



FREE! TAKE ONE! Serving people since September of 2013.

DECEMBER 2023

Dear Readers,

Welcome to our special holiday newsletter, where we have some fantastic things waiting just for you! We know that the holiday season can be a time of happiness and wonder, filled with lots of fun activities and traditions. In this newsletter, we're going to explore some amazing ways to make your holidays even more special.

First, let's take a journey into the worlds of Christmas and Hanukkah. These holidays are celebrated by people all around the world, and each has its very own special stories and customs. From Diwali in India to Kwanzaa in Africa, there are lots of unique ways people come together to enjoy their traditions and heritage during this special time of year.

But that's not all! The holiday season is the perfect time to snuggle up with a good book. We have some interviews with authors of wonderful holiday stories that will transport you to faraway places, introduce you to unforgettable characters, and fill your heart with the joy of the season. Whether you love Santa Claus stories or tales of Hanukkah miracles, there are books ideas for young and old.

Are you feeling hungry? Don't worry; we've got a tasty treat for you - a no-bake eggnog pie recipe. It's a yummy dessert that you can make without even turning on the oven. You'll love every bite!

So, get ready for a great holiday edition of the KSA. We hope this newsletter adds a little extra joy and excitement to your holiday season. Enjoy the holiday season to the fullest, and always remember that the best gift of all is the love and togetherness we share with our family and friends.

Happy reading and happy holidays!

Inside this issue

- Feature Articles
- Movie articles
- Celebrating Disability Awareness, success stories and inclusion for all ! Written by people with Diverse Abilities.

Do you have a story idea or an event you think would be interesting for our readers?

Contact us at:

thekamloopsselfadvocate@yahoo.com

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Office phone: 250-828-1344

We always look for writers and people to interview.

Please subscribe!

Each month you will receive a newsletter with interesting and inspiring content. Be sure to check out our online newsletter for bonus stories and articles!

KSA Facebook page: The Kamloops Self Advocate Newsletter

On KSA website:

ksanews.ca

Interactive flipbook/newsletters

issuu.com/thekamloopsselfadvocate



Special thanks to The Printing Place for your continued support of the Kamloops Self-Advocate Newsletter.





The KSA has created a program to recognize and promote local businesses that are accessible and supportive of all members of the community. The businesses listed here are friendly, accessible, and great to deal with.

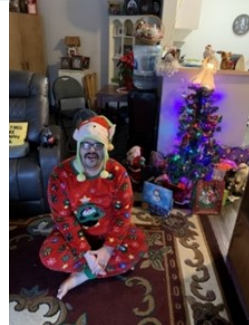
Ability Friendly Accessible Business Program

Horizon Dental Clinic
5 Bean Brewbar & Café
All Around Gamerz
The Vic Downtown
Kamloops Film society
Kamloops Art Party
New Horizons Professional Support Services Inc.
Our Footprints Eco Store

Krystian's Corner

This month we are celebrating Hanukkah, Christmas, and other kinds of holidays in this newsletter. We are discussing holiday books to read and how to have fun this winter season. For example, you can go to the movie theater and watch the new Wonka movie with your friends or family.

There are many good holiday books out there and we want to introduce our readers to new experiences this holiday season. I'm really excited about a Zoom event with Jennifer Griffith, who will be talking about her Christmas books at 11 am PST on December 6th. This event will get everyone in the holiday mood. E-mail thekamloopsselfadvocate@yahoo.com for the Zoom link. I'm proud to have organized this event in partnership with the SUSA Society.



There is so much to do at this time of year. It's nice to listen to Christmas and holiday music. There are all kinds of Christmas specials and activities, like watching movies and singing carols. Some people like drinking eggnog and having Christmas dinners with friends and family. Some people even like taking a drive and looking at Christmas lights or going on a Christmas holiday or trip. You can find lots of great ideas by listening to Christmas podcasts, where people are talking about how they celebrate Christmas and different holidays.

As a multicultural society, it's also important to know about other holidays - we all know lots about Christmas but what about the other holidays in the world? We hope this month's newsletter helps you enjoy this holiday season as you learn about other traditions and holidays. You can learn about Christmas, Hanukkah, and Kwanzaa.

The holidays can be great, but they can also be overwhelming for kids and adults. We have an article with tips for interfaith parents regarding. We've also included some Autism friendly tips for parents to know how to deal with Christmas when you have an autistic child. It's important to know how to deal with possible holiday stress when you have an autistic child. It's also important to not leave children out of the celebrations. Taking some time to learn about disability awareness and autism helps to promote inclusion for all.

It's nice to celebrate different holidays and to have fun with our friends and family. Let's celebrate peace and love, not just during the holidays but throughout the year. We can do this by treating people with kindness and compassion and caring about people.

Happy Holidays Everyone.

Operation Red Nose CALL US FOR YOUR SAFE RIDE HOME

* This number is only live when the campaign is operating. * November 24th- December 31st *
 For a Ride Phone: 250-372-5110

Contact Us

For more information and outside of the operational date period phone: 250-320-0650

2023 Operation Schedule

For the 2023 season, ORN Kamloops will run every Friday and Saturday night from November 24th to December 30th. It will also be available for Sunday December 31, 2023!

2023 Hours of Operation

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, & Thursday - Closed

Friday & Saturday 8 pm to 2 am

Sunday (Dec 31st only) 8 pm to 2 am

Taken from <https://pacificsportinteriorbc.com/operationrednosekamloops/>



CELEBRATE

What Are Hanukkah Candles?

The lights of the Hanukkah menorah are typically made from wax and come in many colors.



Taken from: <https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/what-are-hanukkah-candles/>

Hanukkah is called the Festival of Lights, a clue that the ritual of lighting the menorah is at the center of the holiday, which brings light into the shortest and darkest days of winter (for those celebrating in the northern hemisphere). The menorah that Jews light on Hanukkah, which has nine branches (one for each of the eight days of the holiday plus an extra “helper” *shamash*), echoes the great seven-branched golden candelabra that lit the ancient Temple in Jerusalem. That menorah was lit with sacred oil, and many traditionalists today light their menorahs with oil as well.

However, most people use wax (or sometimes soy) candles to kindle their menorah.

What Are Hanukkah Candles Called?

Hanukkah candles don't have a special name, and it's fine to refer to them as Hanukkah candles. If you'd like to talk about them in Hebrew, you can call them *nerot*, which is the Hebrew word for candles.

Why are Hanukkah candles colored?

Hanukkah candles can be any color, but some people prefer to buy colored ones for aesthetic appeal. There is a principle in Judaism called *hiddur mitzvah*, making the ritual obligation beautiful. Pretty candles are one way to do this. Some also use blue and white candles, since those are colors associated with Judaism and the State of Israel.

Where do you buy Hanukkah candles?

Hanukkah candles are widely available from major retailers like Walmart and Target or from Judaica shops. Hanukkah candles can also be easily purchased online. Many grocery stores also carry them. In a pinch, however, any candles can be used provided they burn for 30 minutes and are equal in size.

When do you light Hanukkah candles?

Hanukkah candles are ideally lit at nightfall, defined in Jewish tradition as the moment when three stars appear. However they can also be lit at any time of the night.

Holidays around the world

Diwali Sunday, November 12

Hanukkah begins Thursday, December 7 at sunset ends Friday, December 15 at nightfall.

Christmas 2023 Monday, December 25

Kwanzaa begins Tuesday, December 26 ends Monday, January 1
New Years Day Monday January 1st

NO-BAKE EGGNOG PIE

Taken from <https://www.lovebakesgoodcakes.com/no-bake-eggnog-pie/>

yield: 6-8 servings

prep time: 15 minutes

cook time: 4 hours

total time: 4 hours 15 minutes

Your holiday won't be complete without this easy, No-Bake Eggnog Pie! It's so creamy and delicious it'll become a family favorite!



INGREDIENTS

1 package (3.4 oz) of vanilla instant pudding
1-3/4 cups cold prepared eggnog
1 cup frozen whipped topping, thawed
1 graham cracker pie crust
additional frozen whipped topping, thawed, for serving (optional)
ground nutmeg, for serving (optional)

INSTRUCTIONS

1. In a large mixing bowl with a hand-held mixer, beat the pudding mix with eggnog for 2 minutes. The pudding mixture should thicken slightly. Gently fold in 1 cup of whipped topping until just combined. Spoon the mixture into the pie crust.
2. Refrigerate the pie for at least four hours.
3. To serve, place a dollop of whipped topping and a sprinkle of nutmeg on each serving.

NOTES

Make sure you use full-fat eggnog. You may not get the right consistency or texture if you use low-fat eggnog.

Make an adult version by adding some brandy or other booze to your pie filling.

If you prefer a pastry pie crust, you can use that instead. It will need to be blind-baked and



Join Jennifer Griffith, USA Today Bestselling
Author on Zoom

Dec. 6th at 11 a.m. PST

Jennifer will be talking about her Christmas book series, including The Christmas Cookie House. This will be a fun event for everyone and will help you get into the Christmas spirit!

Email Krystian at Thekamloopssselfadvocate@yahoo.com
to get the Zoom link.



So This Is Christmas

By Krystian

Meet author Jenny Holiday and find out about her book *So This Is Christmas*.

How did you become USA Today Bestselling Author?

A book of mine called *The Engagement Game* hit the list many years ago.

How do you feel being USA Today Bestselling Author?

It was really exciting! My husband and I bought some champagne and toasted.

What is USA Today?

It's an American newspaper that is known for, among other things, its weekly list of bestselling books. Hitting its list of bestsellers is one measure of success in the publishing industry.

What is your book about called *So this is Christmas*?

It's about an American management consultant who is hired to help save a company owned by the royal family of a fictional country called Eldovia. This book is part of a series that's simultaneously an homage to and a fond satire of Hallmark Christmas movies. So she lands in town near Christmas and butts heads with the king's uptight, tradition-bound equerry.

How did you come up with the name?

