

December

NEWSLETTER

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OUR PLACE COMMUNITY OF HOPE

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December Birthdays



Our Place Birthdays

Frank S. – December 7th

Dominique S. – December 11th

Diane A. – December 17th

Khal B. – December 19th



Famous Birthdays

Lucy Liu – December 2nd

Jamie Foxx – December 13th

Steve Buscemi – December 13th

Sarah Paulson – December 17th

Brad Pitt – December 18th

Samuel L. Jackson – December 21st

Ricky Martin – December 24th

If you want to celebrate your birthday with us, let us know!



Special Events in October

Tuesday December 6th at 3:30pm and Wednesday December 7th at 3:30pm: We will be decorating one of our two Christmas trees! Join us in making new memories for the holiday season.



Wednesday December 14th at 3:30pm: Join us in taking holiday photos on the stage! We will have holiday themed props that will get you in the holiday spirit. At the end of the photoshoot, you will also be provided with a polaroid photo! 😊



Friday December 16th at 3:00pm: We will be hosting our Christmas dinner and gift giveaway. Meals and gifts are available on a first-come-first serve basis. If you would like to enjoy your meal inside, please arrive during drop in hours – there is limited seating available. Hope to see you all then!



During the month of December, all our Arts & Crafts groups that are held on **Thursdays at 1:30pm** will be holiday themed!

Upcoming Changes!

We know you all have been waiting a while for these changes... and we are happy to announce them!

1. Drop-in hours are changing to **12-5pm** from **Monday-Friday** starting Monday November 7th.
2. Dine-in will be open to everyone; this means you will no longer be required to provide your proof of vaccination. This starts on Monday November 7th.
3. Dine-in will be open from 2:30-3:30pm. This is so everyone has a chance to enjoy a warm meal inside as the weather is getting chillier. There is a limit of 2 people per table and a total of 22 people in the drop-in.
4. If you join drop-in after 3:30pm, we will keep aside a takeaway meal for you that you can enjoy after leaving Our Place.

Our Place Weekly Programs

Pool Table Time – Everyday! (*in-person*)

Enjoy a game of pool during our open pool hour! Grab a friend and come join us. If you have any questions, or want to sign up, please use the signup sheet or let staff know.

Gaming Tournaments – Mondays at 1:30 pm (*in-person*)

Come and join us as we play fun games every week! Games include: Trivia, Name that Tune, and.... **CARD GAMES! Limited capacity.**

Bingo – Tuesdays at 1:30 pm (*in-person*)

Bingo is back in person! Enjoy a game with us as there are great prizes to be won!

Karaoke *NEW*** – Wednesday at 1:30 pm (*in-person*)**

Yay! Karaoke is making a comeback, but with a few changes. The program will run for one hour on Wednesdays where you can have your moment to shine with a mic! Hope to see and hear you all then. 😊 **Limited capacity.**

Peer Support Group – Wednesdays at 3:30 (*virtual*)

Peer support meetings are a time to connect with others for support, encouragement, and hope. We will learn from each other's experiences in conversations. We'll talk about relaxation, managing emotions, self-compassion, and self-acceptance. We'll look at positive steps that you could try towards having a better life.

Link to join: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87674798802>

Join by phone: (647)-374-4685. When prompted, enter in the Meeting ID: **876 7479 8802**

Art & CRAFTS Group – Thursday at 1:30pm (*in-person*)

Art & Crafts is a time to explore your creative side and connect with others. It will include drawing and coloring, painting, sketching and many more fun activities. Suggestions are welcome! 😊

Writing Group – Fridays at 1:30pm (*virtual*)

Writing Group with Peter (a professional journalist!) is a time to connect with others, build friendships and get creative together. Everyone is welcome to join in and no experience is necessary!

Link to join Writing Group via Zoom: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/93536287038>

Join by phone, dial: **647-374-4685**. When prompted, enter in the Meeting ID: **935 3628 7038**

Community Programs & Supports

Please ask one of the Our Place Staff if you need access to a phone or computer

Nicotine Replacement Therapy: Are you thinking of quitting smoking? Talk to any of our staff members about how you can access support and free nicotine replacement therapy like lozenges and patches with no wait.

