the streets and getting high.

"I was ashamed, I couldn't face my family all banged up like I was," she said. "I spent Christmas Eve with my dealer. For a lot of people who started using to begin with, family and the holidays are a big trigger. Whether it's that shame or whether it's because someone in your family abused you, there are lots of reasons to want to keep using.

"The other problem with Christmas is that services start to shut down. When you add social distancing and safety measures, a lot of people are at risk of using alone. And that's when you die."

When the pandemic arrived at our shores last year, it interrupted the supply chain of heroin, cocaine and amphetamines from the United States and overseas. Fearing a supply shortage, major suppliers started cutting their product with fentanyl — a synthetic drug that is 100 times more powerful than heroin.

One of the only solutions to stop people dying is for them to test their drugs and use a safe injection site, where a medical professional can intervene during an overdose. Before the pandemic, most of these sites would see one or two overdoses a week but a nurse or street worker would step in and administer the life-saving drug naloxone.

Now, most sites have gone from seeing an overdose per week to multiple overdoses a day. Still, no one has ever died while using at a safe injection site in Quebec. But with the pandemic back in full swing, these facilities have to reduce capacity, and that increases the risk that someone will use alone on the streets.

**'They send you into the wilderness'**

"Last winter, when the government imposed a curfew, we saw a spike in

overdoses too," said Hugo Bissonnet, who works at Le Dispensaire, a harm reduction clinic in St-Jérôme.

"People didn't want to be caught outside and fined so they didn't use safe injection sites, they didn't have a friend watch over them while they injected themselves.

"This time around, workers are burned out, a lot of the resource centres are short-staffed and the government response is practically non-existent."

Funding for harm reduction has flatlined under the Coalition Avenir Québec government. And that's despite a 30 per cent increase in overdose deaths last year. Federally, the process of having Health Canada sign off on drug testing programs is also stalled.

Le Dispensaire has had new lab equipment gathering dust in its basement since last winter. Staff can't legally use it until Health Canada gives the clinic an exemption from the Criminal Code that would allow workers to handle street drugs without fear of being arrested.

"I haven't heard back from (Health Canada) in months," Bissonnet said. "It certainly doesn't feel like the hundreds of people who die of an overdose every year are a priority."

De Kiewit knows both sides of the fentanyl crisis. As a peer intervention worker, she is a recreational user of hard drugs and someone who helps counsel people who use drugs.

Earlier this year, she woke up on a friend's living room floor after nearly dying of a fentanyl overdose. But just a few months prior, she climbed into the backseat of a sports car with her naloxone kit in hand, ready to save someone who was going into respiratory failure after shooting dope spiked with fentanyl.

There are few in Canada with such an intimate knowledge of why people use, how they use and why they die using. Her fear, so close to Christmas, is that the holiday will trigger risky behaviour from people in emotional distress.

"People tend to mix drugs more during the holidays," she said. "You drink a bit of liquor to numb the loneliness, throw in a few benzos to take the edge off and you might wind

up accidentally killing yourself.

"I remember getting kicked out of the hospital on Christmas Eve when I lived on the streets. I asked to stay for supper, to experience some sort of human warmth and have a warm meal. But a lot of people don't consider your humanity when you're a drug addict in the public health system. So they send you into the wilderness to fend for yourself."

**Reach out**

There is some light at the end of the tunnel. While people continue to die every day, more and more of their loved ones are speaking out and enlisting allies in provincial legislatures and parliament. After De Kiewit's friend Sam Moro died of an overdose on Dec. 5 in Drummondville, he was honoured by a politician from his home province.

Green Party MLA Kevin Arseneau stood in the New Brunswick legislature last week and paid tribute to the fallen 36-year-old.

"To all of those who feel bad, who feel alone, who fight demons and who fight a system that abandons them, you're not alone," Arseneau said. "To all the rebels, the dissidents, the anti-conformists, to the punks, I ask you to send a greeting to you, our friend, Sam."

When Sara-Jane died, her mother took her grief and poured it into harm reduction. Fortin sits on the board of a safe injection site and community clinic in Montreal and lobbies politicians on behalf of Moms Stop the Harm — a network of thousands of parents who have lost a child to the fentanyl crisis.

"When you lose a kid to poisoned drugs, it often isolates you from the rest of your family," Fortin said. "There's a lot of shame, a lot of stigma attached to that kind of a death. So people would rather not talk about it and that tears families apart. I'm lucky our family has been strong but for those who have experienced that isolation, there are groups like Moms Stop the Harm.

"What I would say to anyone who knows someone struggling this time of year is reach out. Get over your anxiety or fear of talking about it and reach out. It can make all the difference."

## Parents sue Quebec

CONT'D FROM PAGE 3

Quebec who are contesting the provincial government's decree preventing teenaged students age 13-17 from participating in extra-curricular sports if they are not vaccinated against COVID-19.

"Basically, it's an action about the vaccine passports, but only for the teenagers who are 13 to 17 years," says Me William Desrochers, a lawyer in Gatineau QC who is representing the parents. "What the decree says is that you cannot do anything that falls outside the regular school program.

Limited in taking part

"So, if you're in a sports/study program and you're doing maybe volleyball, then you can do physical education, you can do volleyball six or eight hours a week. But once you have a competition on a Saturday, you cannot go. If you have an extra practice on a Monday night, you cannot go.

"And it's not only that. If you can't do the practice with the team, they're not going to put you in the front position — you're not going to be the quarterback on the football team if you can't play. You end up being left out or only in practice or even sitting on the bench. It's something that's extremely hard on

these kids and we feel that the decree is an infringement of several human rights and not reasonable under the circumstances."

Is it reasonable and why?

Among the issues the lawsuit hopes to raise is the scientific validity of the government's insisting that all school children must be vaccinated in order to fully participate in the sports programs.

"We understand or we believe that the vaccination rate is pretty high," Desrochers added. "Sometimes if you're in a program in school, you might have one kid who is not vaccinated. So, how is it so important that this kid must be vaccinated at all cost? That is the

question: Is it reasonable and why? That is the question we're raising here."

Case to be heard by May

Desrochers said he expected the case to be heard by next May, hopefully with a decision rendered before the beginning in the fall of 2022 of the next school year.

In the meantime, he said the parents were pleased with the government's announcement that mandatory vaccine passports would not be demanded for younger students.