It's from a Christmas song of the same name by John Lennon and Yoko Ono.

What do people enjoy about the book?

This is the third (and last) book in a series that, as I said, was inspired by Hallmark Christmas movies. I think fans of the series in general, and of this book in particular, enjoyed the opposites-attract aspect of the romance, and, more generally, the fantasy setting of a royal Christmas in an Alpine nation.

How do you enjoy the book?

Writing a book is a funny thing because when you start, you're excited by the idea of it. And then by the time you're done writing it, you're usually sick of it! I enjoyed the book, but I'm glad it's behind me!

How do you celebrate Christmas?

My family and I open presents on Christmas morning and have a brunch with some traditional dishes (a cheese strata and some homemade muffins). We usually have some kind of dinner on Christmas eve, too, but for me it's all about the brunch!

What else would you like to add?

Happy holidays to you and your readers!



Dick Clark's New Years Rockin' Eve with Ryan Seacrest

About This year marks the 49th anniversary of "Dick Clark's New Year's Rockin' Eve," America's go-to annual New Year's tradition which celebrates the year's very best in music. The show sets the stage to ring in the new year with more than five and a half hours of dynamic performances airing until 2 a.m. EST and giving viewers a look at New Year's celebrations from around the globe. As previously announced, Ryan Seacrest returns for his 16th year as host, and will be joined by Lucy Hale and Billy Porter in Times Square. Ciara will once again oversee the Los Angeles festivities, returning to the show for her fourth year. <https://abc.com/shows/new-years-rockin-eve>



Wonka coming soon to Theatres.

Wonka is an upcoming musical fantasy film.... It serves as a prequel to the 1971 film *Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory*, which was based on the 1964 novel *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* by Roald Dahl. The film stars Timothée Chalamet in the title role of Willy Wonka, featuring his early days as an eccentric chocolatier.

Wonka is scheduled to be released in the United States and United Kingdom on December 15, 2023.

Taken from [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wonka_\(film\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wonka_(film))





The Night Before Hanukkah

By Krystian

Meet Natasha Wing, a children's book author

What is your book 'The Night Before Hanukkah' about? The book is about a family celebrating the eight nights of Hanukkah interwoven with the story of how the Jewish people fought to take back their temple. They only had enough oil to burn one night yet the oil lasted eight nights which is why Hanukkah is celebrated for eight nights.

How did you come up with this book? I had requests from fans to write this story since I had written about other holidays.

How do people celebrate this Holiday? Jewish people celebrate by lighting a candle on their menorah each night after sundown. Then traditions such as eating latkes, playing dreidel, exchanging small gifts, and singing Hanukkah songs, are performed during the Festival of Lights.

What should people know about this Holiday? Hanukkah can also be spelled Hanukka, Chanukah, or Chanukkah. It means "dedication." This is a time when Jews rededicate themselves to the ideals of Judaism and

commemorate the rededication of the Second Temple of Jerusalem by lighting the candles each day.

How can people celebrate this Holiday? By getting together with family, enjoying a traditional meal, and sharing the spirit of rededication. Maybe even make a unique menorah.

What do people like about your book? The clever way the child solves the problem of not having an eighth candle.

What do you enjoy about this book? The illustrations and interweaving a modern family with the ancient story of the Temple.

What do people eat on Hannukah? Latkes (potato pancakes), jelly doughnuts, rugelach (pastry), foods fried in oil, chocolate coins (gelt), brisket, challah, matzo ball soup, kugel (casserole) and roasted chicken.

What did you enjoy about writing this book? I liked the research and learning about a holiday. And asking my friends how they celebrate.

What else would you like to add? This year Hanukkah is celebrated from December 7 - 15.

Can people buy your book in Canada? Yes.

The Night Before Passover is coming out in February. <https://amzn.to/3tjv1X8>



Merry Little Batman on Prime Video on December 8th

Taken from https://christmas-specials.fandom.com/wiki/Merry_Little_Batman

Merry Little Batman is an upcoming Christmas special to be produced by [Warner Bros. Animation](#), based on DC Comics' *Batman* comics. It was originally set to premiere on Cartoon Network in the 2023 holiday season, as part of the channel's ACME Night block, but has recently been acquired by Amazon Studios for their Prime Video platform.

Summary

An animated family action comedy destined to join the rogue's gallery of classic holiday movies.

When a six-year-old Damian Wayne finds himself alone in Wayne Manor, he must transform into

"Little Batman" in order to defend his home and Gotham City from the crooks and super-villains intent on destroying Christmas.

On Amazon Prime Video December 1

Candy Cane Lane stars Eddie Murphy as a man who makes a deal with an elf (Jillian Bell) to help him win his neighborhood's house decorating contest. Unfortunately, the elf also brings to life the "12 Days of Christmas," which

causes problems for the whole town. (Sounds like it's overtaken by a lot of birds, if the lyrics to the holiday classic are anything to go by...) Co-stars include Tracee Ellis Ross, Ken Marino, and Nick Offerman.

Taken from <https://www.cosmopolitan.com/entertainment/movies/a45359737/best-new-christmas-movies-2023/>



Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas

By Krystian

In this interview, singer Genevieve Fisher talks about her music and how she celebrates Christmas.



What do you enjoy about being a country singer and songwriter? I enjoy so many aspects; both writing and performing. I love the creativity of writing. It's such a cool experience. I've also gotten to travel to some amazing places to perform. I feel so lucky that this is my job!

What is the best part of being a singer and songwriter? My favourite part about being a singer and songwriter is both the creative aspect of it, but also getting to connect with so many other artists/songwriters and fans worldwide! Songwriting can be very therapeutic and it's such a great way to get your emotions out; there's also a really fun aspect to it as well. Being able to write fun, upbeat songs with co-writers has created so many amazing memories for me. Social media has also allowed me to connect with so many incredible artists and songwriters as well as connecting with my fans! I love sharing my music and life with people!

Why did you want to cover 'Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas'? This is such a classic/traditional Christmas song and I've always loved it. I felt like it suited my voice so well; it was really fun to make the song my own! I also played piano on this track as well which was a challenge for myself at that time. I'm very proud of this song!

How do you celebrate Christmas? We're pretty traditional when it comes to celebrating Christmas! We celebrate both Christmas Eve and Christmas Day with our families. Christmas morning has become pretty special ever since we had our son; it makes Christmas morning really exciting!

What kind of Christmas movies do you like? I love Elf and The Grinch. I also have to watch Christmas Vacation every year; it's a classic!

What kind of Christmas food do you enjoy? I love having a turkey dinner on Christmas Day. Christmas Eve (if we're celebrating with my side of the family) we usually incorporate sea food into the meal which I love!

Do you like eggnog? I'm definitely not an eggnog person; although I wish I was! It's a classic Christmas drink!

What do you enjoy about Christmas? I think my favourite part about Christmas is decorating and spending time with family and friends! I have so many decorations and tend to go all out when it comes to decor! This year will be especially fun as we've moved into our new home and it will be our first Christmas here!

Do you have visits with your family and friends at Christmas time? Yes! That's the best part! We try to see our immediate and extended family at Christmas time, and of course have a Christmas celebration with our friends!

What is your best memory of Christmas? This is a hard one! Every Christmas has been so special; my mom and dad growing up always made Christmas so magical, so I think my favourite memories were as a child. I always loved decorating the tree with my mom and listening to Christmas music. This year will be very special as I'm expecting my second child to be born right around Christmas! I also can't wait to decorate with my son and listen to Christmas music; keep that tradition going!

What else would you like to add? How can people find you online? Thank you so much for the great interview! People can find me on Facebook (Genevieve Fisher) and Instagram

Holiday Songs to Look up on YouTube.

By Krystian

I love these songs and think others will too!

Taylor Swift - Christmas Tree Farm & Last Christmas

Ariana Grande - Santa Tell Me

Mariah Carey - Oh Santa! (Official Music Video) ft. Ariana Grande, Jennifer Hudson

Justin Bieber - Mistletoe & Santa Claus Is Coming To Town

Kelly Clarkson - Underneath the Tree

Club Mickey Mouse - When December Comes (From "Club Mickey Mouse"/Official Video)

Jazzy Skye - Santa Tell Me! & All I Want For Christmas Is You!

Jonas Brothers - Like It's Christmas (Official Lyric Video)

The Maccabeats - Candlelight - Hanukkah

Julia Lester - Hanukkah Medley (HSMTM The Holiday Special | Disney+)

Megan Nicole - Christmas Wrapping, Santa Baby & Jingle Bell Rock

Presley Tennant - Christmas Time USA (Audio)

Let It Snow By Amber Mackenzie

Connie Talbot - White Christmas (HQ), Rockin' Around The Christmas Tree,

It's Beginning To Look A Lot Like Christmas (Day 21), & The Christmas Song



Disney Parks celebrates the joy of the holiday season.

About

Disney's annual Christmas celebration returns Christmas morning with heartwarming stories, dazzling celebrity performances and of course, the Christmas Day Parade! The holiday special is executive produced by Disney Parks along with Film 45 Live.

<https://abc.com/shows/the-disney-parks-magical-christmas-celebration>



Happy Holidays Message

Happy holidays to our advertisers, contributors, readers, and Ability Friendly Accessible Business Certificate members.

Sincerely,

Krystian, KSA Publisher, and on behalf of the

Kamloops Self Advocate Newsletter.



YouTube Holiday Special

Look this video up on YouTube it's a great video for kids and adults too.

