



Bean Counters' Quarterly

DECEMBER 2021



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GREETINGS! WELCOME TO THE DECEMBER 2021 ISSUE!

This DECEMBER/WINTER/HOLIDAY edition of BCQ is a celebration of things that make us happy and help us feel grateful at this time of year, but it's also an acknowledgement of many who are not in the holiday spirit, and who are struggling for a variety of reasons with mental health and/or financial issues and/or physical concerns. The holidays have always been a struggle for anyone who's lost love ones or can't celebrate with the ones they love or in the manner or place they would like, but the pandemic has made it much more difficult. Add the fact that the new Omicron variant is causing all kinds of concerns and new safety measures, many are beyond weary and stressed. Whether you're celebrating or enduring this season, our wish is that everyone has a safe, peace-filled, and restorative holiday.

You may be interested in some details from the recent **Speech From The Throne** which opened the 44th Parliament of Canada. See below for highlights and a link to the full speech.

As always, you'll want to read updates in the **About Us** section, as well we've asked all of our team members to share a reply in **the Dialogue** for this question:

"As we celebrate the holidays (you can choose any holiday you'd like to focus on), what is a special item that helps you get a bit excited or marks the holiday in a special way...and why?" As you read their responses, which range from sentimental to fun, you will probably think about your own special emblems that marks the start of a holiday or make it more special? Please feel free to share with us.

In our Spotlight section we wanted to highlight not one, but TWO fantastic organizations that are doing great work (all year round) especially at the holidays. First we continue to highlight the work and needs of the **Oakville Fare Share Food Bank**. We all need food, all the time, every day, but during the holidays we are even more aware of the needs. We're also highlighting the work of **Kerr Street Mission**. Their programs run all year round, but they have a special Christmas program that offers families gifts and food cards. Check out the information and links for both organizations if you can help either one.

Our quarterly book recommendation may be a great gift for loved ones or yourself. The bestselling book is called **JOY: Life Lessons From a Tuscan Villa** by **Debbie Travis**. While it may look like it's here because the title JOY is strongly associated with Christmas, it's actually our recommendation because of the topic of JOY, as well as the fact that we like the idea of books taking us on a travel experience without leaving the country at this time. Tuscany, here we come. "For more than ten years, **Debbie Travis** has watched the guests who come to her Tuscan retreats transform over the course of a single week of talking, walking, and eating together, until even the most driven and stressed-out feel so much better. *Looking for the keys to a vibrant, joyful, vital life? Lifestyle pioneer Debbie Travis has found them in the Tuscan hills. And in her lively, inspiring way, she shares how to bring all that healthful magic home in Joy*".

FROM: all of us and our families TO: all of you and your families!!
Wishing **everyone** a safe and **Merry Christmas and a truly Happy New Year!**
Steve, Sherry, Ana, Andre, Derek, and Andrea.



Dialogue Department

*Here's our question/topic for this issue:
"As we celebrate the holidays (you can choose any holiday you'd like to focus on), what is a special item that helps you get a bit excited or marks the holiday in a special way...and why?"*



44th Parliament Opens With Speech From the Throne

On November 23, 2021, Her Excellency the Right Honourable Mary Simon, Governor General of Canada, delivered the Speech from the Throne. Here is an excerpt of the key areas addressed. Full throne speech at the link below.

Building a healthier today and tomorrow

Priority number one remains getting the pandemic under control. The Government will work collaboratively with provinces,

Our reply for this quarter is from:
The whole team:

SHERRY: "Grant and I moved into our house in Dec 2005. We had been using an artificial tree prior to this move and we had discussed starting a new tradition with a real tree. So, that year we bought a real tree. Since then, we always go out on Friday night, get our tree and then go out for dinner. That is the start of Christmas for us. I look forward to this every year."

ANA: "Thinking of Christmas's past (not in a Scrooge way) – I loved that my family celebrated for three days. We would gather Christmas Eve with traditional meal. Then head out to Christmas mass. Then Christmas day we would open presents, stuff our faces with food at lunch, play cards then eat again. Then Boxing day we would all get together again and eat left overs. Definitely makes me smile just remembering these family gatherings."

DEREK: "The one special thing for me is a cheesy illuminated plastic Santa I bought years ago. Everyone complains how ugly it is but it he would be missed by the whole family if I didn't plug him in. Christmas is all about the cheese."