Addiction Support Groups: If you are on a journey with addictions and are seeking support from the community, feel free to contact any of these communal resources.

<i>Narcotics Anonymous</i> Toronto – call 1-888-811-3887	<i>KeepSix Consumption and Treatment Services (CTS)– 955 Queen Street East) – 416-461-1925 ext 2264</i>	<i>Evangel Hall Mission – 552 Adelaide Street West – 416-504-8056</i>
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Community Fridges Toronto is a mutual aid organization made up of community members and volunteers working to provide food for those in need. They have several fridges and pantries across the city (locations listed below) and they operate on a “take what you need, leave what you don’t” basis. Feel free to visit any fridge to pick up or drop off food.

214 Wright Street	782 Adelaide Street West	250 Westlake Avenue	499 Parliament Street
1132 College Street	870 Dundas Street West	348 Pape Avenue (Pantry)	

Allan Gardens Food Bank 353 Sherbourne Street: You can visit and collect food from the bank once a week either on Thursday or Friday from 12:30pm to 3:00pm. Everyone who is interested must register and complete the intake process if it is your first time visiting. Please remember to bring your own bag.

Bloor West Food Bank 2305 Bloor St. West at the St. Pius X Catholic Church: They provide Prepacked bags for those who have made an appointment to visit. To make an appointment, email at appointments.foodbank@gmail.com. The food bank is open every Friday from 12:30pm to 3:00pm.

Parkdale Activity-Recreation Centre (PARC) 1499 Queen Street West: A drop-in space running daily to support those who do not have stable housing (in shelter, respite). Meal Programming runs from Monday – Thursday from 9:30am to 12:30pm, Fridays from 1:00pm to 4:00pm, Saturday and Sunday from 11:00am to 3:00pm.

Evangel Hall Mission 552 Adelaide Street West: Clothing bank and various drop-in services are available Monday – Friday from 10:30 am to 12:30 pm. If you are in need of a shower, need access to laundry facilities, they provide services on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Registration for these specific services start at 9 am.

Davenport-Perth Neighbourhood Community Health Centre 1900 Davenport Rd: Provides free harm reduction kits and other support. Contact (416) 656-8025 for more information. They offer short term, one-on-one crisis support and information on OW,

ODSP, shelter and housing, and health-related supports. Contact their CSCI worker to book an appointment → Ingrid Moreno (416) 656-8025 ext. 401.

Shelter Beds and Respite Centres: If you need a place to stay you can access 24-hour respite sites and shelters by calling at (416) 338-4766 or toll-free at 1-877-338-3398.

Gerstein Crisis Centre: Provides 24/7 telephone support, community support referrals, substance use crisis management, follow-up and access to short-term crisis beds. They also have an in-person mobile crisis team. Call (416) 929-5200 to access support.

New Circle: If you are in need of warmer clothing for the winter season, please connect with one of the Our Place staff and we will start the online referral process with you.



Bye!

Hi everyone!

I'm sad to say that I am leaving Our Place as of the end of November. Thank you so much to everyone that I have met and spoken to over the years. Meeting each and every one of you has been a blessing. I appreciate all the amazing moments throughout the years! I wish everyone a bright and happy future.

Best,

Alanna



International Day of Persons with Disabilities

The International Day of Persons with disabilities was first proclaimed by the UN in 1992. Marked on December 3rd, this day strives to recognize and promote the inherent rights of persons with disabilities across all facets of society. Additionally, this day works to raise awareness about the day-to-day lives of people with disabilities. Ableism, which is the discrimination of people with different disabilities, works to negatively impact members of our community

with differing abilities. There

is also a lot of stigma attached to the word “disability” as well as people who are seen as having a disability. As such,

International Day of Persons with Disability aims to

combat this very stigma and

ableism that is woven throughout our society, by urging people to be more mindful about the language they use, as well as retaining from judging others. It is not just these harmful social attitudes that work to discriminate against persons with disabilities.

