

FAMILY SERVICES of PEEL

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FAMILY SERVICES of PEEL

Since 1971

Quarterly Newsletter December 2018

In This Issue...



Roots of the Santa Claus Legend

How did Santa become the loveable North Pole-dwelling bringer of Christmas gifts?

... Page 1



SIL Holiday Lunch

SIL clients and staff enjoyed an afternoon of smiles, laughter, and celebration.

... Page 2



20 Ways to Maintain a Healthy Level of Insanity

Fun ways to handle stress over the holiday season.

... Page 5



Family Services of Peel's staff enjoyed the festivities, in recognition of Diwali (Hindu festival of lights).

Roots of the Santa Claus Legend

How did Santa Claus become the loveable North Pole-dwelling bringer of Christmas gifts? It seems the "Jolly Old Soul" is an amalgamation of numerous traditions drawn from characters both historic and mythic; stemming from diverse cultures ranging from Asia Minor to Northwestern Europe and the new world.

One way of looking at it might be that contributors to the Santa legend reassigned attractive and supernatural attributes of popular multi-faith religious figures to a single character, not initially associated directly with the celebration of Christmas. Unfortunately, all possible sources of the elements combined to mold the current North American version of the legend would overflow this newsletter, so I will simply touch upon the highlights.

The modern Santa Claus grew out of traditions surrounding the historical Saint Nicholas, the British figure of Father Christmas, and the Dutch figure of Sinterklaas. In addition, some maintain that Santa Claus also absorbed components of the Germanic god Wodan, who was associated with the pagan midwinter event of Yule and led the Wild Hunt, a ghostly procession through the sky.

Saint Nicholas of Myra was a 4th century Christian bishop of a small Greek town in modern day Turkey. Nicholas was famous for his generous gifts to the poor. For instance, presenting the three impoverished daughters of a pious Christian with dowries so that they would not have to become prostitutes.

Continued on Page 3

Transforming Lives in Peel

A Message from the Executive Director

As I write this article, the weather report includes a winter storm warning in effect, with a prediction of up to 10cm of snow. I remember when that amount of snow was considered a light dusting.

This makes me think about the need to dramatize things, even the weather. Sometimes it's the simple things in life that energize us and give purpose to what we do. A helping hand, a warm and friendly greeting, the laughter of a child, or sharing your time with family and friends.



Years ago I worked with street involved youth. One youth in particular, who was a regular at the shelter, was only 15 years old when he ended up in juvenile detention over Christmas. He called me and asked if I could drop by to visit him and of course I said yes. I couldn't imagine how he must have felt to spend Christmas in a detention centre with no family contact. Sometimes the best gift we can give another person is our time and support.

Regardless of how you, your family, and friends spend the festive season, take care of each other.

SIL Holiday Lunch

On November 22nd, 2018, the **Supported Independent Living (SIL) Program** hosted a festive lunch gathering at the Mandarin Restaurant. Clients enjoyed a delicious meal while excitedly catching-up with old friends and meeting new ones. It was an afternoon full of smiles, laughter, and a celebration of the many extraordinary accomplishments of everyone in the program. SIL Facilitators presented each individual with a **Certificate of Excellence** in recognition of achievements specific to their personal goals. Clients beamed with pride as Facilitators highlighted their strengths, personality traits, and/or unique skills.

During a busy holiday season, we recognize the importance of taking time to reflect on our lives and to be thankful for all that we have. Our clients continually remind us of this and inspire us to be the best versions of ourselves. Family Services of Peel is very proud of everyone involved in this program, for their persistence and dedication to living independently and actively pursuing their goals in the community. Happy Holidays everyone!



Article submitted by Alyssa, SIL Facilitator at Family Services of Peel



A heartfelt **THANK YOU** to People Store Staffing Solutions for once again, sponsoring Family Services of Peel's annual Supported Independent Living Holiday Lunch.

People Store Staffing Solutions is a community champion and leader in supporting the quality of lives for people with developmental disabilities, and we thank John Nalli, CEO and his dedicated team for their hard work and commitment in helping to build an inclusive and caring community.

Roots of the Santa Claus Legend (Continued from Page 1)

During the middle ages, on the eve of St. Nicholas' name day, December 6th, children were bestowed gifts in his honour. Today in North America, this gifting is performed on Christmas day and is associated with the birth of the Christ child, rather than that of Saint Nicholas. The reason for this change was the Protestant Reformation and Martin Luther's more intense focus on emulating the life of Christ while diminishing the importance of the myriad saints canonized by the Roman Catholic Church. This custom transferred to North America due to the majority protestant immigration in the 16th to 19th centuries.

The North American version of the Christmas Santa Claus took shape in the early 19th century and was a derivation of "Sinterklaas" (Dutch contraction of Saint Nicholas), brought to the new world by Dutch immigrants in the 17th century, who still celebrated the saint's name day despite being protestant. The ostensible motives for the resurgence of the character were to make Christmas a more magical family celebration.