Home Alone! Full Movie Recreated! (Christmas Skit) By Kids Fun TV

YouTube



Sun Peaks Holiday Kick-Off

Dec 9, 2023 | 1-4pm

Sun Peaks Resort

Sun Peaks presents the 11th annual Holiday Kick-Off. The village will be alive with lights and sounds of the holiday season. Enjoy your favourite holiday drink from a local café while you stroll through the village shops on your way to the Artisan Market to pick up some last-minute gifts. Taken from <https://www.tourismkamloops.com/holidayevents/>



Enhancing Each Day
for Each Individual





Interactive Science:
TRY the many fun science activities.
Open Tuesday to Saturday, 9:30 to 5:00



BIG Little Science Centre: For ages 2 and up.
Memberships available: they include free entry to Science World!
Accessible. 458 Seymour Street, Kamloops.
250-554-2572 BLSCS.org

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Edible Chocolate Marshmallow Dreidels

By Martha Stewart Test Kitchen Updated on February 12, 2020, Yield: 12

For an easy spin on the Hanukkah top, whip up these fun, kid-friendly treats. Marshmallows form the dreidels' bodies, chocolate kisses serve as the tips, and pretzel sticks act as the knobs. A quick dip in melted chocolate provides a surface for piping white-chocolate Hebrew letters.

Ingredients

12 chocolate kisses

8 ounces melted semisweet chocolate.

12 marshmallows

12 thin pretzel sticks

2 ounces melted white chocolate.

Directions

1. Dip bottom of chocolate kiss in melted semisweet chocolate. Press onto marshmallow; transfer to a parchment-lined baking sheet. Repeat to make 12 dreidels. Refrigerate for 10 minutes.

2. Cut a small slit in bottom of each marshmallow; insert 1 thin pretzel stick. Dip dreidels in chocolate and return to baking sheet. Refrigerate until set, about 15 minutes.

3. Fill a resealable plastic bag with melted white chocolate; cut a tiny opening in a corner, and pipe Hebrew letters onto 3 sides of each dreidel. Refrigerate at least 5 minutes or up to 8 hours before serving.

Taken from <https://www.marthastewart.com/318045/edible-chocolate-marshmallow-dreidels>

Single and Ready to Jingle with Piper Rayne

By Krystian

Meet USA Today Bestselling author duo, Piper Rayne. One lives in Canada outside of Toronto and the other lives in the United States outside of Chicago.

How did you come up with the book called Single and Ready to Jingle?

We wanted to write a standalone holiday novel because we'd never written one before. Piper has been to New York during the holidays and loved it so we decided to set it there. Once we came up with the title, the next thing we had to decide was how we were going to make it work for the story. That's when we had the idea for the heroine to show up to a blind date dressed as an elf.

How did you think of the name?

We were trying to think of a funny/punny name for a book that would make it clear it was a romantic comedy but also a holiday book, so we swapped out the word mingle that's usually in the saying, "single and ready to mingle" with the word jingle.

How do you feel being USA Today Bestselling Author & what is USA today?

It's always exciting to find out your book has made the USA Today list and know that so many people went out on release week to purchase your book so they can read it.

The USA Today list ranks the bestselling books in the United States during one given week. It ended for a time and when it came back it would seem that they no longer rank books strictly on sales like they did before, but it's still wonderful that it returned.

What do you enjoy about Christmas & how do you celebrate it?

The traditions we have in place and getting to spend time with family that you don't always have time to see throughout the year.

Leading up to Christmas we decorate the house, do Christmas baking and watch holiday movies. On Christmas Eve we get together with family and then on Christmas morning we open presents then have a big breakfast. In the afternoon we head over to the house of whoever is hosting Christmas dinner that year.

What kind of Christmas food do you like?

My favorite is what we can "dirty" potatoes, which is essentially just roast potatoes that have caramelized on the outside. And a good stuffing is a close second!

Can people buy your book in Canada & where can people find it?

Absolutely! You can find Single and Ready to Jingle on Amazon, Apple Books, Kobo and in the Google Play store in Canada.

What else would you like to add?

Thank you so much for being interested in our book! If anyone would like to receive some free reads from us they can sign up for our newsletter at www.piperrayne.com



My First Kwanzaa Book

By Krystian

Meet Karen Katz, author and illustrator of many children's books. In this interview she talks about her book and the holiday.

What is your book called My First Kwanzaa about?

This book is for very young readers and is about how Kwanzaa is celebrated.

What should people know about this holiday?

This is a beautiful holiday. And I think it is important for people to understand holidays of other people around the world. There are many beautiful holidays to learn about. Now Kwanzaa is recognized on the calendar, so everyone should know how to celebrate.

How do people celebrate this holiday?

There's many ways that people celebrate this holiday. They light Kwanzaa candles in a Kinnara. They have a feast with special foods, they gather together with friends and family and play music. Again, if you go online, you can find out a wealth of information about how to celebrate Kwanzaa.

You could make art and follow some African patterns, you could learn an African dance, you could have a feast and cook special foods from Africa, and you could look online for ways to celebrate Kwanzaa. There's always great stuff online.

What do people enjoy about this book?

I think what's good about this book is that it is very simple. It has big, bright colorful, illustrations. This book is for young readers, and I think the colors, the text, and the thought behind it is very simple and perfect for the youngest children.

How did you come up with this book?

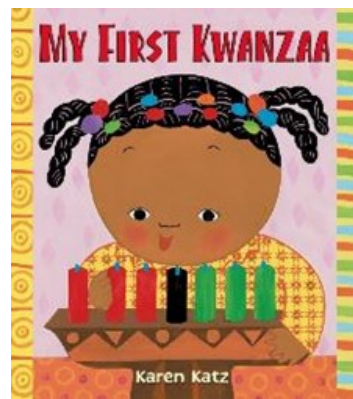
I was interested in doing a book about ethnic holidays. Kwanzaa was the perfect one to do. My editor thought it was a very good idea, so we did the book. We then went on to do my first Ramadan, my first Chinese New Year, and now we are publishing my first Earth Day. In two years, we will publish my first Passover. So, it was just an idea I had.

How can people find your book? Can people buy your book in Canada?

You can find my books on Amazon. Is there an Amazon in Canada? Isn't there an Amazon everywhere.

What else would you like to add?

Thank you for reading this. I hope you enjoyed it and I hope you will go and look at my books.



O Christmas Tea: A British Comedy (Kamloops)

Date & Time

Tue Dec 19, 2023, at 08:30 pm (GMT-07:00)

Sagebrush Theatre, 1300 9th Avenue, Kamloops, BC, Canada

About the event O Christmas Tea: A British Comedy (Kamloops)

Fans of Monty Python, Mr. Bean, and Dr. Seuss... Grab your teacups!

Off-Broadway Comedians and London's 3-time IMPRESARIO Award-Winners, James & Jamesy return with their outrageously funny and brilliantly inventive Christmas comedy classic O Christmas Tea — an astonishing show that delights thousands of hearts every holiday season.

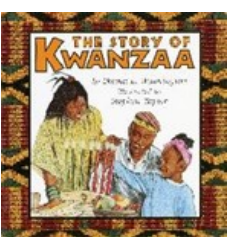
Watch the trailer and get a taste of O Christmas Tea here: <https://ochristmastea.com/>

When catastrophe strikes at James and Jamesy's Christmas tea party, flooding the world with tea, the friends leap into action, finding innovative and hilarious solutions to keep them afloat. Redefining immersive theatre, these masters of physical comedy—with over 25 comedy awards to their name—sweep the audience out to sea in a jolly aquatic escapade brimming with whimsy, action, and ingenuity in a celebration of friendship at Christmas.

Hailed as “a child's imagination on steroids” by London Free Press and “a masterpiece of physical comedy” by Theatre In London, critics rave for the charismatic James & Jamesy. A must-see performance on the international comedy circuit, the unstoppable duo, regarded as “one of the most popular fringe duos ever” (CBC), has been named Best of Fest (Orlando, Toronto, Winnipeg, Ottawa), Most Outstanding Show (London), Best Comedy (Victoria), Patrons' Pick (London), among many other accolades.

Taken from <https://allevents.in/kamloops/o-christmas-tea-a-british-comedy-kamloops/200025430680451>





The story of Kwanzaa

By Krystian

Meet author Donna Washington, an award-winning professional storyteller, published author, spoken word recording artist, and artist educator. She is an army brat and has lived in a number of states in America. She spent a chunk of her childhood in South Korea and graduated from Northwestern University.

She has been a professional storyteller for thirty-six years and this is the only job she has ever had as a grown-up person.

She has two adult children and her husband, David, is also her business manager. She & her husband live in Durham, NC with their 16-year-old cat, Flash.

What is the book **The Story of Kwanzaa** about?

The Story of Kwanzaa explains how the festival was created, how it is celebrated, and why we celebrate it. If you get this book, you will learn what you need to know to understand and celebrate Kwanzaa.

How did you come up with this book?

When I was a new author, an editor called me and asked if I would be willing to write this book. It is a non-fiction book. I wanted to find a way to make the festival approachable to everyone.

How can people celebrate this holiday?

You can get the book and use it as a guide. There might be communal celebrations going on in your community. You should find them and participate. Kwanzaa is a festival about civic responsibility. So, during the festival, families are encouraged to purchase things at local stores, eat at locally owned restaurants, and donate and work at local charities.

What is this holiday about and what should people know?

Kwanzaa is a festival about the importance of participating in your community, investing your time and effort in building connections with your neighbors, and honoring your family.

Sometimes people say to me, "Kwanzaa is just a made up thing." Well, the truth is, every single celebration humans participate in was made up by someone. The longer you do a thing, the more it becomes tradition. Kwanzaa is a way of embracing our communities, neighbors, and families. It is a celebration of all of the good things we create when we come together and take care of each other.

Why is this holiday important to celebrate?

The more we care for our communities, share our gifts, and appreciate the gifts of others, the more we understand people who might not look like us. Building peaceful, understanding communities is important. Supporting local business owners in a world where we have big box stores is important. You can find out more about what is in your community that you might not even know about if you go looking.

What do people enjoy about your book?

It is an easy way to understand Kwanzaa. It is a good resource to each other about Kwanzaa. It is a great primer!

Where can people buy your book and can they buy it in Canada? Yes, you can buy The Story of Kwanzaa in Canada. In fact, the illustrator is Canadian!

What else would you like to add? When is Kwanzaa this year?