There are other obstacles that people with disabilities face, such as a lack of services available to them, as well as inaccessible public spaces. The International Day of Persons with Disabilities asserts that accessibility and inclusion of persons with disabilities are not only objectives, but fundamental rights that should be upheld across society.



International
Day of
Persons with
Disabilities

3 DECEMBER

Human Rights Day

Human Rights Day is internationally observed annually on the 10th of December. It recognizes the day in which the Universal Declaration of Human rights was officially adopted by the UN. Each year since this day in 1948, we see the fundamental rights and freedoms that are laid out in this document both upheld and violated across society. Essentially, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights guarantees the rights of every individual without discrimination based on nationality, place of residents, ethnicity, religion, gender, or language.



Therefore, Human Rights Day seeks to raise awareness and remind people about the value of these fundamental rights, and how exactly they are meant to be utilized and protected in society.



Fresh from the Our Place Holiday Kitchen



Peanut Butter Kiss Cookies

Ingredients:

- 1 cup of peanut butter
- 1 cup of white sugar
- 1 large egg
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 30 milk chocolate kisses



Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F
2. Cream the peanut butter and sugar together until the mixture becomes light and fluffy like a cloud!
3. Beat in the egg and vanilla into the mixture
4. Roll into small sized dough balls on a baking sheet. Bake them for 10 minutes until the tops are lightly cracked. At this time, add 1 chocolate kiss into the center of each cookie.
5. Cool for 5 minutes and enjoy 😊

Amazing Homemade Stuffing!

Ingredients:

- 2 small onions diced
- 1 stock of celery
- ¾ cup butter
- 1 ½ teaspoons poultry seasoning
- Salt & pepper to taste
- 12 cups bread cubes
- 3-4 cups chicken broth
- 2 tablespoons fresh parsley



- 1 tablespoon fresh herbs; sage, thyme, rosemary

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350°F
2. Melt butter in a large skillet over medium heat. Add onion, celery and poultry seasoning (and rosemary if using).
3. Cook over medium-low until tender; approx.10 minutes
4. Place bread cubes in a large bowl.
5. Add onion mixture, parsley and fresh herbs.
6. Pour broth overtop until cubes are moist (but not soggy) and gently toss
7. You may not need all of the broth. Season with salt and pepper to taste
8. Place mixture in a serving dish, dot with additional butter and cover
9. Bake 35 minutes, uncover and bake an additional 10 minutes!
10. Let cool and enjoy! 😊

Delectable Garlic Mashed Potatoes

Ingredients:

- 3 pounds of peeled Yukon Gold potatoes
- 3/4 cup of heavy whipping cream
- 1/2 cup butter (1 stick)
- 4 cloves garlic minced
- 1 teaspoon salt
- Pepper to taste



Directions:

1. Peel the potatoes and cut them into thirds. Add them to a salted pot of water and boil until a sharp knife easily pierces them.
2. Meanwhile, while the potatoes are boiling, add the cream, butter, garlic, and salt & pepper to a small saucepan over low heat.
3. Drain the potatoes thoroughly and leave them in the pot. Slowly pour in the cream mixture and mash the potatoes using a hand-held potato masher. Mash until the cream has been absorbed and its smooth. Don't over-mash!
4. Serve potatoes with extra butter and chopped parsley and/or chives over top and enjoy! 😊

Nyoka's Favourite Christmas Punch!