"Still, for 13 to 17 years old it still raises the question as to why is it okay for them, but it's not okay for the five or eleven or twelve-year-olds," he said.

# EDITORIAL

Organising gatherings, decorating your home, planning dinner – all these activities aim towards fulfilling the goal of having a good Christmas. The problem with goals is that when they are achieved, they leave people feeling flat.

## Why do we feel so ‘blah’ after Christmas?

By Jolanta Burke  
Senior Lecturer, RCSI University of  
Medicine and Health Sciences

The holiday season is usually a joyous occasion, but many people feel “blah” soon after the celebrations. What is it about Christmas that makes people feel this way?

Psychologists describe the blah feeling as “low mood” or “languishing”. Low mood is often temporary and can’t be attributed to any specific cause. Languishing is a longer-lasting state of low mood, emptiness and aimlessness that can stay with people for weeks or months. If not addressed, it can lead to depression.

One reason people feel this way relates to goals. Setting goals and striving towards them is a basic human need. Aiming to reach a goal keeps people motivated, excited and happy. More importantly, having goals and seeing progress towards them can enhance positive emotions, such as excitement, enthusiasm or pride, which is why preparing for Christmas can be so exhilarating.

Organising gatherings, decorating your home, planning dinner – all these activities aim towards fulfilling the goal of having a good Christmas. The problem with goals is that when they are achieved, they leave people feeling flat.

The best way to fix this is by creating another goal. Coming up with an exciting goal for January or the new year may become a motivating force to boost your wellbeing. But setting goals is not enough to shake off the negative feeling. You need to look after your body too.

### A healthy body ...

The effect the body has on the mind can also leave you feeling blah after Christmas. On average, people gain one pound (0.45kg) of weight over the festive season. Unfortunately, it can be difficult to lose this newly gained weight.

At the same time, overeating is associated with a lower mood. To help you take control of your weight and prevent unnecessary pounds piling on, research shows that weighing yourself regularly or fasting intermittently can help you eat less and maintain your weight over the festive period.

Weight gain is not the only issue people experience after Christmas. People change their routines significantly: they eat more, drink more and sleep more. They drink on average double the amount of alcohol they usually drink. Also, sleeping patterns tend to change, with people sleeping on average 5% longer than usual. All of these changes can affect your mood.

To feel less blah after Christmas, it is essential to establish a new, healthier routine. For example, switching to a plant-based diet has been shown to improve energy levels and the ability to think and reason (cognitive function). It also reduces inflammation and the effect is more prominent and lasting than going on a conventional diet, such as a low-calorie or smaller-portion diet. It can also improve mood, which will banish the blah feeling.

### Weekend effect

Feeling down can also be related to the “weekend effect” and the “blue Monday phenomenon”. People’s mood increases during the weekend due to greater autonomy (controlling one’s activities) and connecting with others. But mood significantly worsens as soon as the weekend is over. A similar effect occurs for some at the end of Christmas, especially those who need to be back at work shortly after. The thoughts of Christmas being over and getting back to the old routine may instigate the feeling of blah.

Many activities can help you think about the future with more optimism and hopefulness, instead of dread or worry. One such activity is the “best possible self” exercise, where you imagine yourself in a future in which everything has turned out as you wanted it. This results in an immediate



increase of positive emotions. Studies have shown that people who do this have less-frequent visits to their doctor five months later.

Here is an adapted “best possible self” exercise you can try after Christmas. Take a piece of paper and for ten minutes write down everything about your best possible self. Imagine that you are in excellent health. You have been taking excellent care of your body and mind. You have worked hard to accomplish all your health-related goals. Now write what you have done, what obstacles you have overcome, how

you did it, and your result.

Regardless of the reasons for feeling blah, what matters is you acknowledge the feeling of aimlessness and low mood. Only then can you choose to do something about it. This may include increasing physical activity, exercising, eating nutritious food, planning, or simply sitting with it, fully aware that it is what you feel, and it is OK to feel this way – many others feel the same way. After all, wellbeing is a journey, not a destination. Tomorrow is another day.

## Harassment and threats against health care workers cannot be tolerated

The federal government recently passed legislation to prohibit the harassment and intimidation of health care workers and patients. These new protections are timely, as we are seeing increasing threats directed at physicians and other health care workers – on social media and, in some instances, at their private homes.

This is a deeply disturbing trend and one that cannot be allowed to continue.

With the enactment of new legislative measures to protect health care workers, the Canadian Medical Association (CMA) encourages local law enforcement agencies in all jurisdictions to ensure they are shielded from violence and threats.

The CMA is also calling on social media companies to increase efforts to ensure their platforms are safe spaces for health care workers to share information and advice with

Canadians without being subject to intimidation and threats.

Physicians and other health care workers have worked tirelessly through the pandemic to care for patients. As a fifth wave sweeps across Canada, nearly two years after COVID-19 first emerged, we are still here on the frontlines.

What we need right now is not the ignorance and hate of a small minority, but the kindness, patience and goodwill that most Canadians continue to demonstrate.

We recognize that this has been a challenging two years for everyone. Health care workers on the frontlines of the pandemic are exhausted, yet we remain steadfast in our desire to help others.

Dr. Katharine Smart  
President, Canadian Medical Association

### THE RECORD

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## Sports

After arthritis ended her sporting career, Rosenfeld joined *The Globe and Mail* in 1937. She wrote for the newspaper for 20 years, often in a column called *Sports Reel*.

# Canada's Bobbie Rosenfeld led the way in almost every sport she attempted

By Neil Davidson  
The Canadian Press

**B**obbie Rosenfeld was a trailblazer and champion, willing and able to conquer a variety of sports.

A member of Canada's first Olympic women's track team dubbed "the Matchless Six" — Rosenfeld, Florence Bell, Ethel Catherwood, Myrtle Cook, Ethel Smith and Jean Thompson — Rosenfeld won a gold medal in the 4x100 relay and silver in the 100 metres (Canadian team officials swore she actually edged American Betty Robinson to win the 100) at the 1928 Games in Amsterdam — the first time women were allowed in Olympic athletics.

But she also excelled at everything from baseball, basketball and hockey to lacrosse, softball and tennis. Voted CP's female athlete of the half-century in 1959, Rosenfeld's name graces CP's female athlete of the year award.

Tennis star Leylah Fernandez won the 2021 Bobbie Rosenfeld Award on Tuesday.