Kwanzaa is always celebrated starting the 26th of December. It runs for seven days. I have also written a book called Li'l Rabbit's Kwanzaa which is a fun picture book to read at Kwanzaa time. You don't have to know anything about the festival to read the book. There is a little guide in the back that explains the words you find in the book, and Shane Evans' delightful illustrations help tell the story.



Our Condolences

By Krystian

We have been deeply saddened to hear of the terrible conflict that has been happening in between Israel and Palestine. Many people have been hurt or killed in recent weeks. There is no place for hate in the world. Even if you don't believe in the faith of others, you should not go out and hurt or kill them; that's wrong and not nice.

At the Kamloops Self Advocate Newsletter, we care about all people and believe everyone should be treated with kindness, compassion, love, respect and should not be attacked for their beliefs.





Cassie McNutt does good fundraisers for charities during the holidays.

A little about Cassie

I am currently 16 years old and attend Valleyview Secondary School in grade 12 (I will be 17 on Nov 15th).

I founded my annual charity drive in 2019 with my parents, Don and Lisa McNutt. We have supported local non-profits including The Out of the Cold Shelter, Christmas Amalgamated, and for the past 3 years Kamloops Hospice Association.

This year we are organizing a province wide 50/50 raffle in support of the Kamloops Hospice. My goal is \$80,000 but the raffle site can go up to \$100,000 so we are aiming high! But I'm sure we can do it with the community support as last year we surpassed our goal of \$20,000 and ended up raising \$58,287.

The raffle officially starts on Nov 15th- Dec 20th... We have a link where people can start donating now before the raffle starts (attached to email), and I will have the raffle link going up on the 15th of November as well.

We also decorate my house every year with a huge amount of Christmas lights (appx 44,000 last year!) And light it up for anyone to come by and see (@ 5215 Dallas Drive, Kamloops BC) this year the light up event will be held on December 2nd and the lights will stay on until Christmas.

I absolutely love supporting my community and giving back, especially during the holidays. It is the best gift to be able to make others smile and inspire other young people to give back as well. 😊 I am also a Kamloops Ambassador 2023/2024

Link <https://www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/kamloops-hospice-association/campaign/cassies-charity-drive/>

Sincerely,
Cassie McNutt.

Christmas Jokes

Q: Which reindeer likes to clean?

A: Comet

Q: Why does everybody like Frosty the Snowman?

A: Because he is so cool!

Q: When does New Year's Day come before Christmas Day?

A: Every year!

Q: Why do mummies like the holidays?

A: Because of all the wrapping!

Q: What do you get from a cow at the North Pole?

A: Ice cream.

Q: What is a parents favorite Christmas carol?

A: Silent night!

Q: What do cats and dogs call Santa Clause?

A: Santa paws!!!

Q: What does Santa like to do in the garden?

A: Hoe, hoe, hoe!



The 3rd Annual Canadian Health and Wellbeing in Developmental Disabilities

February 7-8, 2024 — Digital Conference

The Canadian Health and Wellbeing in Developmental Disabilities Conference is an interprofessional conference where health care providers and community partners connect to share educational and informative updates and practical, innovative, promising and effective practices that improve the health and wellbeing of people with developmental disabilities across the lifespan.

The conference strives to achieve equity, diversity, and inclusion through recognition of intersectionality—the interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender as they apply to people with developmental disabilities, creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage.

Fees General Attendee \$99 Pre-Sale until Sep 29 \$195 Early Bird until Dec 31 \$265 Regular Rate
Students, Residents & Fellows **Proof of trainee/student status is required* \$99. People with Developmental Disabilities and Family Members “Intended for individuals not actively working in the field who would face financial barriers; if additional barriers exist, please contact us for support \$49. Taken from <https://www.healthandwellbeingindd.ca/>





Christmas Cousins Podcast

By Krystian

***Meet cousins** Seth and Chad, two real cousins who started a podcast and who enjoy the holidays. In this interview, you'll learn about how they got started and some of the fun they get up to.*

How did you come up with the podcast?

Chad has been way into the holidays for a while now, and I really didn't do anything or celebrate in any real kind of way. So, Cousin Chad approached me with an idea to guide me along a journey introducing me to everything Christmas, and then some. The original idea came from Cousins Chad's wife Cousin Leslie. Although, I'm pretty sure he doesn't call his wife Cousin Leslie. But Leslie, after a week of graciously hosting my son and I at their home, also having to endure a week of Cousin Seth and Cousin Chad hijinks and overall immaturity - she had the great suggestion, and wherewithal to insist we channel all this silliness into something productive.

What do you enjoy about this new podcast?

We both love that we get to be creative, funny and best of all talk to each other every day. It really feels like we're kids again acting out a dream.

Why will people enjoy your podcast?

We try to be a funny and entertaining show, enough so that maybe we can help others find a little respite from their daily stressors. Especially around the holidays when things tend to get a little chaotic.

What will people enjoy about your podcast?

First and foremost, we hope it makes them laugh. Whatever that is. Anything from holiday food tasting mishaps, to our various thoughts and observations we pepper into our holiday movie reviews.

How do you celebrate Christmas?

I [Cousin Seth] really haven't done much of anything up until this point. But Cousin Chad is determined to make sure that not a Christmas goes by moving forward that I am not up to my ears in Christmas celebration, cheer and Tinsel. Cousin Chad, as we know from the show, or maybe you don't, does it all. He and his family host a gigantic family dinner, they attend festivals, a Christmas tornado swoops through their home completely covering everything in tinsel, garland, stockings, Christmas figurines, etc. The list goes on and on. Did I mention tinsel in excess?

What kind of Christmas food do you enjoy? Do you like eggnog?

I [Cousin Seth] love mostly all Christmas Cookies, and these Candied Pecans that a family friend makes a batch of and gives to us every year. To be honest, I've never had Eggnog. But I guess I should try it at some point. I don't want to speak for Cousin Chad, but I'm pretty sure it's a "No" for him on the regular Eggnog. However, he does enjoy a nice Almond Eggnog - I just recently learned. His preferred Christmas foods would make quite a long list. He does have some fascinating eating habits and food choices though. Although, he confirmed his all-time favorite is, in some form or another, an Acai bowl. When he customizes it, or "Chadifies" it, as I [Cousin Seth] like to call it - it's a work of art. I'm excited to see what he comes up with for his holiday themed ones.

What kind of Christmas music do you enjoy?

For us, we want the crooners doing the classics. We'll take the Tony Bennet's, the Sinatra's, even Canada's own Micheal Bublé. We are also big fans of different punk rock and heavy metal artists doing their own versions of well-known Christmas songs.

What kind of Christmas movies do you like?

We both love National Lampoons "Christmas Vacation." I [Cousin Seth] am also a huge fan of the movie "A Christmas Story." For Cousin Chad, it will come as no surprise to our listeners - but if you slap a "Hallmark Holiday Seal" on it- he'll watch it and most likely enjoy it.

What do you enjoy about your podcast?

It's really nice to have a platform to laugh and joke around on. We've gotten to meet and talk to some really some great folks. We really feel like we're building a little community with this, which is so much fun and brings us so much joy. Something that I think we all kind of need right now.

What else would you like to add? How can people find your podcast online?

We have a lot of different types of shows, some for folks who listen in short bursts all the way to the listener with a dreaded long morning commute. You can find the Christmas Cousins Pod podcast on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, Google Podcasts or wherever you get your podcasts:

Also, please come check us out on our socials at:

Instagram (@christascousinspod) X (Twitter): @Xmascousinspod, Facebook: (Christmas Cousins Pod), YouTube: (@christascousinspod2) and at our direct email: christascousinspod@gmail.com





Breakfast with Santa

Taken from <https://allevents.in/kamloops/breakfast-with-santa/10000742419957077>

Sat Dec 23 2023 at 10:00 am to 12:00 pm at the Coast Kamloops Hotel & Conference Centre, 1250 Rogers Way, Kamloops, Canada

Come join us for a jolly morning with Santa, where you can enjoy a delicious breakfast and get into the festive spirit! Santa Claus himself will be making a special appearance to spread holiday cheer.

Bring your little ones for a delightful breakfast and a chance to meet Santa in person. It's the perfect way to start the holiday season! Don't forget to bring your camera to capture those precious moments with Santa. This event is sure to make your family's Christmas extra special. See you there!

Our event will benefit the Royal Inland Hospital's Neonatal Intensive Care Unit. We hope to raise approximately \$10,000.

Featuring Santa Claus himself & friends. As well as gifts for the children, multiple activities, and face painting.

Tickets: \$27 per person + applicable taxes.

Tickets include: breakfast buffet, cookie decorating, meeting with Santa, crafts, activities, and much more.

please be advised that your seat location will be non-negotiable at the event, the seats chosen at the time of purchasing your ticket will be your seat at the event



ELF SPECIAL EVENT SATURDAY, DEC 16TH @ 2:00 PM at PARAMOUNT THEATRE 503 Victoria Street

When young Buddy falls into Santa's gift sack on Christmas Eve, he's transported back to the North Pole and raised as a toy-making elf by Santa's helpers. But as he grows into adulthood, he can't shake the nagging feeling that he doesn't belong. Buddy vows to visit Manhattan and find his real dad, a workaholic publisher.

DIRECTED BY: Jon Favreau

STARRING: Will Ferrell, James Caan, Zooey Deschanel

GENRE(S): Comedy, Family, Fantasy

RUNTIME: 1h 37m minutes

Rated G

Taken from <https://www.thekfs.ca/movie/13241/>

Wine Glass Snow Globe Candle Holder

By Tami

Supplies you will need:

- Wine glass (1 or 2)
- Hot glue gun
- Figurines/ornaments
- Fake snow or white cotton balls
- White paint
- Sturdy cardboard (cereal or cracker box)
- Ribbon (your choice)
- Pillar candle (1 or 2 if needed)

Instructions:

1. Trace the bottom of the wine glass on a piece of thin cardboard. Cut it out, paint it white, and let it dry.
2. Poor some fake snow or white cotton balls in your wine glass. Glue figurines (or ornaments) to the cardboard circle.
3. Put hot glue around the rim of the wine and glass and then tip the figurines upside down and press around the edges. If any snow falls out, add extra hot glue.
4. (Optional) paint the outside of the bottom of the rim with white paint and sprinkle glitter or fake snow. If there is excess cardboard cut it off.
5. Tie a bow with the ribbon and hot glue it on the stem near the bottom of the globe.
6. Top with a pretty pillar candle.

