

## In the spirit of ?

by SHERALYN ROMAN

A number of faith traditions are celebrated in December. Chief amongst them (as we are bombarded daily with reminders) is Christmas. However, no matter how you might celebrate during this holiday season, one thing remains consistent: not everyone has the financial means to celebrate.

In the spirit of the season ? however you and your family choose to acknowledge it, perhaps consider incorporating some form of ?holiday giving? as part of your annual traditions.

Whether you agree with the commercialization of Christmas, there's no denying that most children believe in some form of benevolent being. It might be Santa Claus, or a magical elf, or La Befana, Gnomes, Father Christmas or Kris Kringle. Whomever your child believes might be visiting sometime between December 25 - January 6, there's a good chance they'll be anxiously anticipating the arrival of some sort of gift. What a perfect world it would be if every child received one. Perhaps you can help make that happen.

Here are just a few suggestions on how you can help locally.

Caledon Community Services are hosting a Family Day of Giving at The Exchange on Healey Road.

Happening this Saturday, December 6, families are invited to a ?fun, hands-on day of volunteering.? Activities will include sorting food donations, preparing meals and ?spreading warmth to neighbours in need.? The hot cocoa is ?on the house,? and participants are encouraged to bring along a donation of non-perishable food or everyday essential items. CCS is also collecting monetary donations through their Season of Hope campaign, available online anytime.

Perhaps Friday night's Christmas in the Valley is more your style. It promises fun for everyone, but will also feature an opportunity to drop off a non-perishable food item or a new, unwrapped toy, at Santa's photo booth, hosted by the Humberview Huskies football team. As well, throughout our community, many local businesses both small and large are either hosting and/or supporting food and toy drives. Some are also providing matching dollar for dollar campaigns to several of our local charities, CCS included. To each of these companies, as well as to each and every one of you, thank you for your charitable giving.

Caledon Meals on Wheels supports area seniors, including through their Holiday Dinners for Seniors program. This holiday season, CMOW is one of the organizations whose donations are being matched, up to \$7,500, so any help you can provide will have an even greater impact.

Seniors are often left out of the holiday hustle and bustle in our earnest endeavours to make sure kids have a happy holiday, but many seniors are lonely and/or without loved ones nearby and making a donation goes a long way providing them with a hot meal and the knowledge that our community cares.

The Christmas Season is also a wonderful opportunity, if you are able, to teach your children about the joy of giving. Consider the age of your child(ren) and ask them to help you shop for an item a child their age might appreciate. Talk about budgeting and what your family, and perhaps even your child, can afford to pay. Maybe even factor in the cost of something like batteries if the toy requires them.

By getting your children involved in the decision-making AND the gift giving itself, the experience can be both a learning opportunity in basic math and budgeting as well as introducing the concept of philanthropy.

Luckily, we could go on and on. That means we truly have a community who cares about all its inhabitants and is ready, willing and

able to step up to offer support for our neighbours who may be experiencing difficulties during these trying, tariff-laden, challenging times.

Embrace the opportunity to give back in a way that is meaningful for your family. Do a little research online as to where and how you can donate locally, or use this column as a guidepost.

I might have a bit of a reputation for 'calling out' some of the people, events and happenings around Town that frustrate me (that's putting it mildly) but even for me, December should be a time when we think about our fellow residents in a more charitable way.

If you can, and in the spirit of the season ?. donate or volunteer in whatever way the spirit of the season means for you and your family.

Thank you for your generosity.