After arthritis ended her sporting career, Rosenfeld joined *The Globe and Mail* in 1937. She wrote for the

newspaper for 20 years, often in a column called *Sports Reel*.

Rosenfeld "set the sports world ablaze with her incomparable ability in every sport she ever tried," the *Globe* wrote in its 1969 obituary on the Canada's Sports Hall of Famer.

Born Fanny Rosenfeld in Russia (now Ukraine), on Dec. 28, 1904, she came to Canada as a baby when her family elected to leave because of anti-Semitism. Her father Max came first, followed by her mother Sarah with Bobbie and her older brother. Bobbie survived smallpox on the boat to Canada.

The Rosenfelds settled in Barrie, Ont., joining family members who had come earlier. Known by her nickname "Bobbie" after her long hair was bobbed, Rosenfeld grew up trying her hand at a wide range of sports. She excelled at them all, often competing against and beating boys.

She moved to Toronto with her family in 1922 and worked at the Patterson chocolate factory, where she joined the company's athletic club, as well as the Young Women's Hebrew Association's hockey and basketball teams.

She turned heads at a local track and field meet in Beaverton, Ont., in 1923 when she entered the 100-yard dash as a lark and beat Canadian champion Rosa Grosse, in a time just two-fifths of a second off the world record. Rosenfeld won the race despite wearing her big softball "pup-tent bloomers," her Canada's Sports Hall of Fame bio notes. Other times she competed in men's swimming trunks and her father's borrowed socks.

She beat 100-yard world champion Helen Finkley in 1923, won the Toronto grass-courts tennis title in 1924 and tied the 100-yard world record of 11 seconds in 1925.

At the 1925 Ontario Ladies' Track and Field Championships, she won the shot put, discus, running broad jump, 200-yard dash and 100-yard hurdles, while finishing runner-up in the 100-yard dash and javelin — all in a single afternoon.

In 1928, she set national records in long jump, standing broad jump and discus that lasted into the 1950s.

"She ran like the wind," said Jean McCann, who helped found the Barrie Sports Hall of Fame. "I can see her yet, coming down that track."

At the 1928 Olympics, Rosenfeld also entered the 800 metres to help Thompson, who had suffered an injury in training. When Thompson started to drop back after tangling with a Japanese runner, Rosenfeld moved alongside her teammate and started encouraging her.

Thompson finished fourth and Rosenfeld fifth, with observers saying Rosenfeld could likely have won a medal had she not be so selfless.

The Canadian team, which included star sprinter Percy Williams, returned home to a hero's welcome, with thousands lining the streets in Toronto.

Rosenfeld was sidelined soon after by rheumatoid arthritis. A doctor recommended amputation but the family refused and she spent nine months in bed followed by time on crutches — which she set aside one day to rejoin her hockey team. In 1932, she was named Ontario's most outstanding women's hockey player but her arthritis returned in 1933 and she retired.

Rosenfeld turned to coaching hockey and journalism, later becoming the *Globe's* public relations manager until illness prompted her retirement in 1966.

## Bravo Leylah Annie Fernandez

**T**ennis Canada would like to extend its heartfelt congratulations to Leylah Fernandez, who earned the 2021 Bobbie Rosenfeld Award presented by the Canadian Press to the country's best female athlete. The 19-year-old Quebecer is the sixth tennis player to win the award since it was created in 1932, joining Carling Bassett-Seguso (1983, 1985), Helen Kelesi (1989, 1990), Aleksandra Wozniak (2009), Eugenie Bouchard (2013, 2014) and Bianca Andreescu (2019).

"I'm very honored to be amongst these athletes who've done so much women's sports, and their respective sports, and even outside of their sports," Fernandez said. "Growing up, I've read about (last year's winner, soccer star Christine Sinclair) in the news. I've seen her how much she's accomplished, and I'm honored to have my name right beside her's."

"Leylah is so deserving of this prestigious award," affirmed Michael Downey, President and Chief Executive Officer of Tennis Canada. "At such a young age, she rolled over three Top 10 players to reach the US Open final. She may not have gotten the result she wanted but her on-court performance was simply brilliant. And her post-match speech about September 11th was for the ages, as she endeared herself to New Yorkers forever. Leylah is the real deal, and she will inspire the next generation of young players across the

country to pick up a racquet through the rest of this decade and beyond."

In addition to competing in the US Open final and becoming only the second Canadian to achieve the feat after Bianca Andreescu in 2019, Leylah raised her very first WTA championship trophy in Monterrey, Mexico, when she secured a two-set win (6-1, 6-4) over then No.102 Viktorija Golubic of Switzerland. Her excellent performances all season helped boost her ranking to a career-high World No.24.

In 2021, the Laval native also achieved great heights with Team Canada. At the Billie Jean King Cup Play-Offs in April, she was presented with the Heart Award by the International Tennis Federation on the heels of Canada's 4-0 triumph over Serbia, in which she posted victories over Olga Danilovic (7-5, 4-6, 6-4) and Nina Stojanovic (3-6, 6-3, 6-4).

"Leylah definitely proved this year, and especially at the US Open, that she could rank among the best in the world," said Sylvain Bruneau, Head of Women's Professional and Transition Tennis at Tennis Canada. "So many fans discovered a relentless and passionate competitor who fights for every single ball and displays a nice blend of power, intelligence and athleticism on the court. She also showed that she was the full package with her genuine and inspiring speeches after her matches."

Submitted by Tennis Canada

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**Death**

**Rémi BAILLARGEON 1957 - 2021**

It is with great sadness that we announce the death of Rémi Baillargeon, in his 64th year, son of Olivette Chenard and late Joseph Baillargeon.

He leaves to mourn, his wife Karen, his children Carole (Robert), Claude (Ilham), Cindy (Benoit); his grandchildren Christina, Jeremy, Sebastian, Emily, Ryan, Rema, Océanne, Damien; his foster grandchildren Yurick, D-Reck, Liam, Alexis, Jay-Sea and Mavrick. He also leaves his sisters and brothers Hélène (Réal), Laurian (Aline), Céline (André), Robert (Colette), Réal (Louisette), Lucienne, Roger, Colette (Benoit), Thérèse (Benoit), Fernand (Ann), Denis, Sonia (Jacques), Raymond (Nicole), late Gilles, and late Carmelle, as well as his sister-in-law Elaine, his brother-in-law Allan (Phylis), nieces, nephews and many friends. Family and friends will be welcomed at Cass Funeral Home, 3006 College, Sherbrooke, on Monday, January 3, 2022 from 3 to 5 and 6 to 9 pm. Burial will take place at Sand Hill Cemetery at a later date.