Enjoy and have fun with this craft!



Great Actor and TV Christmas Series

By Riley

There is this actor that I love, mostly because of his great comedy in the films and tv series he's in. His name is Tim Allen and he has a series out on Disney plus. It is called The Santa Clauses and it is a sequel to the Santa Clause movies. Tim Allen and his daughter are in it together. His real-life daughter his daughter in the tv series. I like the humor between Tim and his daughter and how they both have great personalities.

The show tells about what happened to the Santa Claus that fell off Tim's roof in the first film. They show more of that story and where that Santa disappeared to. It's a 5 out of 5 for story telling. Anyone that hasn't watched it, watch it now because there is a season 2 on its way!

Blazers Report (2023-24 Regular Season)

By Andrew

With the first half of the 2023-24 Blazers Season coming to a close with 13 games to go before the Christmas Break on the horizon, the Blazers sit in 5th place of the B.C. Division with 5 Wins 12 Losses 2 Overtime Losses and 1 Shootout Loss with 13 points after 20 games played. After the Christmas Break, I look for the team to start the second half to come out and have a good start and go on a winning streak. Hopefully, I see the Blazers being either in 3rd or 4th place in the B.C. Division.



Welcome Winter Block Party

Dec 9, 2023 | 12-4pm

300 Block Victoria Street

The Welcome Winter Block Party presented by **Dearborn Ford Kamloops** is back on December 9th from 12-4PM! Join us for an afternoon of local shopping, holiday crafts, warm drinks, and all the festive vibes (including a visit from the man himself!)

Taken from <https://www.tourismkamloops.com/holidayevents/>

Wildlights Festival at the BC Wildlife Park

Dec 15, 2023 - Jan 7, 2024 | 4-9pm

9077 Dallas Dr.

The BC Wildlife Park's Wildlights Festival returns for the 2023/24 season. Their team worked incredibly hard to set up nearly 1 million lights, endless light displays, and picture perfect scenes to capture holiday memories.

Details coming soon

Taken from <https://www.tourismkamloops.com/holidayevents/>



Woodward Christmas Tree Farm

Nov 19 - Dec 18, 2023

5505 Westsyde Rd.

The Woodward Christmas Tree Farm has been a part of many people's Christmas Traditions for over 30 years. Once again, we are happy to welcome you and your family to our "Christmas Tree Patch" to select your own Christmas Tree! Each weekend, we will have hay wagon rides, mulled wine, and hot apple cider to enjoy by the bonfire. While you visit, stock up on tasty adult-beverage Christmas gifts from Privato Vineyard and Winery and Woodward's Cider.

Taken from <https://www.tourismkamloops.com/holidayevents/>



Home Alone 3

By Krystian

I love the story line behind Home Alone 3. More than not, the first movie is usually the best in a series of shows, but not this time. In my opinion, Alex D. Linx, who played the 8-year-old child in Home Alone 3, was better than Macaulay Culkin in Home Alone 1 and 2. Alex's reactions seemed cuter; whereas in Home alone 1, Kevin's reactions showed more disrespect. The parrot in the movie also made the show because of its funny remarks. There is a collection of Home Alone movies on Disney Plus, including this one, which is by far my favorite of the Home Alone movies. It isn't Christmas without our tradition of sitting in front of the fireplace with a bowl of popcorn and hot chocolate while watching Home Alone 3 every year.



Kindness and Compassion with Emily McCallum

By Lisa Coriale

As self advocates, we teach those around us how to look at life from our perspective. Kindness and compassion change our interactions from strained, stressful, unpleasant, and hurtful to easy, peaceful, joyful, and healthy. There are many simple ways to express and offer kindness and compassion each day. This feature shows us how many different individuals use kindness and compassion to improve their daily lives and the lives of those around them.

Please tell me about yourself.

Hello, I'm Emily McCallum and I grew up in Kamloops.

What do you do for a living?

I have been a Behavior Consultant for 20 years and am the Director of New Horizons Professional Support Services.

What does kindness and compassion mean to you? To me, kindness and compassion means truly trying to understand the perspective and experience of other people and being empathetic to their unique struggles.

Why is it important to show kindness and compassion to others?

Everyone experiences challenges and you never know what is going on in the background for someone. If you want to get along with people, and for others to also treat you with kindness, you have to start by understanding that everyone's experiences are unique and valid.

How do you show kindness and compassion to others?

By first being curious and listening – I want to learn what is going on for the person and how they are experiencing the world. Then, I can be kind to them in a way that they truly appreciate.

How can people show compassion when they are in community?

By stopping and considering that everyone experiences things differently and all experiences are equally valid. Your opinion might be right for you, but not right for them. Instead of being judgemental, be open minded and take the opportunity to learn about each other.

What are some ways people can show kindness and compassion to people with diverse abilities?

Again, learn about the person, be curious about what they like and dislike, what brings them joy, and what they might be struggling with. Don't make assumptions based on your own experiences.

Being kind to ourselves improves our mental health. In what ways are you kind to yourself?

It took me a long time to learn that I can't do everything for everyone and that I should give myself the same kindness that I do to everyone else. I like to shut off work and go in the garden, listen to audiobooks, and hang out with my husband and cat.

People sometimes have negative views and/or attitudes towards people with diverse abilities. What do you do, or can you do, to increase kindness and compassion for those who are diversely abled?

In my job, we try to truly get to know the person we are supporting and learn the context behind why they might be struggling – then we can advocate to others around them to make changes so that life is easier for everyone. There is a saying: "be my microphone, not my voice" – that is what we try to do, is amplify the perspective and needs of people who maybe can't be heard so easily.

Lisa's Thoughts – This month I am honoured and excited to feature Emily McCallum, Director of New Horizons Professional Support Services in Kamloops, BC.

Emily emphasizes the importance of truly trying to understand the perspective and experience of other people in order to be empathetic to their unique struggles. She is aware that there is always something going on in the background of people's lives that leads to their behaviour. When I'm going through difficult challenges, I appreciate people who recognize that and then interact with me in a kind and compassionate way.

I resonate with Emily's thoughts about listening, different perspectives and opinions, and assumptions. Listening with the intent to understand how and why someone is different encourages us to be open minded and to learn how that person sees the world. This allows us to accept different opinions even when they aren't ours. We realize that assumptions are often limiting and contribute to misunderstanding.

Continued on next page

**BE MY
MICROPHONE**

**NOT MY
VOICE**



Kindness and Compassion with Emily McCallum continued

Emily reminds us that it is important to treat ourselves with as much respect and kindness as we do others. It's too easy to forget to be kind to ourselves, especially when we are working hard on being kind to others.

Finally, I love the quote that Emily shares "be my microphone, not my voice". This is a very powerful metaphor because it expresses that everyone has their own voice but some aren't easily heard. A microphone amplifies sound without taking away or changing the meaning of the words. This is crucial to being an effective advocate for people with diverse abilities and people who cannot speak for themselves.

I would like to thank Emily very much for the powerful images she provided to accompany her interview.

CHRISTMAS WITH THE KSO At Sagebrush Theatre.

Get into the holiday spirit with our annual celebration of the festive season! Featuring the KSO Chorus and students from the Kamloops Symphony Music School, this concert boasts a sparkingly jolly programme with traditional hits from the Baroque to today, full of opportunities to sing along to your favourite carols.

Tickets are available from Kamloops Live! Box Office.

Saturday, December 16, 2:00 & 7:30 pm

Sunday, December 17, 2:00 pm

Sagebrush Theatre

A Fairfield by Marriott Kamloops Signature Performance

A Kelson Group Pops Performance



Taken from <https://www.kamloopssymphony.com/concerts/christmas-kso.htm>



Canada Pacific Holiday Train

Presented By: Canada Pacific

Dates: December 16, 2023

Location: Parking lot near the Sandman Centre

Address: 300 Lorne St., Kamloops, BC

Time: 5:00 PM to 5:30 PM

Price: Free but cash and non-perishable food donations are encouraged for Kamloops Food Bank

The 2023 CPKC Holiday Train tours Canada and the United States Nov. 20 through Dec. 19, raising money, food and awareness for the important work that food banks do in their communities. Professional musicians play free concerts from the brightly decorated train's stage. CPKC makes a donation to the local food shelf at each stop and encourages attendees to also donate.

Since its inception in 1999, the CPKC Holiday Train has raised more than \$22.5 million and more than 5 million pounds of food for community food banks across North America.

Taken from <https://www.tourismkamloops.com/event/canada-pacific-holiday-train/16870/>

Goodbye Kamloops This Week

We are sad to hear Kamloops This Week closed. The Kamloops Self Advocate Newsletter has been interviewed and promoted many times by Kamloops This Week, which helped to make the newsletter well known in the community of Kamloops and beyond. Thank you all of your support and for helping to make the newsletter well known. Goodbye Kamloops this Week!



10 Ways to Have a Mindful Christmas

5 MIN READ • 16TH MARCH 2021 by Health and Wellbeing

Taken from <https://www.healthwellbeing.com/10-ways-to-have-a-mindful-christmas/#:~:text=10%20Ways%20To%20Have%20A%20Mindful%20Christmas%20,yoga%20...%204%20Focus%20on%20your%20breathing%20>



The festive season can be overwhelming, so we've rounded up the experts to show you how to feel more present (no pun intended)

How does Christmas make you feel? If your answer is less 'full of the holiday spirit' and more 'just trying to keep it together', we hear you. In fact, according to MIND, one in four adults feel anxious over the festive period, as the extra demands become overwhelming. All is not lost, however, and you can enjoy the season (yes, really). We asked the experts for their top tips for being more mindful throughout the day, which will make a big difference to your Christmas this year.