ANDRE: "The most exciting things this Christmas is that all of family members can get together this Christmas after months of separation. My daughter has been in London most of the time in the past year and my son was in Kingston. Now seeing both of them back and sitting together in front of me becomes such a special thing, to my great comfort and satisfaction."

ANDREA: "Our outdoor Christmas lights definitely mark the beginning of the Holiday season for me. Even though it's a lot of working putting them up every year...it's really satisfying seeing them shine at night. I love looking at all the

territories, and other partners to deliver real results on what Canadians need.

Growing a more resilient economy
We should rebuild an economy that works for everyone. The Government will continue making life more affordable for all Canadians.

Bolder climate action
The Government is taking real action to fight climate change. Now, we must go further, faster.

Fighting harder for safer communities
When someone in our country is targeted because of their gender, or who they love, or where they come from, the way they pray, the language they speak, or the colour of their skin, we are all diminished. Everyone should be – and feel – safe.

Standing up for diversity and inclusion
Fighting systemic racism, sexism, discrimination, misconduct, and abuse, including in our core institutions, will remain a key priority.

Moving faster on the path to reconciliation
Reconciliation requires a whole-of-government approach, breaking down barriers, and rethinking how to accelerate our work.

Fighting for a secure, just, and equitable world
The Government will continue to protect Canadians from threats to our communities, our society, and our democracy.

Full Throne Speech

lights in the neighbourhood as we walk our dog in the evenings."

STEVE: "Not sure I really have an annual Christmas trigger.....but this year being the first with our youngest away at school, I think it will be when he returns around the 20th and the excitement of the season will start to kick in around the house."

Here's What I Have To Say - (send reply to) steve@kirkhamca.ca



SPOTLIGHT

KIRKHAM Chartered Accountants:
This pandemic has affected everyone, but it has not affected everyone equally. Many in our community have been extremely affected by loss of income, business, and/or resources. The impacts are most certainly financial, but also contribute to physical/mental health risk and harm. Many don't qualify for the government programs that have been available or have exhausted the programs or services. In light of this, we'd like to use this space in our enewsletter to highlight a local option (local to us in the Oakville area) where they really need help with donations, resources, and/or volunteering.



Christmas Wonders & Beyond with Kerr Street Mission

For many of us, Christmas is a wonderful time of year when we purchase special gifts and favourite foods for our loved ones. For others the reality of their financial struggles are magnified, often leaving them feeling inadequate and hopeless. "Christmas Wonders" provides support for families at Christmas with gift and food cards, giving them the chance to choose the gifts and food that their families will enjoy. The "Beyond" provides support for the rest of the year.

The last 18 months have been very difficult for the families who have come through our doors. Most struggle every day to make ends meet and they know when Christmas comes there will be no extra funds. As a result, they come to us for help. Without your support it will be very difficult for these families to celebrate.

Oakville Fare Share Food Bank

We are a non-profit registered charity that has been run entirely by volunteers since 1987.

We currently have about 700 households registered with us for support. This is about 2,500 individuals, many of whom are children.

Client households may come once per month to our location at 1240 Speers Road, between 3rd and 4th Line.

The bulk of our non-perishable food comes from food drives held at Easter, Thanksgiving and Christmas and ongoing donations from churches, schools, businesses, supermarkets and others in our community.

Financial donations are vital to our existence. We need them to purchase fresh fruit and vegetables, fish meat, eggs, cheese milk, and a variety of other items.

Oakville Fare Share Food Bank

How can they prepare a special meal or purchase the gift that their child has been dreaming about when it is a challenge just to provide the basic necessities their families need.

We are grateful for the love, compassion and support from all of you. With your help we can make a difference, we can provide for families in need, we can give the gift of joy this season!

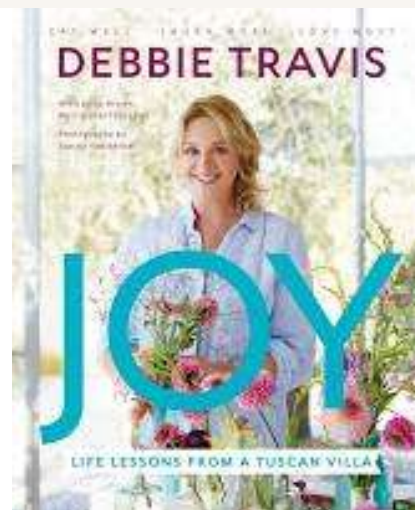
Kerr Street Mission

Recommended Reading:

JOY: Life Lessons From a Tuscan Villa by Debbie Travis

About

Looking for the keys to a vibrant, joyful, vital life? Lifestyle pioneer Debbie Travis has found them in the Tuscan hills. And in her lively, inspiring way, she shares how to bring all that healthful magic home in *Joy*, a glorious book infused with the warmth and colour of life at the Villa Reniella, the thirteenth-century farmhouse retreat to which she welcomes guests from around the world.