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**In Memoriam**

**BELL, Stanley L. – December 29, 2018.**

*What we shared will never die,  
It lives within my heart,  
Bringing strength and comfort  
While we are apart.*

Lovingly remembered,  
**ELLA (wife)  
AND FAMILIES**

The Arthritis Society  
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**ERASE THE PAIN**  
ThePain.ca

**Date Book**

**WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 29, 2021**

Today is the 363rd day of 2021 and the ninth day of winter.

**TODAY'S HISTORY:** In 1170, Thomas Becket, the archbishop of Canterbury, was murdered.

In 1890, U.S. Army troops massacred an estimated 300 Lakota Indian men, women and children near Wounded Knee Creek in South Dakota.

In 1940, Germany dropped hundreds of incendiary bombs on London.

In 1970, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) was created.

**TODAY'S BIRTHDAYS:** Charles Goodyear (1800-1860), inventor; Andrew Johnson (1808-1875), 17th U.S. president; William Gladstone (1809-1898), British prime minister; Mary Tyler Moore (1936-2017), actress; Jon Voight (1938- ), actor; Ted Danson (1947- ), actor; Patricia Clarkson (1959- ), actress; Sean Payton (1963- ), football coach; Lilly Wachowski (1967- ), filmmaker; Jude Law (1972- ), actor; Theo Epstein (1973- ), baseball executive; Mekhi Phifer (1974- ), actor; Danny McBride (1976- ), actor/

comedian; Alison Brie (1982- ), actress; Eric Berry (1988- ), football player.

**TODAY'S FACT:** OSHA imposed the largest fine in agency history on Oct. 30, 2009, assessing \$87 million in penalties against oil company BP. A 2005 explosion at the company's refinery in Texas killed 15 workers.

**TODAY'S SPORTS:** In 1978, Ohio State football coach Woody Hayes punched a Clemson player who had just intercepted a pass during the Gator Bowl. Ohio State went on to lose 17-15, and Hayes was fired the next day.

**TODAY'S QUOTE:** "I love kids, outings, camping, sports, Legoland, all the Daddy stuff. I love it. I wish I could just do that, but I have to work, too." – Mekhi Phifer

**TODAY'S NUMBER:** 6 – years that Thomas Becket spent in exile (1164-1170) for refusing to acquiesce to new laws set by Henry II.

**TODAY'S MOON:** Between last quarter moon (Dec. 26) and new moon (Jan. 2).

**FDA issues guidance to lower sodium intake**

**ASK THE DOCTORS by Eve Glazier, M.D., and Elizabeth Ko, M.D.**



eat? Why is it that this kind of advice keeps changing?

**Dear Reader:** You are correct about the recent release of updated guidance regarding how much salt we should – or, more accurately, should not – be eating. And it's not a surprise that you're feeling a bit confused. Federal nutrition advice for individuals comes in the form of the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, which are jointly issued by the United States Department of Agriculture and the Department of Health and Human Services.

However, the new information about salt that you're asking about comes from a different source, namely the Food and Drug Administration. It's aimed not at individuals, but, rather, at the food industry. And because compliance is voluntary – it's basically a request – it has been labeled as "guidance." Specifically, the FDA is asking food manufacturers, restaurants and other vendors of prepared foods to cut the amount of salt

in their products in order to help reduce the amount of salt that the average American consumes each day.

Over the next 30 months, the FDA wants the food industry to adjust their products so that sodium intake drops from 3,400 milligrams to 3,000 mg per day. Despite this being about 12% lower than current sodium levels in prepared foods, it's still markedly higher than the 2,300 mg of sodium per day in the official Dietary Guidelines. And that's the point. Due in large part to the prevalence of prepared foods in the American diet, the average adult here consumes 3,400 mg of sodium per day – and often more.

A study that looked at 450 adults from geographically diverse areas in the U.S. found that salt added to food eaten outside of the home accounted for a whopping 70% of each person's daily sodium intake.

The adverse health effects of excess salt in the diet are well-known. It can lead to high blood pressure, which

increases the risk of stroke, heart attack and heart disease. As a reminder, the Dietary Guidelines recommend children between 1 and 3 years old consume less than 1,200 mg of sodium per day. Children between the ages of 4 and 8 should consume less than 1,500 mg per day, and those 9 to 13 years old should get less than 1,800 mg of sodium per day. And, as we mentioned earlier, 2,300 mg of salt per day is the recommended limit for those 14 years old and older.

Whether or not food manufacturers will comply with the FDA's request remains to be seen. But understanding how much sodium is added to prepared food before you even touch a saltshaker can help you limit your own intake. People who make it a practice to read sodium percentages on food labels say they're often startled by the high numbers, and that this awareness lets them make healthier choices for themselves and for their families.

**RATES and DEADLINES: ANNOUNCEMENTS & NOTICES**

**BIRTH NOTICES, CARDS OF THANKS, IN MEMORIAMS, BRIEFLETS:**

Text only: 40¢ per word. Minimum charge \$10.00 (\$11.50 taxes included)

Discounts: 2 insertions or more: 15% off

With photo: additional \$18.50. **DEADLINE:** 11 a.m., day before publication.

**BIRTHDAY, ANNIVERSARY & GET-WELL WISHES, ENGAGEMENT NOTICES:**

Text only: \$16.00 (includes taxes)

With photo: \$26.00 (\$29.90 taxes included) **DEADLINE:** 3 days before publication.

**WEDDING WRITE-UPS:**

\$26.00 (\$29.90 taxes included) WITH PHOTO: \$36.00 (\$41.40 taxes included)

**Please Note:** All of the aforementioned (except death notices) must be submitted typewritten or neatly printed, and must include the signature and daytime telephone number of the contact person. Can be e-mailed to: classad@sherbrookerecord.com - They will not be taken by phone.

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For Monday's paper, email production@sherbrookerecord.com or call 819-569-4856 between 1 p.m. and 5 p.m. Sunday. For Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday or Friday's edition, email production@sherbrookerecord.com, call 819-569-4856 or fax 819-569-1187 (please call to confirm transmission) between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. the day prior to the day of publication. The Record cannot guarantee publication if another Record number is called. Rates: Please call for costs.