Change up your mornings.

"Setting an intention to spend some time with yourself first thing in the morning will enable you to start your day right and feel a greater sense of calm as you navigate busy days throughout the festive period," says Alister Gray, life and mindset coach and founder of Mindful Talent (mindfultalent.co.uk). Try his ideas that can replace a period of aimless scrolling in 15 minutes or less:

1. A cup of tea or coffee in the garden with no distractions
2. A 10-minute meditation in a room where you won't be disturbed.
3. A 15-minute walk in nature where you set an intention to be fully present.
4. Dedicate some time to read a book that enables you to switch off your mind

Use your time.

"Every morning, ask yourself what is the one thing you need to do today to take better care of yourself and, whether it's physical, mental or emotional, commit to just that one thing," says yoga teacher Brenda Ward (brendayoga.co.uk). "It really can be as simple as making sure you have a healthy lunch, spend 10 minutes in the fresh air or read a chapter of your favourite book. Next, take a lovely full breath. Notice whether you feel tight or restricted in your belly and, if you do, simply soften and relax this area. Place your hand on your belly and then, when you next breathe in, allow your belly to gently expand and, when you breathe out, draw it back gently towards the spine. Do this three times and feel the subtle difference that mindful breathing makes."

Make more of your morning drinks.

"If coffee or tea is your morning drink, take time while you prepare it to be present in the task and mindful of how you do this," says personal trainer and wellbeing coach Fiona Storey (becomingyou.today). "Just by simply noticing what you are doing, you will stop your mind wandering ahead of itself, rushing to the next task. The coffee has to be made, so allow yourself to enjoy the process fully and then you will also appreciate the real taste! For example: If it is the smell you like, hold it under your nose and close your eyes. Breathe in naturally, savouring the aroma. Take three to four breaths, this way you can take in the smell with each breath, before the taste hits you. Done regularly, this will not only bring you into the present moment and give you a few moments of pleasure and calm, but it will enhance your sense of smell."

Remember what the season is about.

"Christmas time is meant to be filled with joy, merriment and thankfulness," says Mark Newey, psychotherapist and founder of headucate.me. "Carve out time with family and friends to reconnect with one another. Slow down and think about what you really want to do this season." Gratitude is also important: "Before you begin handing out the gifts and tearing in to them, take a moment to reflect on all of your blessings since last Christmas," Mark adds. "Write them down. Look at all of the good you have in your life and be grateful."

Try yoga.

Yoga teacher Cheryl MacDonald, founder of YogaBellies (yogabellies.com), suggests these postures to help overcome stress and anxiety during the festive season:

1. Downward-facing dog

This pose enables fresh blood to flow into your body. It stretches the neck and cervical spine, releasing the stress in them, thereby reducing anxiety and calming your being.

2. Seated forward bend

This pose calms the brain and helps relieve stress and mild depression by stretching the spine, shoulders, and hamstrings. The stretch soothes headaches and anxiety, reduces fatigue and is therapeutic for high blood pressure.

3. Wide-angle standing forward bend

This pose helps relieve tension in your back, shoulders, and neck and improves the functioning of your nervous system. It calms you and reduces anxiety.

Continued on next page

10 Ways to Have a Mindful Christmas continued

Try Yoga

4. Upward-facing bow

A back bend will open your heart and release the stiffness between the shoulder blades. At some point, you will have some sort of emotional release, which you may or may not be conscious of. It's about doing the inner work to shift or change and be open to doing your best with your weaknesses and faults.

5. Child's pose

This pose helps calm your brain and relieves stress and anxiety. It gently stretches your lower back and hips, enabling your body to relax. Peace and calm prevail over your entire being, helping you deal with depression better.

Consciously choose the foods you love.

"Psychological research indicates that we make over 200 food-related decisions every day, with 90 percent happening outside our awareness", says Dr Aria, a clinical psychologist specialising in weight loss and mindfulness (dr-aria.com). "We often eat festive foods at Christmas parties or events because they are in front of us. However, unless you really enjoy mince pies, eggnog or Christmas cake, you'll be unnecessarily consuming extra calories. Focus on making mindful choices and only choose the foods that you really enjoy!"

Focus on your breathing.

"Taking control of your breathing is a great way to manage symptoms of social anxiety," says Stuart Sandeman, the UK's leading breath coach and founder of Breathpod (breathpod.me). "It allows you to balance your body and mind so that you can enjoy quality time with friends and family." Try Stuart's 'If in doubt breathe it out' technique, which is designed to balance your nervous system to wave goodbye to anxious feelings:

1. Breathe in through your nose using your diaphragm for a count of five.
2. Hold your breath for a count of five.
3. Breathe out through your mouth for a count of 10.
4. Repeat for five rounds.

Scan your body.

"When we are under increased pressure, it can be difficult to remain present and fully engaged with what is happening around us," says Kate Harahan, holistic therapist, yoga teacher and franchise owner of Neal's Yard Remedies Edinburgh (nealsyardremediesedinburgh.com). She recommends doing a body scan to help you stay centred, because when you're aware of what is happening within your body, you can be more present and engaged with what is happening outside your body. "Lie down still, and quickly scan through your body, focusing on relaxing every individual part," she explains. "Start with your right big toe, right second toe, right third toe, right little toe, right shin, right calf, right knee, and work your way through your entire body. I usually use this exercise at nighttime to help me fall asleep, and rarely make it around the entire body before falling asleep."

Be grateful.

"At the end of every day, say thank you for three things: the people who love you, the food you eat, your healthy body, or anything else you feel grateful for," says Brenda.

Christmas Movie Quotes

"Faith is believing in things when common sense tells you not to." — Fred Gailey, "Miracle on 34th Street"

"The thing about trains ... it doesn't matter where they're going. What matters is deciding to get on." — Conductor, "The Polar Express"

"This is extremely important. Will you please tell Santa that instead of presents this year, I just want my family back?" — Kevin McCallister, "Home Alone"

"You can mess with a lot of things. But you can't mess with kids on Christmas." — Kevin McCallister, "Home Alone 2: Lost in New York"

"Just because I cannot see it, doesn't mean I can't believe it!" — Jack Skellington, "The Nightmare Before Christmas"



It was the Night Before Christmas on Spotify

By Ben

Did you know that Spotify has a Christmas App? Why I like Christmas on Spotify is because it gets me into the Christmas spirit and gets me in the mood for holiday festivities. It also lets me listen to my top 5 favourites songs.

In December, Spotify has come out with new Christmas favourites to add to their collections.

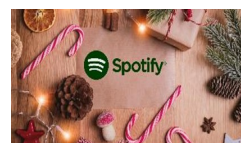
Grandma Got Run Over by Reindeer
Silver Bells

Blue Christmas by Elvis Presley

I'm Dreaming of a White Christmas

Santa Claus is Coming to Town by Katy Perry

You can search holiday music on Spotify and find your favourites, too!



Christmas with Autism: Ho-Ho-Hold the Expectations

Taken from <https://autismawarenesscentre.com/christmas-with-autism-hold-the-expectations/>

By Maureen Bennie

December 18, 2016



The Christmas holidays are a time of great excitement and anticipation. Holidays also mean changes in the schedule, visitors, crowds, line-ups, noise, and socializing. For autistic children, the Christmas holidays can be a stressful and anxious time. Meeting family demands can be especially nerve-wracking, particularly if you want to break with time-honoured traditions that just don't work for an autistic child. Here are a few ideas for making the holidays happy.

1)Family Expectations – Be clear with other family members what will and won't work and make a compromise. For example, my mother wants us to spend most of the day on December 24th at her house, then go to an evening mass. To get a seat, you have to be there one hour before the mass starts. I know this will be too much for my two children on the spectrum, so I've opted to just spend the afternoon at Grandma's, then go home for a quiet, family dinner on our own. We'll still see the family, just not for the same amount of time everyone else will.

2)Pick the Right Time for Activities – With everyone on Christmas break, most attractions will be busier. Call ahead and ask when the less busy times are. Matinees are better than evening shows. If eating out, get there by 5 pm or after 7 pm. A Sunday may be quieter than a Saturday; mornings are usually better at most places.

3)Maintain Routines – Try to stick with routines like bedtime, bath time and meals. If that's impossible, try to keep one routine in place so that the child has something he can count on being the same. Kids like predictability. If there is a change in routine, let your child know ahead of time on the schedule.

4)Food – If your child follows a special diet, let everyone know and ask them not to offer food. Well-meaning people think a child is missing out if they don't try all the Christmas treats. Parents know the consequences of dietary changes. Having a child that is sick or won't sleep due to what he ate is no fun.

5)Visiting – When out visiting, limit the length of the visit and make sure your child brings a few things that he finds comforting. Ask your hostess where there is a quiet space available if your child needs it.

6)Visitors – Let potential visitors know that unannounced visits are stressful. Ask that they call ahead and come at times that work for your family. Limit how long they stay ahead of time. (i.e. – We'd love to see you for an hour, but then Joey has to go for a nap or we'll be going out.)

7)Schedule in Some Respite Time – Finding people to babysit over the holidays can be trying, but with many university students home for the holidays, you may be able to enlist some help. Take in a movie, go for a walk – whatever lifts your spirits.

8)Seeing Santa – I was very inspired after reading this [article](#) about Calgary's [South centre Mall](#) organizing a special morning for autistic children to see Santa. There is potential for this to be a program across Canada. It could be called Sensational [Sensory Santa](#) because they accommodations meet the sensory needs of children with autism.

9)Christmas Fun – I came across this sensory article on how to host autism-friendly Christmas events. Go for a drive and see the Christmas lights at night. Decorate the tree over the course of a week – hang a few decorations a day so that it isn't a huge job in one go. Buy an Advent Calendar and count down the days until Christmas.