For more than ten years, **Debbie Travis** has watched the guests who come to her Tuscan retreats transform over the course of a single week of talking, walking, and eating together, until even the most driven and stressed-out feel so much better about themselves. When it's time to leave, they tell her it's the simple priorities of Tuscan life—the way the village locals, from young to old, take time for each other every day—that hit them in their hearts, and they pepper her with questions about how to retain what they've experienced when they get home.

In *Joy*, Debbie offers the answers she gives them to all of us, capturing the essentials of the Tuscan lifestyle in a series of ten engaging and practical lessons—on everything from how to get a good night's sleep, to how to find community and rediscover purpose, to how to eat and drink like an Italian—designed to make our lives sweeter and healthier.

Delightfully down-to-earth, Debbie draws on her own life experience, the example of her Tuscan neighbours, whose fabled longevity springs from the wisdom she captures in her lessons, and the expertise of her long-time friend and colleague, **nutritional therapist Jacky Brown**. Whether you wish to hit the reset button, start a new endeavour, regain your confidence, turn a page in your relationship, make changes to your worklife or your community, or simply reboot your vitality, these lessons will help guide you to a life filled with joy.

[JOY: Life Lessons From a Tuscan Villa](#)

ABOUT US



Sherry says she would like to say that this Fall has been better than last Fall but unfortunately she can't. Sadly, she lost her Uncle and her best friend's Dad in Alberta due to Covid just in the last couple of months. It is heartbreaking as these men had hearts bigger than life itself. She prays that no one else has to go through a loss like this. On a brighter note, her family out here are all fully vaccinated and they are keeping their fingers crossed that they can enjoy Christmas together this year. She has also started curling again which has been a life saver. She's wishing everyone a safe and festive season.

Andrea says the Fall was a busy time with life in general, and also Back to School – thankfully, school is “in person” again! She's looking forward to the holidays and hopefully getting out skiing, and snowboarding...weather permitting, of course. She's choosing to believe that 2022 will have lots of good things to come.

Andre says this fall and winter, he has been very busy with all the accounting matters on his work list. He is feeling stronger to handle to workload, as a result of keeping up with his swimming almost every day. That also required him to manage his time when swimming in order to become a part of his daily schedule. He also said it was exciting to have the firm's Christmas dinner last week, with all of the colleagues reunited after of keeping distances for almost two years. There were lots of things to talk about, and there have been many changes in all of them, either in the work and in our personal lives..

Ana says she that nothing exciting is happening in her life right now. Just work – home, repeat etc.. The most exciting thing that happened recently was the staff Christmas dinner. It was wonderful seeing everyone who she hadn't seen in over a year and meeting the new additions. Thanks Steve.

Derek says Wow, it's December already? This year has been in turbo mode! Paige went back to in-person learning in September but is back online (again) due to increased COVID cases in her cohort. Laura and Derek had many real estate deals closing this fall which kept them hopping. They're all looking forward to some time off together. Derek wishes Happy Holidays to everyone and all the best in 2022.

Steve says it's been a blur. Especially with December in full swing, days continue to fly by. Steve does recall a quick solo trip to the family cottage in Parry Sound

recently. Arriving to -5C and managing to get the place up to almost 27C the next night was actually quite an enjoyable escape. He also took a walk in the woods with some recently fallen snow, and “tracked” 2 moose that he managed to catch sight of as they galloped off thru the trees (only the second time he recalls actually seeing moose in the wild). Sherry had a tough few months, losing both an aunt and an uncle. But she has also been enjoying some walks and got up to Blue Mountain for a few days for a change of scenery. Erin has somewhat settled in Vancouver and now is working in a “dive” shop, hoping to get out on some excursions under the water. Justin continues to WFH, sometimes accompanying dad to the office to help his focus, but also getting a lot of friend time in on the weekends. Gavin is just wrapping up exams to finish his first semester at Mac and also managed to get on a few intramural teams to keep the athletic side in shape. All in all, we have been very lucky, and sometimes have to take a step back to actually realize that in today’s environment. Wishing you and yours all the best!

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