# Somatic therapy could help with trauma

## Dear Annie

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 29, 2021

**Dear Annie:** I'm a 45-year-old-male and have had many traumatic events in my past, including abuses too bad to name. My problem is, as I was growing up, I was so mistreated that I never learned how to feel. I had to suppress everything I was feeling and disconnect from my emotions and body to survive.

Now that I'm grown and have been seeking mental help for almost 17 years, I still can't connect with anything inside. This has led to relationship failures, lost jobs and more. I live every day on a flat plain of numbness, and yet I believe that I am worthless and undeserving of anything I receive from anyone. That includes kindness, love, help or gifts.

I have been through five therapists and as many psychiatrists. No one has been able to diagnose or help in any way. Each and every one of them has come up empty-handed and told me that I should seek help from "someone better" without giving referrals or suggestions as to whom I should be talking to.

As a result, I have begun to distrust the world of psychological treatment.

All I want is to live a "normal" life and not run everybody out of it. - Numb and Lost

**Dear Numb and Lost:** Thank you for writing to me. First off, no one has a "normal" life. Everyone has stuff. But what you want is to be out of pain. I am sorry that you had to endure all sorts of abuse. No person or child should ever have to. The question is, how do you heal from that?

Congratulations on trying to find help. It looks like the five therapists you saw were probably not trained in trauma. You might try and find a

somatic therapist. Somatic therapy is a type of therapy that helps treat post-traumatic stress by releasing bodily sensations that come up in everyday life. The therapist works from the inside out, starting with your body instead of just talking and reliving the traumas over and over again. I would recommend reading Dr. Peter Levine's book, "Waking the Tiger." Another good book for trauma is "The Body Keeps the Score" by Bessel van der Kolk. Both could be great resources on your journey toward feeling better. It's a cinch by the inch and hard by the yard.

**Dear Annie:** What an amazing soul you are, and your duty to do for others before yourself speaks loudly of your ability to be truly unselfish. Thank you for the experiences and advice you have shared with the world. It surely is a beautiful light to help guide those who struggle through the dark paths. - Grateful

**Dear Grateful:** Thank you for the kind words. It is an honor that so many readers share their stories each week.

**Dear Annie:** I don't know how to begin, so I'll just start by saying that after my father passed away 20 years ago, my sisters abandoned me. At my father's funeral, my oldest sister told me out loud, in front of my other sisters, that they are never going to speak to me again since my protector (my dad) is gone.

We had just laid our father in his grave, and the pain of losing him was intense, and I was sobbing. She told me that my tears were fake and to stop because nobody cares.

None of my sisters kept in touch until my sister "Alice" was diagnosed with terminal cancer. I begged to come see Alice, and I was allowed. Since I was separated from my husband at the

time, I offered to be her caregiver, and she was so pleased. I took care of her until she passed away, six months later. Immediately after her funeral, I was right back to being abandoned again.

I tried to keep in touch. I made sure to send Christmas cards to the ones for whom I had contact information, but I received no reply. Later, I got blocked, as their address had changed.

Now we're all in our 60s and 70s, and I kept hoping that our relationships would change, but they have not. I've been divorced for 10 years, and my sisters don't care to check on me.

I miss my sisters very much and can't let them go. I can't remove them from my heart or thoughts. - Abandoned in Vegas

**Dear Abandoned in Vegas:** I am so sorry for your loss - not only the loss of your father and sister but the loss of your relationship with your other sisters as well. Your oldest sister harbors long-term resentment toward you, and your other sisters are following her lead. I would suggest starting with one of your sisters who you feel closest to and letting her know how much you love and miss her.

You can't control how she or any of your other sisters will react, but you can control how to communicate your love for them. Good luck.

**Dear Annie:** Lately, I see so many emails from grandparents who are wondering how to deal with grandchildren who fail to acknowledge gifts, and my heart breaks for them.

My husband and I have been struggling with this for years. When we actually do see his grandchildren at Christmas, the older ones thank us for our gifts, but if we are mailing them anything for birthdays and so on, they are not acknowledged. We

don't expect a reaction from the little ones (that should be the parents' job), but teenagers ought to know better. They should be taught to send an acknowledgement of appreciation.

One year, I mailed a self-addressed stamped envelope with a generous gift to the oldest granddaughter with a note saying that we'd love to hear from her. She's a teenager. We never received a response. I doubt sending a box of thank-you cards would help, though I sincerely hope it just might for others.

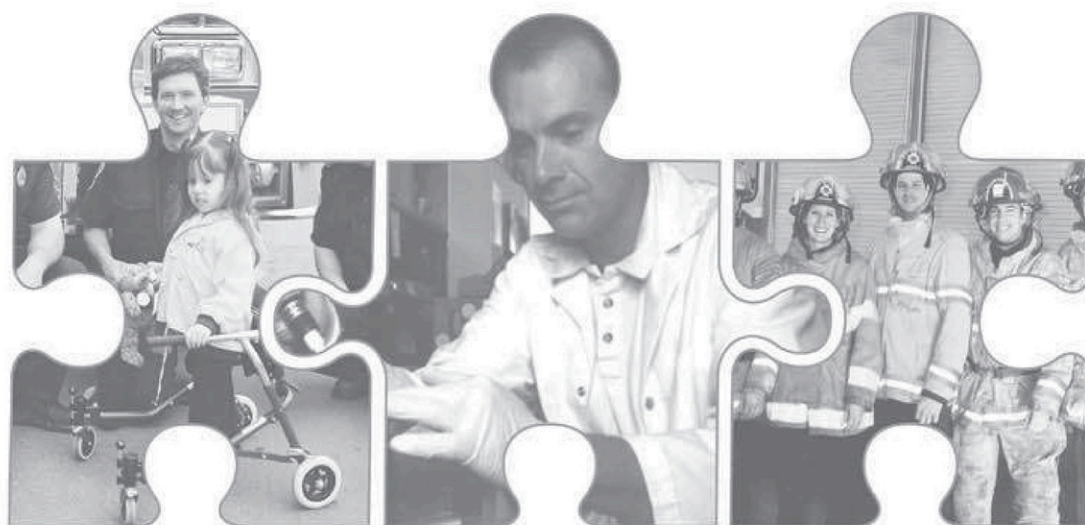
Many of us who are elderly and now have serious health issues can only mail gifts, especially during the pandemic. A brief message acknowledging a gift would mean so much.