10)Christmas Presents – Some autistic children find presents overwhelming. Tearing off wrapping paper can be a challenge for those with fine motor issues. Some children might feel anxious not knowing what's inside. For those with fine motor issues, consider putting things in gift bags with loose tissue on top. Put a picture of what's inside the box on the outside. Not everything has to be opened in one day – stretch the gift opening over the course of a week.

Remember: Forget about everyone's holiday expectations and create your own traditions that work.

Every family has its own rhythm and pace. Do what works for your child – think about maintaining predictability through routines and familiar toys, places, and people. Merry Christmas to everyone across the globe!

Christmas Past Podcast

By Krystian

Brian Earl is an author and the creator of a podcast called Christmas Past. Today, it's one of the longest-running and highest-rated podcasts of its kind. In this interview, he talks about the podcast and his favourite holiday!

What is your Podcast about?

During the 2015 Christmas season, I wondered if NPR had some kind of Christmas podcast. But my search came up empty, so I figured I'd try to create something like that myself. The concept of the show is that I explore the history behind Christmas traditions in a storytelling style inspired by public radio news pieces. I wanted to create a way of talking about Christmas where curiosity was front and center. Christmas may be the most wonderful time of the year, but it's also the most fascinating!

What do you enjoy and do at your podcast?

Doing the podcast has given me a chance to learn more about my favorite holiday, and to be creative and put something out there for others to enjoy. And I love all the connections I've made with my listeners and the people I've interviewed for the show.

What do you enjoy about Christmas and how do you celebrate?

The great thing about Christmas is that it grows and changes with you. As a kid, it's all about Santa and gifts, as an adult, it may be about tradition and family, or something else entirely. I always look forward to the wonderful Christmas food and music. And I love the overall feeling of a magical kind of coziness. Lately, what I've loved most about it is seeing it through the eyes of my son.

It has changed now that I'm a dad to a three-year-old. The last few Christmases have been very child centric. When I meet people, they assume I go all out with decorating and light displays, or that I have a closet full of ugly Christmas sweaters. But that's just not my style. Throughout the season, I enjoy playing Christmas music on the piano, listening to my old vinyl records, and doing all kinds of traditional Christmas baking.

What is the backstory of TV Christmas romance movies?

Made for TV Christmas movies are nearly as old as TV itself. But these days, we can expect a flood of Christmas romances every year from the likes of the Hallmark Channel, Lifetime, Great American Family, UpTV, and many more. The trend started in the mid 2000s when the Hallmark channel hit on its formula of wholesome Christmas romances that take place in small towns. Once that formula was proven successful, many other networks jumped in. These movies are quick and inexpensive to produce, and account for a major portion of the network's yearly advertising revenue.

What kind of Christmas romance movies do you like and enjoy?

I'm actually not a huge fan of Christmas romance movies. I'll watch one or two a year. But there have been some standout examples. Two Turtle Doves was very good, and proof that you can work within the formula and still create something of substance.

What kind of Christmas food do you like? Do you like eggnog?

I'm a huge fan of fruitcake, Christmas pudding, mince pies, and gingerbread. I do like eggnog, but I find most of the store-bought kind to be sickly sweet.

What is your book about?

In 2022, Lyons Press published my book, Christmas Past: The Fascinating Stories Behind Our Favorite Holiday's Traditions. The book is a companion to the podcast. Each chapter tells the story behind a Christmas tradition.

Where can people buy your book and can it be bought in Canada?

Christmas Past is available wherever books are sold. And yes! It's available in Canada.

What made you think of creating this book?

With the podcast, I'm limited to audio. But I wanted to take the work I've been doing on the show and create something physical and visual...something you could put on the coffee table during the season and give as a gift. It felt like the natural next step to create the book.

How can people find your podcast?

Christmas Past is on all major podcast platforms, like Apple Podcasts, Spotify, and others.

Merry Christmas!



HANUKKAH December Holiday Tips for Interfaith Parents

Taken from: <https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/holiday-guidelines-for-interfaith-parents/>



Interfaith families struggle to be true to the religions of both parents during the winter holiday season.

BY DR. JUNE A HOROWITZ

It's difficult to go about "business as usual" during the December holiday season. While the whole country appears to be celebrating, non-Christians often feel either trapped and marginalized if they don't join the merriment, or they may feel disingenuous and even guilty if they choose to participate in Christmas observances.

Issues Faced by Interfaith Couples

For interfaith couples in which one partner is Jewish and the other identifies as Christian, the holidays of Hanukkah and Christmas pose opportunities and challenges. When children are not involved, couples frequently share their respective traditions and try out ways to observe the holidays together.

Many holiday practices can be shared without violating either partner's religious integrity. Prior to having children, the vast majority of interfaith couples I've known over the years tell me that the December holidays are not especially problematic and can even be enjoyable times to share each other's traditions.

When children are involved, however, the December holidays are more likely to be stressful. Couples often struggle over which holiday to observe or how the respective holidays will be celebrated. Even when the children are being raised as either clearly Jewish or Christian, questions may arise about celebrating the "other" holiday. Parents often ask if they will confuse their children.

This issue surfaces most commonly when the children are being raised as Jews. Christmas observance can be perceived as a threat to their children's Jewish identity and parents worry that others will question their commitment.

Parents' ambivalence or difficulty in making decisions about children's religious identity can lead to struggles between parents who try to attract children toward either religious tradition through holiday observances. Clearly, "letting the children decide" poses a real risk when Christmas and Hanukkah become competitions in which the number of presents is what matters most.

Some parents use holiday observances as a substitute for choosing a religious affiliation or education for the children. If parents have not decided on their children's religious upbringing, Christmas or Hanukkah observance can send signals to others that the children are being raised as either Christians or Jews—whether or not that is the case.

Guidelines for Making the Holidays Family Celebrations, Not Battlegrounds

Interfaith parents can lessen tensions and enjoy the December holiday season by making a commitment that Christmas and Hanukkah will not become a battleground. The following guidelines can help parents negotiate the December dilemma.

Share childhood holiday memories. When partners understand the significance of various activities and symbolic objects, greater openness and creative ideas for incorporating the meaning in holiday observances may emerge.

Respect each other's heritage. More than tolerance is needed to communicate acceptance of each parent's tradition. Sincere appreciation for the meaning and richness of both Christmas and Hanukkah will help parents to teach children effectively and to choose activities as partners rather than as adversaries.

Communicate the real spirit of the holidays. For example, families can select charities or organizations and make a donation rather than buy extra gifts. Volunteering to help others in need teaches children about the value of social action rather than materialism.

Recognize each partner's needs and work out ways to meet them. For example, one parent may wish to honor his or her heritage by having a holiday symbol at home or by visiting extended family. Denying this need will breed resentment, whereas, negotiating an acceptable plan recognizes the partner's need.

Keep the focus on the children's needs. Although parents' needs are important, they should not overshadow those of the children.

Try using the analogy of a birthday party when both holidays are observed and children are being raised in one religion. Children can understand that everyone wants other people to share a birthday celebration. Parents can use this common experience to explain that the family is helping Mom or Dad to celebrate her or his holiday so it will be fun and not lonely, just like going to someone else's birthday party. It can be fun to share even if it's not your birthday party!

Continued on next page



HANUKKAH December Holiday Tips for Interfaith Parents continued

When possible, celebrate holidays with extended family. Grandparents in particular wish to share holiday traditions with their grandchildren. Even when children are not being raised in the grandparents' religion, family celebrations can be avenues for relating, creating valued memories, and passing on traditions. Regardless of the specific holiday plans, "family togetherness" can result when the themes of inclusiveness and sharing overshadow those of competition and control.

Work as partners to develop new family traditions. Although it is easier to let others make the plans and do the work, creating ways to celebrate aspects of the holidays unites the family and avoids observing holidays vicariously through the grandparents.

Avoid making a competition out of the holidays. Parents who use presents to show children how wonderful "their" holiday is send the implicit message that it is better to identify with the religion associated with the most gifts.

Help children understand that they can enjoy Christmas and Hanukkah activities without betraying either parent or their religious upbringing. At the same time, use holidays to reinforce children's religious identity. Even children ask each other, "Are you Christmas or Hanukkah?" Children want to be able to have a holiday of their own. If the family celebrates both holidays, help children answer questions with responses such as, "We have Hanukkah at home and visit my grandparents for Christmas" or "We do something for both Christmas and Hanukkah because my mom (or dad) is Christian (or grew up Catholic or Protestant, etc.) and my dad (or mom) is Jewish."

December holidays come around every year. Negotiating ways to create family celebrations rather than struggles is worth the effort. Have a wonderful season this year!

Reprinted with permission from [The Guide to Jewish Interfaith Family Life: An InterfaithFamily.com Handbook](#) (Jewish Lights Publishing).



Christmas Everyday Club

By Krystian

Jay Roberts is a big fan of Christmas, so much so that he created the Christmas Everyday Club. In this interview, you'll find out what that is and how Jay came up with the idea.

How did you come up with Christmas Everyday Club?

I loved Christmas as a kid so when I became a father, I wanted to make every Christmas amazing for them. Then we thought, why wait all year for this feeling when we can create a place for people to go and enjoy it all year long. We want to build a community of like-minded people to love and share together.

What do people enjoy about Christmas Everyday Club?

I think people enjoy having somewhere to go and enjoy their love with like minded people. A place to escape the everyday stress of life so to speak.

What can people do in the club?

I am always trying to improve the Christmas Everyday Club across all platforms but the website is the best place to really enjoy as they can read blog posts, listen to carols, listen to Christmas music, watch full Christmas movies, chat in the forum, do trivia, learn history, check recipes and my favourite, download free printables to enjoy themselves or for their kids.

How do you celebrate Christmas?

I take my two sons to my sisters (as my mum died) and some other friends and family members come and we all have Christmas dinner together. We play games, sing on the karaoke, and enjoy a party afterwards.