In 1804, John Pintard, a member of the New York Historical Society, distributed woodcuts of St. Nicholas at the society's annual meeting. The background of the engraving contained now-familiar Santa images, including stockings filled with toys and fruit hung over a fireplace.

In 1809, Washington Irving helped to popularize the Sinterklaas stories when he referred to Saint Nicholas as the patron saint of New York in his book, "Knickerbocker's History of New York". As his prominence grew, Sinterklaas was described as a pipe-smoking Nicholas soaring over the rooftops in a flying wagon, delivering presents to good boys and girls and switches to bad ones.

In 1821 an anonymous illustrated poem entitled "The Children's Friend" went much further in shaping the modern Santa and associating him with Christmas.

In 1823 the poem "A Visit from St. Nicholas," also known as "The Night before Christmas" (of disputed authorship), was published anonymously, consolidating many of the attributes drawn from diverse sources into one character. The poem is largely responsible for our modern image of Santa Claus.

In 1881, political cartoonist Thomas Nast drew on "A Visit from St. Nicholas" to create the first likeness that matches our modern image of Santa Claus. His cartoon, which appeared in Harper's Weekly, depicted Santa as a rotund, cheerful man with a full, white beard, holding a sack laden with toys for lucky children. It is Nast who gave Santa his bright red suit trimmed with white fur.



In other parts of the world, similar figures were popular. Christkind or Kris Kringle was believed to deliver presents to well-behaved Swiss and German children. Meaning "Christ child", Christkind is an angel-like figure often accompanied by St. Nicholas on his holiday missions. In Scandinavia, a jolly elf named Jultomten was thought to deliver gifts in a sleigh drawn by goats. English legend explains that Father Christmas visits each home on Christmas Eve to fill children's stockings with holiday treats. Père Noël is responsible for filling the shoes of French children. In Russia, it is believed that an elderly woman named Babouschka purposely gave the wise men wrong directions to Bethlehem so that they couldn't find Jesus. Later, she felt remorseful, but could not find the men to undo the damage. To this day, on January 5th, Babouschka visits Russian children leaving gifts at their bedsides in the hope that one of them is the baby Jesus and she will be forgiven. In Italy, a similar story exists about a woman called La Befana, a kindly witch who rides a broomstick down the chimneys of Italian homes and places toys into the stockings of lucky children.

Lastly, as is quite apparent today, one can't forget to mention that the marketing community had a major influence in the propagation of the Santa Claus icon.

Article submitted by Franca, Executive Assistant at Family Services of Peel

Marijoy's Food Blog

With the colder (and darker) weather upon us, nothing is better than cozing up with a warm bowl of flavourful broth and tasty noodles. If you are a ramen noodle fan and also enjoy exotic cuisine, then you definitely have to try

KINTON RAMEN. As their website proclaims, "KINTON RAMEN | The Ultimate Japanese Ramen Experience".

KINTON RAMEN was the first authentic Japanese ramen bar to open in Toronto in May 2012, and I'm happy to admit that I have been enjoying their flavoursome bowls for quite some time. The second you walk into the restaurant, you are welcomed by staff greeting you with "irasshaimase", which means "welcome" or "come in".

I love to indulge in hot and spicy soups and KINTON definitely satisfies



this craving. My favourite bowl is their **Spicy Garlic Ramen**. The base includes chili pepper, bean

sprouts, grated garlic, scallions, miso, sesame, sriracha, and more, making this broth extremely rich and tasty. I typically prefer to make this bowl "my own" by adding yummy sweet corn and a seasoned egg.

What I really like about KINTON RAMEN is that you can create your bowl from scratch, and choose from a variety of proteins, toppings, flavours, and even noodle size. So, use your imagination and delight your taste buds!

In addition, this restaurant invites their patrons to be a "**Kinton Bowler**" (a valiant warrior who

finished a whole bowl of Kinton Ramen). When you finish (to the last drop) 10... 50... 100... bowls (over a period of time), you get various prizes!

If you're not a 'soup person' then there are a variety of delicious cold and hot tapas, like their sweet **Edamame**, savoury **Age Gyoza**, delightful **Tofu Furai**, tempting **Hot Karaage**, and tasty **Takoyaki**. And don't forget to compliment your meal with a bottle of **Sake** (rice wine).

Based on my experience, each visit to KINTON RAMEN has been enjoyable and the service was exceptional. Their delicious food and great prices make this restaurant a must try. Happy Eating!

Marijoy is an employee at Family Services of Peel and an avid "foodie"



The agency's **Walk-In Single Session Therapy** was officially launched on September 24th.

The **Toronto Star** published an article regarding joblessness in Peel and Halton on September 28th. It featured a former client, **Uzma Hameed**, who worked closely with Job Developer, Jeffrey Miranda to find meaningful employment. She was successful in finding a job as an

administrator at a recycling company.