I think this is the last time we'll send a gift through the mail, and we'll follow your suggestion in today's column to let them know the time after that we won't send anything else and why. - Fed-Up Granny in Ontario

**Dear Granny:** Showing appreciation for gifts is always gracious, and I am printing your letter to remind parents to instill that message in their children. It is beneficial not only to the gift giver but also to the receiver. The more we appreciate, the more it appreciates. Many readers have written in to say that their last gift will be their last and final gift because there was no acknowledgement or thank you from the recipient.

"Ask Me Anything: A Year of Advice From Dear Annie" is out now! Annie Lane's debut book - featuring favorite columns on love, friendship, family and etiquette - is available as a paperback and e-book. Visit <http://www.creatorspublishing.com> for more information.

Send your questions for Annie Lane to [dearannie@creators.com](mailto:dearannie@creators.com).



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### CELEBRITY CIPHER

by Luis Campos

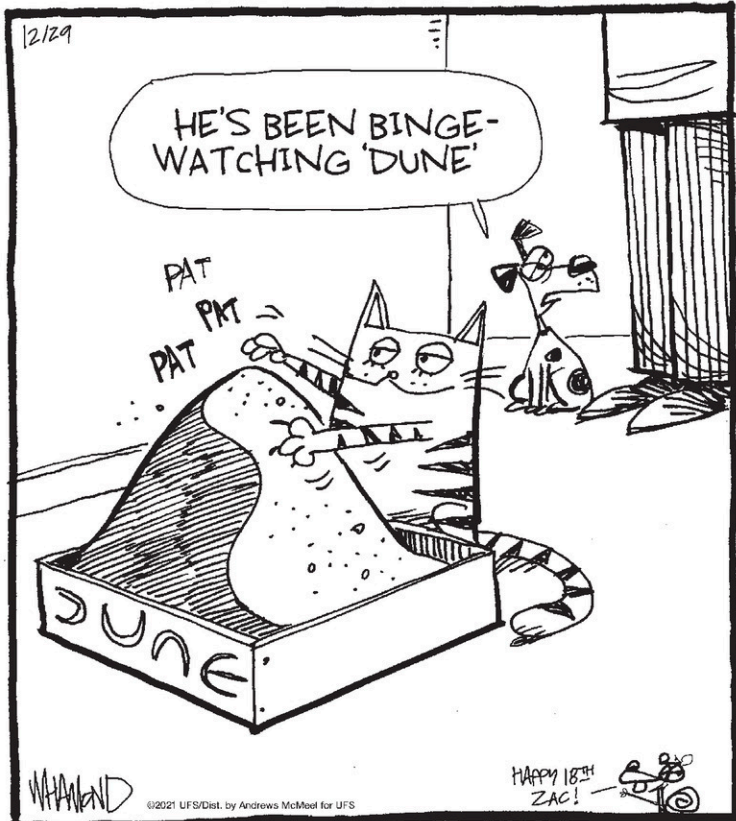
Celebrity Cipher cryptograms are created from quotations by famous people, past and present. Each letter in the cipher stands for another.

" F R F R A ' D B M D M J A F I C V K F D N , T A R  
K M , C I C V N D F G C D U T D F X M V L , F ' G  
H M M L F A B P M V T D C T Y U C V F A T X T N ."  
— R F C B M H J A T

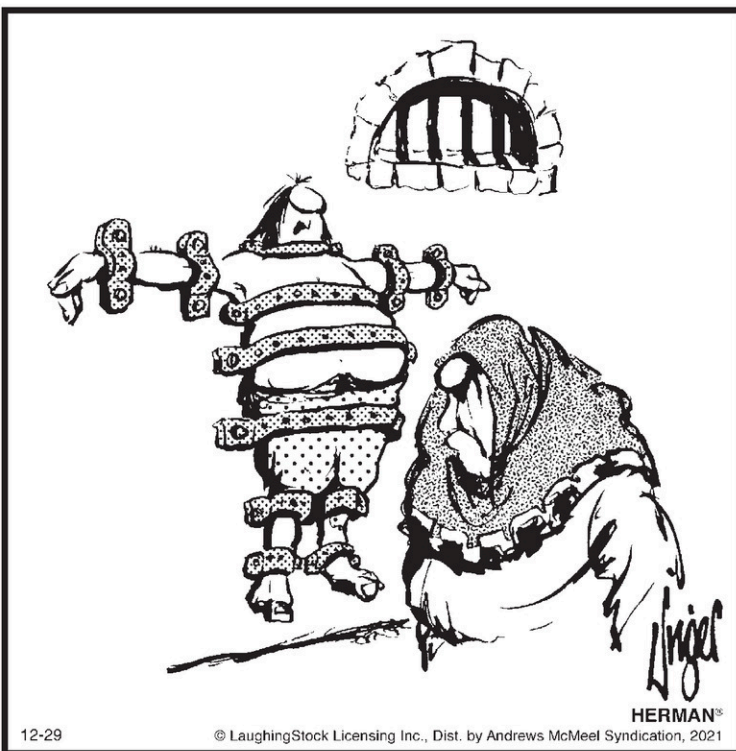
Previous Solution: "The dream for any parent is you want to raise happy, healthy, responsible, compassionate, kind kids." — Gayle King