Ingredients

- Cranberry juice
- Orange juice
- Sprite
- Pineapple juice
- Orange slices and lemon or lime
- Rosemary and mint
- Fresh cranberries



Directions:

1. Mix Cranberry Juice, Orange Juice, Lime Slices, Orange Slices, Rosemary, Mint leaves and cranberries in a big jar or punch bowl.
2. When you are ready to serve, add ice cubes and Sprite. Enjoy! 😊

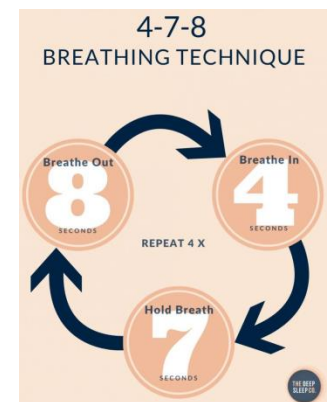


Mental Health Tips of the Month

All about the 4-7-8 Breathing Technique – by Nyoka

How it works:

- Start by placing your tongue behind your teeth on the roof of your mouth.
- Exhale through your mouth, making a whoosh sound as you breath out
- Close your mouth and quietly inhale through your nose to a mental count of four.
- Hold your breath for a count of seven.
- Exhale through your mouth, making a whoosh sound for a count of eight.
- Repeat the process three more times for a total of four breath cycles.



Benefits of this technique

- Reduces depression and anxiety

- Improves sleep quality
- Reduce stress levels
- Improve motor memory

Ways to Ease Seasonal Depression this Winter Season – by Sim

Seasonal affective disorder, also known as seasonal depression is brought on by the changing seasons. Many people feel down during fall/winter and have less energy and interest as the season progresses. Although the depressive symptoms typically resolve when spring comes around, it is important to know how to take care of yourself during these times. Here are some tips to help you recognize and alleviate your symptoms.



1. Get Your Daily Dose of Sunshine

As the sun sets earlier and earlier, it is important to make sure you're getting an adequate amount of natural sunlight. Aim to leave the house once a day. When indoors, leave the window open to let the sun in and try to sit by a spot where natural light gets in.

2. Take a Vitamin D Supplement

Vitamin D deficiency is linked to depression which is why many people struggle with getting enough vitamin D, particularly during the winter months where it gets dark early. If you are finding it difficult to expose yourself to enough natural sunlight during the day, consider taking a vitamin D supplement.

3. Try Light Therapy

Light therapy may help you with any natural sunlight you're craving during the night hours. A light therapy box is a device that produces a bright light that mimics sunlight. It can help synchronize your circadian rhythm and cause chemical changes in your brain to improve your overall mood.

Writing Submissions

Christmas – James

C is for the Christ who came to this lowly earth.

H is for the harps that rang at our Savior's birth.

R is for the ringing bells, telling Christmas-tide.

I is for the crystal ice where we go to slide.

S is for the schoolboy's sled when he coasting goes.

T is for poor Tommy Jones Jack Frost bit his nose.

M is for the merry part of this Christmas day,

A is for the apple pies Grandma put away.

S is for old Santa Claus, coming here tonight.



A Christmas Message – James

I have a message for you,
And I do believe it's grand.

During this Christmas season,
It's time to take a stand.

Remember the reason for Christmas,
And what it represents.
Jesus, loving and welcoming,
It's not just about presents.

So take this Christmas message
And pass it far and wide.
Christmas is a time for caring,
Let's share this message, amplified.



Christmas Time is Here Again

Christmas time is here again.

Christmas time is here again I wish you only knew, how special Christmas is this year
Because I am with you. This year I don't need any gifts beneath the Christmas tree. The
only thing I'll ever want is you to be with me.

I put you on my Christmas list and mailed it like a kid. But if Santa didn't bring you here an
angel surely did. You're my favorite gift of all. You've filled my heart with cheer. I hope
that I can be with you On Christmas every year. Birth of Jesus, a joyful prayer. To show
loved ones how much we care.

Christmas time is a time for song, a time for us to get along, to make us feel Lord Jesus
strong, Christmas time is finally here. It only comes but once a year, and it's a time to
spread good cheer to those we love and hold so dear.

Christmas time is a time of glee, a time when peace and love run free, a time for those
like you and me to sit beneath the Christmas tree. Christmas time is a time of joy, a time
to sit back and enjoy. The smile on each girl and boy, as they play with a Christmas toy.

Christmas time is a time to share the passing of another year. Birth of Jesus, a joyful
prayer. To show loved ones how much we care.