What kind of Christmas movies do you enjoy?

I love movies but I watch Christmas movies throughout the year. My favourite ones are the made for tv types that Hallmark, Lifetime and Movies24 show.

What kind of Christmas food do you enjoy?

I enjoy the full Christmas dinner but the best thing on my plate is pigs in blanket. These are little sausages wrapped in bacon. Then afterwards I enjoy mince pies. These are like a pastry with a mixture of currents and something else that I'm not quite sure of. They are a treat/dessert and not a meat type of mince.

What kind of Christmas music do you enjoy?

I love all types but my favourite two are 'O Holy Night' and 'Carol of the Bells' but when my sons were little kids, we would dance to Sir Cliff Richards 'Mistletoe and Wine' and I would pick them up and pretend to put them on the tree. They loved it and would laugh so much. Now they would be able to pick me up instead.

What do you enjoy about Christmas?

I love being with the people I love but I love how it brings people together. The kindness and love it brings. It shouldn't just be once a year this kindness happens. Plus I am like a big kid so I get all excited for my sons.

What else would you like to add and how can people find you online?

My sons and I created a Christmas activity book that we buy lots, wrap them up and give away to strangers at Christmas. The book is designed to be given away to help cheer someone up and give a little Christmas joy their way.

If you want to find me, search Christmas Everyday Club online and on any social media and please feel free to come and enjoy with us. The Christmas Everyday Club is a place for everyone.

Thank you so much for your time. My sons and I wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Jay and sons

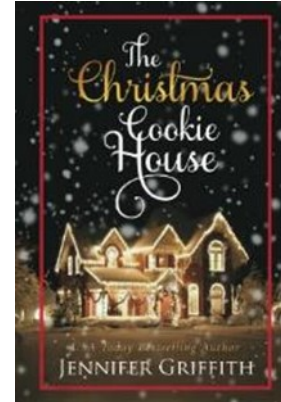




The Christmas Cookie House

By Krystian

Meet Jennifer Griffith, an author and a fan of all things Christmas. She took some time for an interview with Krystian and will also be part of a Zoom presentation in December.



How do you feel being USA Today Bestselling author? It was really a fun experience to try for those “letters.” I found out that we made the list while I was at Disneyland, right next to the Davy Crockett canoes, with my husband and daughters—which made Disneyland even better!

How did you become a bestselling author? A group of 20 wonderful clean romantic comedy authors and I worked together for this goal. We developed a charity anthology, and each of us wrote a novella to submit. (Mine was *Elevator Pitch*.) We all shared the book with our readers, and on release day, we had made enough sales to reach the list. I

really appreciated everyone who participated and made some new friends in the process.

What is the Christmas Cookie House book is about? The Christmas Cookie House is about Leela, who is taking care of her father who is ill, and she wants to honor her mother’s legacy by hosting the town fundraiser The Cookie House. She finds the perfect place: the Layton Mansion. What she doesn’t know is that it has been restored by its heir—Jay, a newly minted veterinarian. He renovated it to sell it so he can buy a partnership in a vet practice, but she needs it for the fundraiser! Sparks fly, and there’s a lot of baking and love.

How did you come up with the book name and the idea for this book? My aunt and uncle owned the house that is featured on the cover. I loved it! While I was on a plane ride, I sat next to a young man who happened to tell me he was in love with his girlfriend, and I told him I’d write up their (fictional) love story and set it at Christmas—in that house. Also, I knew I loved cookies MOST of all the baked goods, and my mother-in-law had the most delicious gingersnaps recipe. It all just fit together in a snowy, swoony story.

Why do you love writing Christmas books? I grew up in a big family, and my mom always made everything really special, especially at holidays. She was a “more is more” person. For a long time, I thought everyone had families like that, but when I found out that wasn’t the case, I wanted to give everyone the kind of warm, cozy, big-family, music-filled, faith-filled holiday experience my mother provided for us—through stories.

How do you celebrate Christmas? We keep Christmas Eve religious. We tell the story from Luke 2, using our crèche. My husband reads the verses, and the kids each choose a character from the set, and they take them up to the stable. We sing hymns together. Then, on Christmas morning, it’s present time! Santa brings gifts first thing. The kids line up behind a makeshift curtain until we say they can come out and find their presents on the sofas. They unwrap a couple of gifts and their stocking. Then, we eat breakfast (usually hash brown potatoes and blueberry muffins and juice), and then it’s time to open gifts that are wrapped under the tree. The kids each buy for one another in preparation, which they like doing. It’s nothing big, just little thoughtful things. We take turns. Then, we call family members. And in the afternoon, we celebrate our oldest son’s birthday with his favorite meal and a chocolate birthday cake. He was born on Christmas! I never expected such a blessing, to be the mother of a baby boy on Christmas morning, but there it is!

What kind of Christmas food do you like? Do you like eggnog? I’m a huge fan of all food, even eggnog—especially if it has *good* vanilla in it. My favorite thing to take to the neighbors is homemade caramels. If anyone would like the recipe, I am always happy to share it. (It’s easy—use the microwave and don’t stir!)

What kind of Christmas movies and music do you like? My top favorite is Handel’s “Messiah” for music, but I also love the Frank Sinatra and Dean Martin and Bing Crosby era big-band versions of pop and religious Christmas music. Who doesn’t love “White Christmas?” For movies—bring them on! I love the Hallmark romances set at Christmas, but I also watch It’s a Wonderful Life every year, as well as A Christmas Carol (the George C. Scott version is a favorite, but the Muppets version is really good too), and I love The Twelve Dates of Christmas and A Christmas Kiss for more modern holiday romances. When New Year’s Eve rolls around, we love watching the David Niven and Ginger Rogers classic The Bachelor Mother. So fun!

What else would you like to add? How can people find your book? Can people buy your book in Canada? Thanks for the interview! How fun to talk about these things that I love so much. I think of Christmas as “that time of year when the world falls in love,” like the lyrics of the song says. Love is the most powerful thing in the universe, and it’s great to share all year. All my Christmas and other clean romance books are on Amazon (including Amazon Canada), in ebook, paperback, and hardcover versions. I’ve got several books on audio to listen for free on YouTube at Stewart Plaid Publishing’s channel. I hope you have a wonderful holiday season!

Why Do Jews Play Dreidel on Hanukkah?

Taken from <https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/why-do-jews-play-dreidel-on-hanukkah/>

A dreidel (*sevivon* in Hebrew) is a spinning top, with four sides, each side featuring a different Hebrew letter: *nun* (נ), *gimmel* (ג), *hey* (ה) and either *shin* (ש) or *peh* (פ).

Why do Jews play dreidel?

There are a number of traditional explanations for why Jews play dreidel on Hanukkah.

The custom is often explained with a legend that, during the time of the Maccabees, when Jewish children were forbidden from studying Torah, they would defy the decree and study anyway. When a Greek official would come close they would put away their books and take out spinning tops, claiming they were just playing games.

In *A Different Light: The Hanukkah Book of Celebration*, Rabbi David Golinkin writes that a number of rabbis also developed elaborate numerological (*Gematria*) explanations for the dreidel game, using the numerical equivalents of the letters on it. For example, the sum of the numerical values of *nun*, *gimmel*, *hey* and *shin* is 358, which is also the numerical equivalent of the Hebrew letters spelling *Moshiach*, the Hebrew word for Messiah.

Others, Golinkin noted, have argued that the letters *nun*, *gimmel*, *hey* and *shin* are supposed to represent the four kingdoms that tried to destroy the Jews in ancient times: N = Nebuchadnezzar (Babylon); H = Haman (Persia); G = *Gog* (Greece) and S = *Seir* (Rome).

In reality, according to Golinkin, the dreidel is not a Jewish invention, but is instead an adaptation of a centuries-old game played in many cultures.

What is the significance of the Hebrew markings on the dreidel?

The letters on the dreidel are the first letters in a Hebrew phrase, *Nes gadol haya sham* (נֶס גָּדוֹל הָיָא שָׁמַיִם), which means “a great miracle happened there” (“there” being the land of Israel). In Israel, the letter *peh*, for the Hebrew word *po* (הֵכָּה) meaning “here,” replaces the letter *shin* to spell out “a great miracle happened here.”

How do you play dreidel?

I played dreidel and found it really boring. Are there any ways to liven it up?

A number of enterprising people have come up with alternatives and variations over the years. Here are five suggestions:

1. In 2009, Jennie Rivlin Roberts and her husband Webb Roberts developed a game called “No Limit Texas Dreidel,” which mashes up dreidel with “Texas Hold ‘Em” poker.
2. You can find several dreidel variations and dreidel-game ideas here.
3. After a lengthy explanation of traditional dreidel’s many failings, this 2010 Slate article introduces a new version it calls “Speed Dreidel.”
4. If you are hosting an adults-only dreidel game, you may want to try our partner site Alma’s Official Dreidel Drinking Game.
5. Have a dreidel-spinning competition, to see whose dreidel can spin the longest.

Are dreidels really made of clay?

Contrary to the popular children’s song, most dreidels on the market today are made of plastic, wood or metal.

What’s the world record for number of dreidels spun simultaneously in one place?

We’re glad you asked. As of July 2017 (yes, seems like an odd time of year for a dreidel competition, but...), 820 dreidels spun simultaneously for 10 seconds at the Boy Scout Jamboree in Glen Jean, West Virginia.

Where can I buy a dreidel?

You can buy a dreidel at any Judaica store in the weeks leading up to Hanukkah or choose from a wide variety of sizes and price points online. Or you can try to purchase the world’s most valuable dreidel (according to the Guinness Book of World Records), a \$14,000 diamond-and-gemstone dreidel, from Chabad of South Palm Beach.

Explore Hanukkah’s history, global traditions, food and more with My Jewish Learning’s “All About Hanukkah” email series. Sign up to take a journey through Hanukkah and go deeper into the Festival of Lights.

Taken from <https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/why-do-jews-play-dreidel-on-hanukkah/>