TODAY'S CLUE: 0 srenba 1

### REALITY CHECK

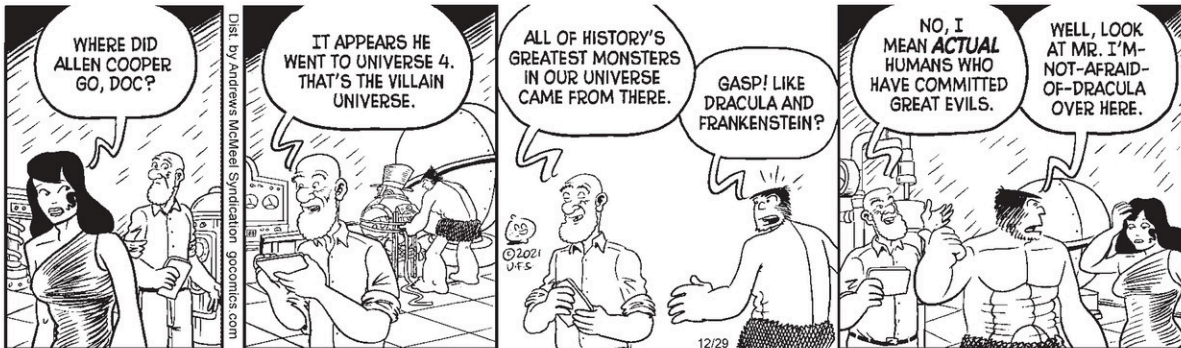


### HERMAN

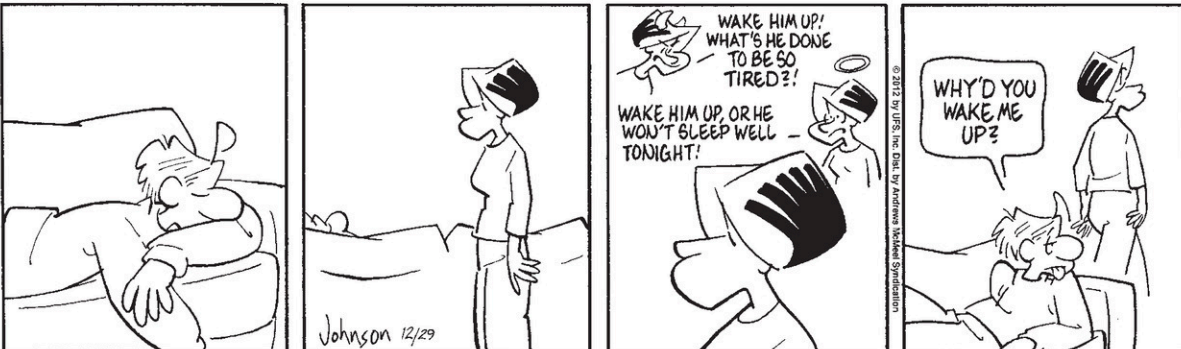


"What are my chances of time off for good behavior?"

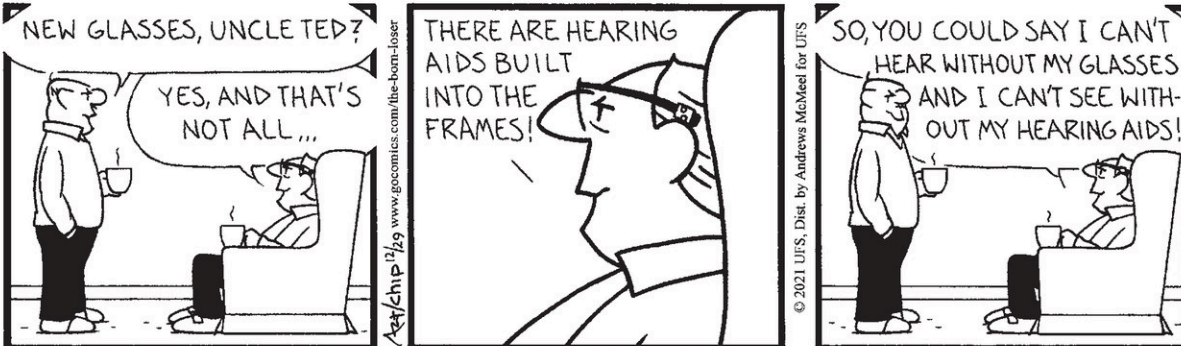
### ALLEY OOP



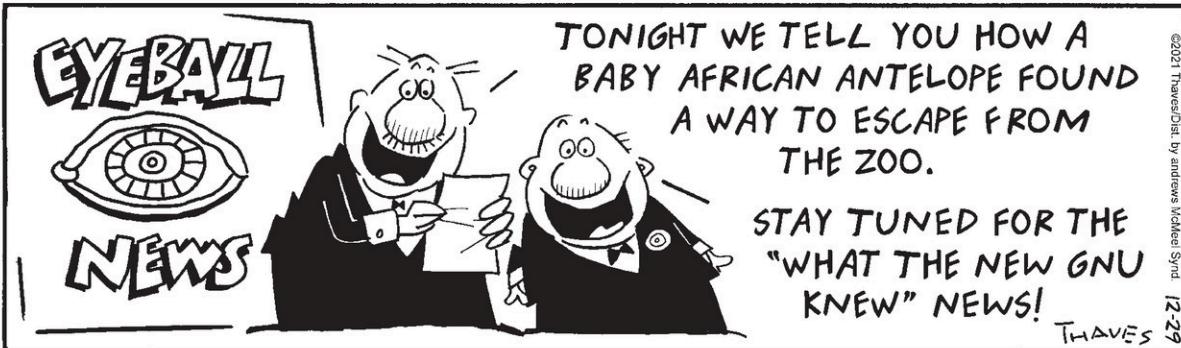
### ARLO & JANIS



### THE BORN LOSER



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## From the outside in: Home décor inspired by nature

(NC) If you're looking to bring a sense of ease and calm to your space, turn to the great outdoors for inspiration. Here, Sharon Grech, Benjamin Moore colour and design expert, shares how to bring the best of the outdoors in with inspiring design.

the colour of the year for 2022," says Grech. "Inspired by the stem of a flower, this colour is the perfect support for other hues in a room and is an inspiring and soothing colour that looks beautiful with a variety of styles."

**Embrace imperfection.**  
 Taking inspiration from nature gives us permission to be comfortable with the imperfections in our homes. "Give any room a natural and relaxed feel by choosing textiles like linen that look their most inviting when creased," suggests Grech.

Not ready to repaint a full room? Repainting a piece of furniture such as an accent table or just the legs of your dining table or desk with Advance interior paint can help bring subtle hints of colour to a more neutral space.

Other ways you can embrace imperfection include creating a simple mantle decoration with a piece of driftwood, or filling vases with collected pebbles and a single candle. Celebrating the imperfect in your space will instantly create a sense of welcome for you and your guests.

**Go organic.**  
 To bring a true feeling of nature into any room, look for ways to bring organic touches into your space. "Simple arrangements of greens can be a striking and stylish way to add colour," suggests Grech. "As a bonus, greens can be a much more affordable alternative to traditional bouquets that focus on blooms."

**Choose earth tones.**  
 One of the most impactful ways to bring a sense of the outdoors into your space is through colour. "Consider a hue like October Mist CC-550,

When you're furnishing a space inspired by the outdoors, choose materials that evoke nature like wood, wicker and rattan.



