



# The Reno Reader



INFORMING THE RESIDENTS OF THE RM OF RENO SINCE 1986

PUBLISHED BY CONSUL MUSEUM INCORPORATED



**Canadian Natural**

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*Editor's Note: This story was originally published in the December 14, 1982 issue of Woman's Day magazine. It was the first place winner out of thousands of entries in the magazine's "My Most Moving Holiday Tradition" contest in which readers were asked to share their favorite holiday tradition and the story behind it. The story inspired a family from Atlanta, Georgia to start The White Envelope Project and Giving101, a nonprofit organization dedicated to educating youth about the importance of giving.*

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## "For the Man Who Hated Christmas" by Nancy W. Gavin

It's just a small, white envelope stuck among the branches of our Christmas tree. No name, no identification, no inscription. It has peeked through the branches of our tree for the past ten years or so. It all began because my husband Mike hated Christmas--oh, not the true meaning of Christmas, but the commercial aspects of it--overspending... the frantic running around at the last minute to get a tie for Uncle Harry and the dusting powder for Grandma---the gifts given in desperation because you couldn't think of anything else.



Knowing he felt this way, I decided one year to bypass the usual shirts, sweaters, ties and so forth. I reached for something special just for Mike. The inspiration came in an unusual way. Our son Kevin, who was 12 that year, was wrestling at the junior level at the school he attended; and shortly before Christmas, there was a non-league match against a team sponsored by an inner-city church. These youngsters, dressed in sneakers so ragged that shoestrings seemed to be the only thing holding them together, presented a sharp contrast to our boys in their spiffy blue and gold uniforms and sparkling new wrestling shoes. As the match began, I was alarmed to see that the other team was wrestling without headgear, a kind of light helmet designed to protect a wrestler's ears. It was a luxury the ragtag team obviously could not afford. Well, we ended up walloping them. We took every weight class. And as each of their boys got up from the mat, he swaggered around in his tatters with false bravado, a kind of street pride that couldn't acknowledge defeat.

Mike, seated beside me, shook his head sadly, "I wish just one of them could have won," he said. "They have a lot of potential, but losing like this could take the heart right out of them." Mike loved kids - all kids - and he knew them, having coached little league football, baseball and lacrosse. That's when the idea for his present came. That afternoon, I went to a local sporting goods store and bought an assortment of wrestling headgear and shoes and sent them anonymously to the inner-city church. On Christmas Eve, I placed the envelope on the tree, the note inside telling Mike what I had done and that this was his gift from me. His smile was the brightest thing about Christmas that year and in succeeding years. For each Christmas, I followed the tradition--one year sending a group of mentally handicapped youngsters to a hockey game, another year a check to a pair of elderly brothers whose home had burned to the ground the week before Christmas, and on and on. The envelope became the highlight of our Christmas. It was always the last

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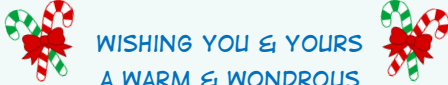
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with love, laughter  
& goodwill!*



Marilyn Blythman

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## COMING EVENTS

**Bingo Bake Sale Time!** Reno 4-H's Annual Bingo & Silent Bake Auction will be held on **January 12th** in the Consul Hall. Bingo starts at 7 pm. Also coming up, **District 10 4-H Curling** on **January 2** at Consul starting at 10 am. Everyone welcome!

All are welcome to the second **Good Neighbour Talk** on **Saturday, January 16** at 1:30pm in the Consul Hall. The guest speaker is Lei Fuimaono, Freedom House Home Director, from Dream Centre, Los Angeles. The Dream Centre specializes in inner city ministry in the greater LA area. They gave Living Hope Ranch permission to use its successful teen restoration program.

