

CHRISTMAS HERALD

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1. When we look back to the 2019 version of our Christmas Herald things were pretty normal. Well, we sure cannot say that of these days. We have managed to stay COVID free and we hope that all of our readers have managed to stay free as well. We have had our scares with various friends and family members under isolation after potential exposures. Thankfully, they all tested negative. As I am sure you are all aware, Alberta is currently not fairing very well these days so we are keeping to ourselves as much as possible except for the odd outdoor visits and the Zoom visits of course.

2. We call this section Vacation and Travel. What you may ask are those? Well, there was a bit, but it was limited. Mary and Ed did manage to get away to Florida for 3 weeks in late February and early March, just before you know what hit the fan. We stayed mostly at the resort but did manage get to a Blue jays/Tiger's baseball game and a trip to the Kennedy Space Centre. Most days we spent around the various pools. Mary's planned trips to Quebec and Ontario as well as a cruise were cancelled. In late October, just before you know what hit the fan the second time, Mary and Ed did spend a week at their Fairmont, BC time share. Jeff, Kelly, Noelle and Caleb limited their camping trips to Canada. Jennifer and Barb were home bodies this year, thoroughly enjoying the first year in their new home and country living. Greg and Julie completed their New Zealand trip at the beginning of the year and stayed put for the rest of the year except for what you will read later in this edition.

3. Keeping healthy, this year, took on a whole new meaning. As reported earlier we have all escaped COVID thus far. Mary was diagnosed with some arthritis in her lower back and has been prescribed an exercise regimen to hopefully keep that in check. She has also developed some upper back/shoulder pain being treated with more exercises, medication and needle therapy. Ed continues to have good Cystoscopy reports and has graduated to 6-month procedures. The grand animals, Ember, Bella and Alix are all doing well.

4. Noelle graduated from High School in June. Hard to believe! Graduation was somewhat disappointing, no walking across the stage to get a certificate, no banquet, no dance. Graduation was a drive through affair held at the Stampede grounds. Noelle was accepted into a 5 year program at the University of Lethbridge leading to degrees in Music and Education. She had made plans to live in residence there. Those plans were cancelled when all her classes were put on-line. This arrangement has worked out well for her and her first term is almost completed. Her second term will also be on-line. Caleb graduated from Menno Simons and is now in Grade 10 at Bishop Carrol High School. His first semester was mostly at school, however, since November 30 he too is taking classes on-line. Bishop Carroll operates as a "Personalized Self-Directed Learning" school. Caleb is enjoying the challenges that this environment brings. With Jeff working from home and Noelle and Caleb taking online classes, it has become a busy house.

5. Everyone has continued in their respective jobs, Jeff at Canadian Natural Resources, Kelly at Canadian Blood Services, Jenn, Barb and Julie at Alberta Health Services and Greg at Rev Engineering. Jeff worked from home for quite a period, returned to the office but is now back at home. Jenn and Julie primarily work from home. Kelly and Barb work in their clinics. Greg also worked from home for a period but is now back at the shop. With their reduced workload and reduced staff he has become a man of many hats from office designing to shop building.

6. Mary continues her role as Treasurer of the Holy Spirit Charitable Society. Luckily, the Casino she organized for mid January was held as scheduled. From this Casino the organization was able to distribute \$57,600 to 19 Alberta charities. Mary was hard at work all summer and early fall making preserves which she had planned to sell at the CWL Christmas Craft Sale. That sale was cancelled so she organized her own preserves garage sale. Sales were not as brisk as she had hoped so we should have enough preserved for a while. She usually organizes the baking of 320 Christmas Cakes for the CWL craft sale. With no Craft sale she decided to bake 120 cakes for sale by herself. Ed did a lot of the mixing. Sales have been quite good, but we may be eating Christmas Cake until next Christmas. Ed is still a member of the Holy Spirit Funeral Choir. With COVID's restriction on choir singing he has had neither practices nor funerals since March. His involvement in the parish hamper program also came to a halt with

COVID. Mary and Ed's garden was average this past summer. It produced a good supply of yellow beans, carrots, beets, raspberries, horseradish and Evan's cherries. Head lettuce and endive were the pits. Mary is still knitting baby hats. She has now exceeded her goal of 1000 but is unable to deliver them to the hospital because of COVID. As soon as the golf courses were allowed to open this spring Mary eagerly started playing. She played between 40 and 50 games over the season. While Mary was golfing Ed did some bike riding and even managed a few rides around the Glenmore Reservoir, about 15km. In the evenings Mary and Ed sharpen their pool skills or play some hard-core Gin Rummy. After a hiatus of about 70 years Ed is again taking piano lessons this time online of course. He is very much enjoying the program and has almost mastered Bach's Prelude in C Major. Jenn is into serious gardening. As some of you may know Calgary can be challenging for gardeners especially with late and early frosts and the dreaded hailstorms. She has decided to build a green house to make gardening more weather resistant. Ed had the pleasure of spending many summer days helping her with the construction. She used a lot of lumber left from their home construction. Next spring, they will complete it by covering it with heavy, hopefully hail resistant, plastic. Even with all of the weather setbacks she had a great crop of onions and potatoes, even some corn this year. Ed keeps working on the Kuntz Family website www.kuntzfamily.ca. He has decided to include his dad's "History and Stories of Formosa" on the site. He continues to add to the family genealogy.

7. Greg and Julie became homeowners this fall. They purchased a beautiful home in the hamlet of Langdon which is about 20km east of the Calgary's city limit and about 40km from our place. Their yard backs onto the Boulder Creek Golf Course. Mary was disappointed that the house did not come with a Golf Club Membership. We are all delighted that everyone in the family now have their own places and house moves are now a thing of the past. Greg finds the commute to work is more pleasant and almost as fast as when they lived in the city.

8. www.chickeringregistry.ca
www.phiapiaia.ca
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