# SUDOKU

DIFFICULTY RATING: ☆☆☆☆☆

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

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### PREVIOUS SOLUTION

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

**HOW TO PLAY:**  
 Each row, column and set of 3-by-3 boxes must contain the numbers 1 through 9 without repetition.



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# NEA Crossword Puzzle

# Your Birthday

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 29, 2021

**GEMINI (May 21-June 20)** – A laid-back attitude and approach will help you dodge a mistake. Spend more time on personal improvement and less on trying to change someone. You can be amicable without being gullible.

**CANCER (June 21-July 22)** – Plan to do something you enjoy with a loved one. A change will lift your spirits and give you something new to explore. If you discuss your plans and intentions, you will receive valuable feedback.

**LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)** – An emotional moment can limit progress if you aren't prepared to compromise. Look at every angle, and you'll find a way to appease others and satisfy your needs at the same time.

**VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)** – Share your intentions and make plans with a loved one. Make a change at home conducive to improving your life. Information you gather will provide insight. Romance is featured.

**LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23)** – Slow down and distance yourself from turmoil and chaotic people. Self-discipline, personal growth and exercise will encourage you to spend more time perfecting who you are.

**SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 22)** – Emotions will lead to fluctuating circumstances. Be a good listener, think about what's going on around you and how others think and feel, and take a reserved approach. Keep life simple.

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 23-Dec. 21)** – Use your energy wisely. Too much of anything will be your downfall. Focus on getting things done on time and moving on to self-improving activities. Close the year on a high note!

## Answer to Previous Puzzle

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

- ACROSS**
- 1 "Waterloo" group
  - 5 Full of energy
  - 10 Commotions
  - 12 Living room
  - 13 Shack (hyph.)
  - 14 Hard sells, maybe
  - 15 Forearm bone
  - 16 "Say what?"
  - 18 Folk song mule
  - 19 Smidgens
  - 21 Opposite of liability
  - 25 Looks forward to
  - 29 Cello cousins
  - 30 Sunfish
  - 32 Destroy data
  - 33 Sri —
  - 34 Hexes
  - 37 Go right in
  - 38 Is afraid of
  - 40 Kipling classic
- 43 Double helix**
- 44 Be grouchy**
- 48 Languishing**
- 50 Pizza topper**
- 52 Trite phrase**
- 53 Harley competitor**
- 54 Full amount**
- 55 Lean and sinewy**
- DOWN**
- 1 "The Mammoth Hunters" writer
  - 2 Grain husk
  - 3 — fide
  - 4 Museum contents
  - 5 Channel-surf
  - 6 Orchidlike flower
  - 7 Supplication
  - 8 Vote
  - 9 Cen. fractions

- 10 Cold-weather malady
- 11 Area of London
- 12 "Baloney!"
- 17 Ms. Hagen
- 19 Pays for —
- 20 Pricey furs
- 21 Hail, to Caesar
- 22 Gentlemen
- 23 Detergent
- 24 Otherwise
- 26 Baha'i origin
- 27 Circus arena
- 28 Benefit
- 31 Spoil
- 35 Flowerpot spot
- 36 Tokyo honorific
- 39 Spicy
- 40 About 2.2 pounds
- 41 Put one's foot —
- 42 Isinglass
- 44 Turnpike rumbler
- 45 Just around the corner
- 46 Wan
- 47 Tiny legume
- 48 Interest amt.
- 49 Boston Bruins org.
- 51 Left, to Dobbin

	1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9	
10					11		12				
13						14					
15					16	17			18		
				19				20			
21	22	23	24			25		26	27	28	
29								30		31	
32								33			
	34				35	36		37			
				38				39			
	40	41	42		43			44	45	46	47
48				49			50	51			
52							53				
54								55			

**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)** – Step up and make a difference. The changes you implement will help you head into next year with optimism. Say what's on your mind and pursue what excites you. Forward thinking will pay off.

**ARIES (March 21-April 19)** – Be careful. Don't let your emotions steer you in the wrong direction. Honesty is the best policy when it comes to financial and contractual differences. Keep a tight rein on your spending habits.

**TAURUS (April 20-May 20)** – Change will excite you. Dig in and see what life has to offer. Explore something that interests you and consider if it's a viable or lucrative option. A partnership looks promising.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 29, 2021

## An even number often splits unevenly

By Phillip Alder

G.K. Chesterton, an Englishman who was known as the prince of paradox, wrote, "The poet only asks to get his head into the heavens. It is the logician who seeks to get the heavens into his head. And it is his head that splits."

A good bridge player keeps knowledge of suit-split odds in his head. But even if he does not know the exact numbers, he remembers that an odd number of cards will usually divide as near to even as possible. (For example, five cards will split 3-2 more often than 4-1 and 5-0 combined.) An even number (with the exception of two) will normally split unevenly. (For example, six cards will divide 4-2 more often than 3-3.)

In today's deal, how does that affect South's line of play at three no-trump after West leads the club queen?

North made a transfer bid, then offered a choice of games. He correctly upgraded for his five-card suit and pair of aces.

Declarer has eight top tricks: three spades, three hearts and two clubs. Playing on diamonds is too slow. Instead, he should work on spades. However, if he unblocks the king and

		North	12-29-21
		♠	A 9 8 5 2
		♥	A 6 3
		♦	J 10 4
		♣	7 4
West		East	
♠	10 7 4 3	♠	J 6
♥	5 2	♥	J 10 9 8 7
♦	A K	♦	Q 9 7
♣	Q J 10 9 8	♣	5 3 2
		South	
		♠	K Q
		♥	K Q 4
		♦	8 6 5 3 2
		♣	A K 6
		Dealer: South	
		Vulnerable: Both	
South	West	North	East
1NT	Pass	2♥	Pass
2♣	Pass	3NT	All Pass
Opening lead: ♣ Q			

queen, crosses to dummy's heart ace and cashes the spade ace, he will need to find the missing spades 3-3 or the doubleton J-10: a total chance of 38.76%.

Instead, as he needs only four spade tricks, not five, he should cash the king, overtake the queen with dummy's ace and lead the nine. He gets home when the suit is 3-3 (admittedly without an overtrick) or if it 4-2 with the doubleton J-x, 10-x or J-10: a small matter of 64.60%.