Christmas time is a time for song, A time for us to get along, To make us feel Lord Jesus
strong, Forgive all those who did us wrong. Christmas time is a time to pray, Put love and
kindness on display, Show compassion along the way. Christmas time should be ever

Name: _____ Date: _____

4 Letter Words

BELL
SNOW

5 Letter Words

ANGEL
COCOA
ELVES
HOLLY

6 Letter Words

LIGHTS
SLEIGH
TINSEL
WINTER
WREATH

7 Letter Words

CHIMNEY
GARLAND
PAGEANT
RUDOLPH
SNOWMAN

8 Letter Words

CAROLING
DECEMBER
EXCHANGE
ORNAMENT
PRESENTS
REINDEER
WRAPPING

9 Letter Words

CHESTNUTS
CHRISTMAS
EVERGREEN
FRUITCAKE
MISTLETOE
NORTH POLE

10 Letter Words

POINSETTIA
SANTA CLAUS

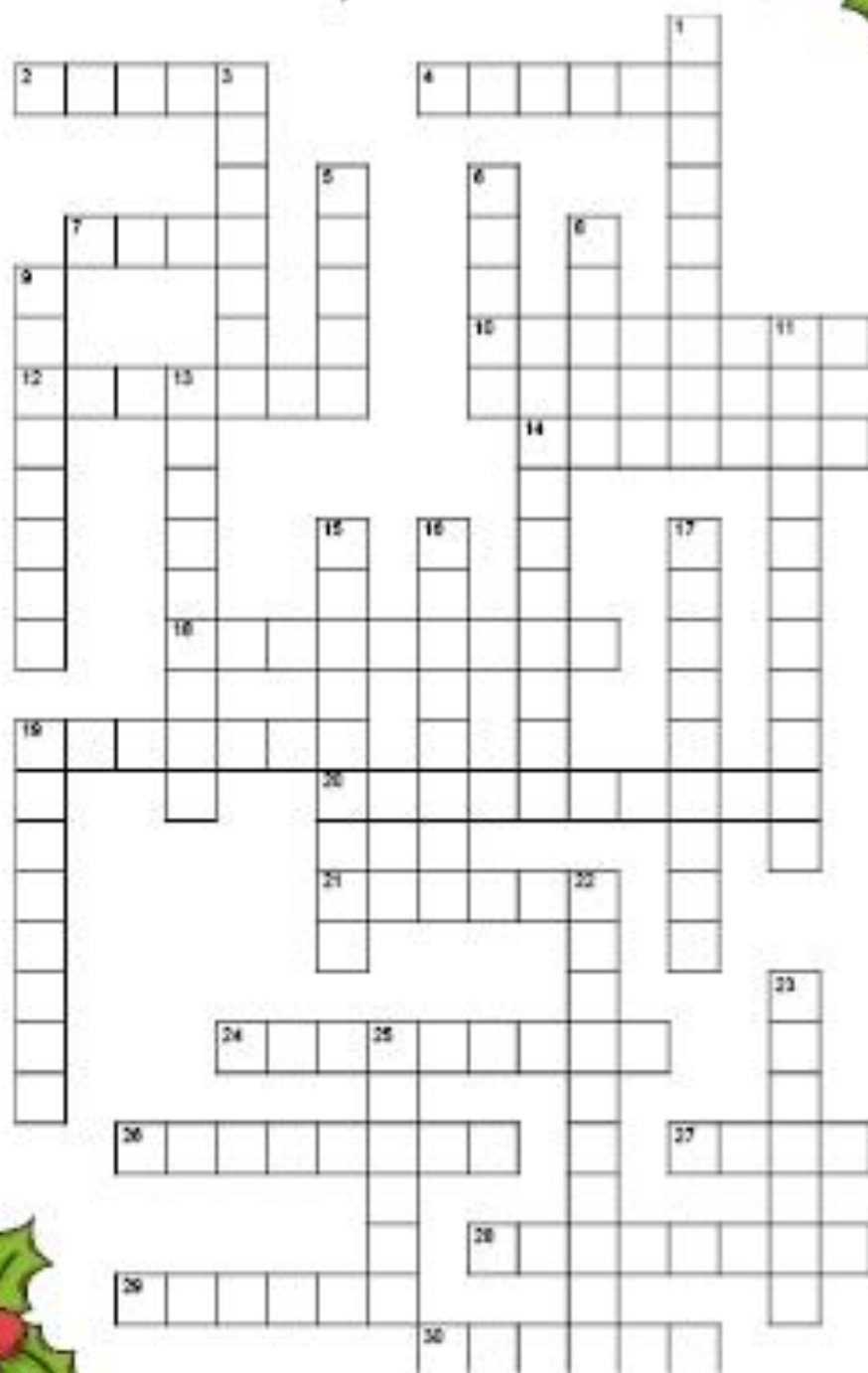
11 Letter Word

GINGERBREAD

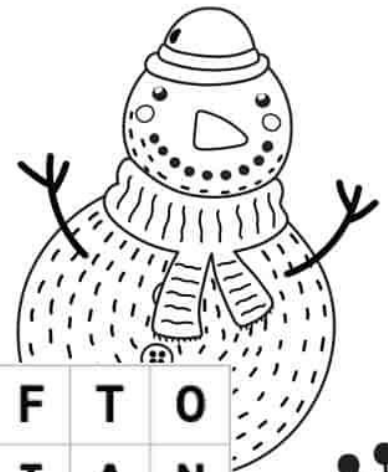
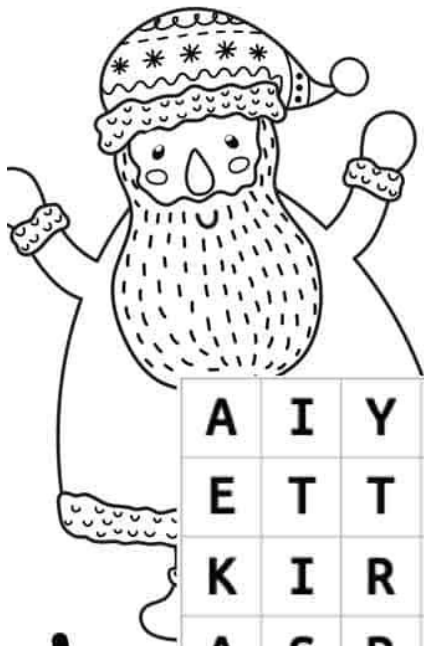
Christmas Joy



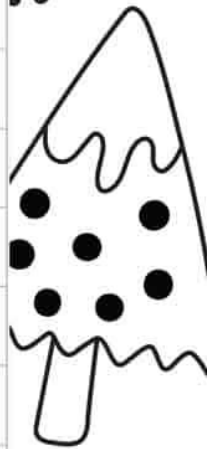
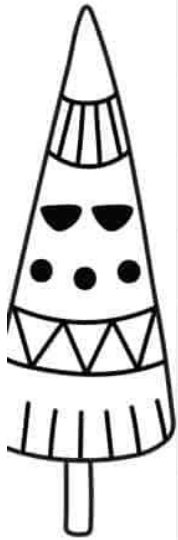
DIRECTIONS: Fill in the crossword grid with the provided words.



Merry Christmas



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

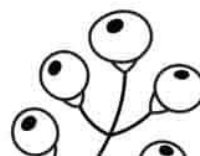
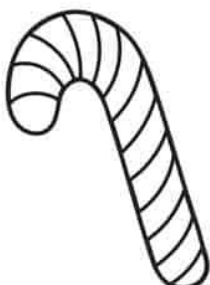


SLEIGH
REINDEER
RUDOLPH
ORNAMENTS

NATIVITY
TREE
WREATH
SNOWFLAKE

ANGEL
LIGHTS
SANTA
STOCKING

GIFT
CANDY CANE
ELVES
SHOWMAN





Happy Holidays!