On October 19th, **Sandra Rupnarain** presented on the agency's work regarding Human Trafficking to the Region of Peel, Peel Poverty Reduction Strategic Committee.

The Ministry of Community and Social Services conducted a compliance inspection of the Supported Independent Living Program on October 22nd and 23rd. Family Services of Peel was found to be **IN COMPLIANCE!**

The agency's **United Way Greater Toronto Fundraising Campaign** was held from November 12th to 23rd.

A lot of prizes were awarded and we surpassed our goal by approximately \$2,000.

A BIG welcome to Family Services of Peel's new Employment Services Manager. **Pedro Monteros** joined our team on November 29th.



20 Ways to Maintain a Healthy Level of Insanity

1. At lunch time, sit in your parked car with sunglasses on and point a hair dryer at passing cars. See if they slow down.
2. Page yourself over the intercom. Don't disguise your voice.
3. Every time someone asks you to do something, ask if they want fries with that.
4. Put your garbage can on your desk and label it "In".
5. Put decaf in the coffee maker for 3 weeks. Once everyone has gotten over their caffeine addictions, switch to espresso.
6. In the memo field of all your cheques, write "For Smuggling Diamonds".
7. Finish all your sentences with "In accordance with the prophecy".
8. Don't use any punctuation.
9. As often as possible, skip rather than walk.
10. Order a diet water whenever you go out to eat, with a serious face.
11. Specify that your drive-through order is "to go".
12. Singalong at the opera.
13. Go to a poetry recital and ask why the poems don't rhyme.
14. Put mosquito netting around your work area and play tropical sounds all day.
15. Five days in advance, tell your friends you can't attend their party because you're not in the mood.
16. Have your co-workers address you by your wrestling name, "Rock Bottom".
17. When the money comes out of the ATM, scream, "I won! I won!"
18. When leaving the zoo, start running towards the parking lot, yelling, "Run for your lives, they're loose!"
19. Tell your children over dinner, "due to the economy, we are going to have to let one of you go."
20. And the final way to keep a healthy level of insanity... share this to make people smile. It's called therapy.

Article submitted by Sandra, Director of Client Services at Family Services of Peel



Once you lose weight, be sure to reward yourself. But not too much. It's not like you found a lost kitten or anything.



Monthly Observances

Family Services of Peel celebrates diversity via articles, videos, information sheets, social media, and our glass whiteboard. The following observances will be recognized during the months listed below.

DECEMBER

Homelessness Awareness Month
Hanukkah (Jewish) (2-10)
Remembrance Day of 14 Women Killed in Montreal in 1989 (6)
International Human Rights Day (10)
Christmas Day (25)
Boxing Day (26)

JANUARY

Disabilities Awareness Month
New Year's Day (1)
Christmas (Christian Orthodox) (7)
International Holocaust Remembrance Day (27)

FAMILY SERVICES of PEEL

Mission, Vision, Values and Contact Information

Head Office

151 City Centre Drive, Suite 501
Mississauga ON, L5B 1M7
Phone: 905-270-2250 | TTY: 905-270-7357 | Fax: 905-270-2869

Employment Services Office

640 Eglinton Avenue West, Unit 201
Mississauga ON, L5R 3V2
Phone: 905-366-0322 | Fax: 905-366-0325 | E-Mail: eos@fspeel.org

Brampton Office

60 West Drive, Suite 209
Brampton ON, L6T 3T6
Phone: 905-453-5775 (By Appointment Only)

Malton Office

6870 Goreway Drive, Unit 201
(Malton Medical Group)
Mississauga ON, L4V 1P1
Phone: 905-453-5775 (By Appointment Only)

Intake Department 905-453-5775

E-Mail fsp@fspeel.org

Web www.fspeel.org



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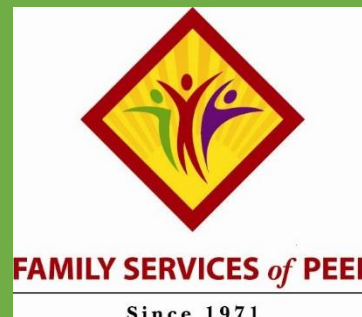
<http://www.linkedin.com/company/family-services-of-peel>



<https://twitter.com/fspeelca>

Transforming Lives in Peel

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Mission Statement

Through leadership, collaboration and innovation, we support families and individuals in Peel to transform their lives.

Vision Statement

Transforming Lives in Peel

Values

Responsiveness
Excellence, Leadership, Innovation
Service Accessibility and Inclusion
Partnership and Collaboration
Engaging Community
Client Driven
Transparency

What **Diversity** and **Inclusion** means to Family Services of Peel:

Diversity

The mix

Inclusion

Making the mix work

Sandra Rupnarain (Editor)

*Franca Vettese (Co-Editor/
Graphics/Layout)*