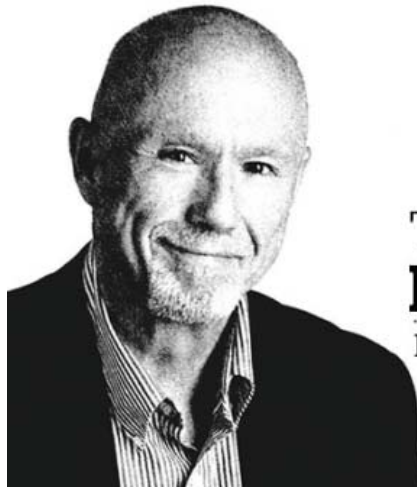


SULLIVAN: A Christmas wish or two to get us through

Paul Sullivan / Contributing writer

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The
NORTH SIDE
Paul Sullivan

Here it is Christmas Day. Once again I still haven't finished shopping, and I've sent out exactly one Christmas card.

Sigh. If this keeps up, I'll be drummed out of the Elf Corps, forced to spend all of my days as a lawn ornament, or wherever it is disgraced elves go.

Fortunately, thanks to this column, I can broadcast Christmas wishes to all the boys and girls, naughty, nice ... or neither.

It's kind of an honour and a privilege. I'll try to be like Santa.

My first wish goes to North Shore Rescue. May the volunteers get to spend Christmas with families and friends instead of wandering around in the dark on top of the mountain looking for lost souls, no shining star to light their way.

Best wishes to the District and the City of North Vancouver. Will 2016 be the year they are able to see past their boundaries (which no one else bothers to acknowledge) and move toward a rational future together as a united front? Ho, ho, ho, that's a good one, Santa.

To the Syrian refugees who are wondering what all the fuss is about — the gifts, the feast, the decks, etc. — it's how we cope with getting up in the dark, working in the dark, going to bed in the dark, and doing it all over again tomorrow in the dark, endlessly. It's been called Christmas, but in an effort to become more inclusive, we've started calling it "Happy Holidays" and leave it up to you to guess what holiday we're talking about. Frankly, I don't care what we call it, as long as it comes with pudding. Pass the sauce.

To the District of North Vancouver, which is building me a nice new gym and pool across from Delbrook Community Recreation Centre. How's that for a gift? The new centre will also be called Delbrook Community Recreation Centre, and it would be confusing to have two Delbrook community recreation centres across from each other, so obviously, one's gotta go. No problem! They'll sell the land upon which the current Delbrook centre resides and, unless the bottom falls out of the market, make out like a bandit, so it's not clear who's giving what gift to whom.

To everyone who's been stuck on the Upper Levels Highway between Westview and the Second Narrows since what seems like Thanksgiving, be of good cheer. Sure you're going to miss Christmas dinner at Granny's house, but everyone knows the leftovers are better on Boxing Day.

Speaking of the gridlock that ate the North Shore: Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays, whatever, to the doomed motorists stuck in the mess bounded by Capilano Road and Taylor Way. The District of North Van plans to fix the problem by adding 18- and 12-storey towers, a new community centre, four low-rise buildings and 20 townhouse units. Meanwhile, the Lions Gate Bridge continues to accommodate one lane of traffic at least half the time.

Speaking of Lions Gate: Good news for everyone who lives in the shadow of the stench of the Lions Gate sewage treatment plant. Metro Vancouver says the new secondary treatment facility will be ready by Christmas ... 2020. And that's if young Mr. Trudeau keeps his "infrastructure" election promise. Just keep holding your noses.

A shout-out to the bears, cosy and hibernating in the mountain forests: Stay where you are! Don't go out from the woods today even if you're tempted to unwrap a few dumpsters in a quest for Christmas leftovers. There are "conservation" officers out there, who are instructed to keep the peace with extreme prejudice.

To the other guys wandering around the aisles of the 7-Eleven looking for last-minute holiday beef jerky, give it up. Go home. Be with your families. It's officially over. Try to do better next year.

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