### January Booth Schedule

#### JANUARY

- 3 Terry Stokke / Randy Genert
- 5 Abbey Parsonage
- 6 Tracey Schacher
- 7 Cody Reamer
- 8 Rodney Gallant
- 9 Jill Parsonage / Bryan Tully
- 10 Heidi Beierbach / Geoff Fisher
- 12 Randy Olson / Parker Richards
- 13 Bo Rutkowski
- 14 Terry Reamer / Shauna Jones
- 15 Miranda Wenzel
- 17 Wyatt Geiger / Jeremy Genert
- 19 Daryl Brost
- 20 Shay Pridmore
- 21 Marilyn Buchanan
- 23 Fred Blakley / Carl Parsonage
- 26 Lane Sanderson
- 27 Dean Mackie
- 28 Rodney Fairbrother / Russ Swihart
- 29 Calvin Dahl / Lorne Warberg
- 30 Wade Pridmore

**THANK YOU**

We would like to thank our family and friends for all their love and support through this most difficult time. We cannot express our appreciation enough to everyone who has called, stopped by for a visit, brought food, sent a card and shared memories of Bill, the lovely flowers and all your hugs and prayers, for thinking of us and for the donations made in Bill's memory. To everyone who was with mom and helped her in any way - we thank you from the bottom of our hearts...

With all our love and thanks!!  
The Family of Bill French

*Your presence we will miss  
Your memory we will always treasure  
Loving you always  
Forgetting you never...*

**Celebrate Christmas!**

**Church of God:** Christmas Eve Candle Light Service .. Thursday, December 24th @ 5:00 pm. Music and quiet reflection on the birth of Christ! All welcome!

**St. Stephen's Catholic Church:**  
Christmas Day Mass at 1:00 pm.  
Everyone is warmly welcomed!



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Season's Greetings to all of you and thanks for your support of The Reno Reader & museum projects!

**The next Reno Reader deadline is January 11th at noon.**

*Christmas is the story of God's love for us, expressed through the birth of the Christ Child.*

*Merry Christmas!*

Wayne & Marilyn Elhard & family  
MLA—Cypress Hills

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thing opened on Christmas morning and our children, ignoring their new toys, would stand with wide-eyed anticipation as their dad lifted the envelope from the tree to reveal its contents.

As the children grew, the toys gave way to more practical presents, but the envelope never lost its allure. The story doesn't end there. You see, we lost Mike last year due to dreaded cancer. When Christmas rolled around, I was still so wrapped in grief that I barely got the tree up. But Christmas Eve found me placing an envelope on the tree, and in the morning, it was joined by three more. Each of our children, unbeknownst to the others, had placed an envelope on the tree for their dad. The tradition has grown and someday will expand even further with our grandchildren standing to take down the envelope.

Mike's spirit, like the Christmas spirit, will always be with us.

To learn more about honoring a loved one through this special tradition, please visit [www.giving101.org](http://www.giving101.org).



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**RUNAWAY SNOWBALL**

(Author unknown)

Someone in the sky last night  
Had an awful snowball fight,  
And when I woke today I found  
All the snowflakes on the ground.

I made myself a snowball  
As perfect as could be  
I thought I'd keep it as a pet  
And let it sleep with me.

I made it some pajamas  
And a pillow for it's head,  
Then last night it ran away,  
But first...  
It wet my bed.




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**A COWBOY'S CHRISTMAS PRAYER**

Christmas poem written by S. Omar Barker

I ain't much good at prayin', and You may not know me, Lord--  
I ain't much seen in churches where they preach Thy Holy Word,

But You may have observed me out here on the lonely plains,  
A-lookin' after cattle, feelin' thankful when it rains,

Admirin' Thy great handiwork, the miracle of grass,  
Aware of Thy kind Spirit in the way it comes to pass

That hired men on horseback and the livestock that we tend  
Can look up at the stars at night and know we've got a Friend.

So here's ol' Christmas comin' on, remindin' us again  
Of Him whose comin' brought goodwill into the hearts of men.

A cowboy ain't no preacher, Lord, but if You'll hear my prayer,  
I'll ask as good as we have got for all men everywhere.

Don't let no hearts be bitter, Lord; don't let no child be cold.  
Make easy beds for them that's sick, and them that's weak and old.

Let kindness bless the trail we ride, no matter what we're after,  
And sorta keep us on Your side, in tears as well as laughter.

I've seen old cows a-starvin', and it ain't no pretty sight:  
Please don't leave no one hungry, Lord, On Thy good Christmas night--

No man, no child, no woman, and no critter on four feet--  
I'll aim to do my best to help You find 'em chuck to eat.

I'm just a sinful cowpoke, Lord,--ain't got no business prayin'--  
But still I hope You'll ketch a word or two of what I'm a-sayin':

We speak of Merry Christmas, Lord--I reckon You'll agree  
There ain't no Merry Christmas for nobody that ain't free.

So one thing more I'll ask You, Lord: just help us what You can  
To save some seeds of freedom for the future sons of man!

