Peace on earth

by BRIAN LOCKHART

Peace on Earth, Goodwill toward men.

It is the holiday season and everyone looks forward to seeing family and friends, and enjoying everything good about Christmas.

The means giving gifts, having big dinners, going to a few parties, and enjoying a lot of socializing.

The overall meaning of the season means it's time to put your grudges aside, bury the hatchet, enjoy yourself with your family, and help those less fortunate.

Unfortunately, the world does not always work that way.

There is no peace on earth, and in many places, there is no goodwill toward your fellow inhabitants of this planet.

There are wars waging at several hot spots around the planet.

The Russian people have apparently not yet been told, or realize how many of their sons have died in a useless and futile war, that may expand in the near future if the Russian government decides to act on some of its threats. And if it expands to certain countries, we will be obligated through NATO, to get involved.

We are currently complicit in that war, whether good or bad, or whether we like it or not, through monetary means and supplying arms.

There are innocent people being held hostage in the Middle East, some of them are very young children who must be confused and sacred to death, and some of whom have already been murdered, and for those still alive, you can bet that no amount of Christmas cheer is going to ease their situation.

At the same time, other innocent people who had nothing to do with any of the events that have happened over the past few months, are being terrorized by bombs and missiles that have destroyed their homes.

So, what happens at Christmas? Hallmark will make the same movie that it made last year, but change the character names and move it to a different town.

King Charles will make a televised Christmas speech, and the Pope will also make some kind of speech ? the same one that's been made for the past half-century.

Linus will explain the true meaning of Christmas to Charlie Brown, and Ralphie will once again receive his Red Ryder Range 200 Shot BB gun and shoot himself in the eye with a ricochet, while his father battles his arch enemy in the basement.

Little kids will track Santa Claus on his journey through the NORAD radar system on Christmas eve, but fall asleep before he makes it anywhere near North America.

Children will rise at the crack of dawn, and wake their parents to see if Santa did arrive, and did he eat the cookies they left out for him?

Many turkeys will be the centrepiece of dinner, to which many people will wear their special Christmas clothes ? which cannot be

worn on any other day of the year.

Many of us will be missing a person or persons at the dinner table this year, who are gone and will never again be part of the family Christmas festivities.

In 1997, Mr. Rogers, the kids show host who invited you to be his neighbour, received a lifetime achievement award during the Daytime Emmy Awards. He stunned the audience, and brought many to tears, when he asked them to take ten seconds, to think about a special person who made a difference in their life. Mr. Rogers timed it on his wrist watch.

Maybe this Christmas, you could put aside a few moments to do the same, and think of a person, or persons who have made a big impact on your life.

Maybe during all these festive and traditional moments, you can also reflect on this holiday and why it happens, and remember it is the celebration of the birth of a child, who will grow up to be a man who became the most influential person in history.

We have a lot to be grateful for in this country. We don't have any enemies dropping bombs on our homes, and we have the freedom to do almost anything.

Christmas is a chance to celebrate more than just receiving gifts, and eating and drinking too much.

It's a chance to celebrate life, and revel in the miracle that we are all here.

Merry Christmas to all, and to all, a good night.