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Top Stories For 2020



1. **COVID-19 PANDEMIC**, no doubt the pandemic takes first place. Early in January, we started to hear stories about a virus outbreak in China, and within mere weeks, the virus had made its way internationally around the world and grew to become a pandemic. The World Health Organization announced the pandemic world-wide on March 11th, 2020. Businesses shut down except for essential services, schools closed and virtual learning and graduations became the norm. Toilet paper, bleach, flour and hand sanitizer ran out on the shelves, but the public forged on. And, we have to mention some COVID favs; The Tiger King on Netflix and Alone, with our own Kielyn Marrone of Lure of the North in Espanola, on the History Channel kept us glued to our television sets. Sour dough bread, shared recipes, pajamas, Zoom meetings and mask designing became the norm. The virus continues to be a challenge heading into 2021. On December 09th, 2020, Health Canada approved the Pfizer vaccine and the process of vaccination began around the globe. The three basic rules of protocol still include wearing masks, maintaining physical distancing and staying within social circles.

2. **THE PASSING OF ALEX TREBEK** – One of the most well-known voices and personalities in television history passed away after a battle with pancreatic cancer. The final new “Jeopardy!” episodes hosted by Alex Trebek aired last week, starting with highlights that

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Top Stories For 2020

promised to be memorable. The first of the five episodes started with Trebek's "powerful message about the season of giving," producer Sony Pictures Television said in a release last week. The final episode, on Friday, concluded with a tribute to the long-time and beloved host. He died of pancreatic cancer on November 8 at age 80. Trebek, who had been candid about his condition, worked until 10 days before he died, soldiering on despite debilitating treatments and the disease's toll. It was unexpected that the episodes taped in late October would be his final ones, Sony said. Trebek had been fighting the disease for nearly two years. Veteran "Jeopardy!" champion Ken Jennings will take over as guest host starting on

January 11. A permanent host has yet to be announced.

3. THE DEATH OF MANITOULIN OPP CONSTABLE MARC HOVINGH was devastating, not only to the policing family and people in Ontario, but across Canada. Ontario Provincial Police Const. Marc Hovingh faced each day with "bravery and resolve" and was "nothing short of heroic," OPP Commissioner Thomas Carrique told mourners attending the funeral service for the 52-year-old officer on Saturday, November 28th. "I stand before you today with a broken heart, asking myself how, how it is possible to be so sad but yet so proud at the same time," Carrique said. "We are grateful and forever indebted to you

for your service." Hovingh died November 19th in the line of duty on Manitoulin Island in a shoot-out with Gary Brohman who also died in the altercation. Because of COVID-19 restrictions, the funeral held at the high school in the First Nations community of M'Chigeeng was by invitation only. The service was livestreamed online, and some Manitoulin residents watched the livestream together at a drive-in in Little Current. Premier Doug Ford and Lieutenant Governor Elizabeth Dowdeswell were among those in attendance. The investigation continues.

4. INTEGRITY COMMISSIONER INVESTIGATIONS - If you do not know the name Robert Swayze by now, you have definitely not been in tune with the times. Swayze, the Integrity Commissioner for Espanola and Elliot Lake, and who also stepped in to oversee a serious allegation in the Township of Sables-Spanish Rivers, was kept busy this year dealing with councillor infractions and a death threat made by a mayor in Massey. He also cashed in, nearly \$500,000. Will he play as strong a role in 2021?

Only time will tell.

5. BLACK LIVES MATTER PROTEST - On May 25, George Floyd, a Black 46-year-old man, died after a police officer pressed a knee on his neck for eight minutes and 46 seconds, despite Floyd repeatedly crying out, "I can't breathe." Cellphone video of Floyd's death quickly drew attention to the treatment of Black Americans by police and the criminal justice system. Peaceful protests started taking place in the U.S. against racial injustice and police brutality, with Black Lives Matter demonstrations quickly spreading all across the globe. In the months that followed, people would also protest in the names of other Black Americans who had been killed, such as Breonna Taylor, 26, Ahmaud Arbery, 25, Eric Garner, 44, Michael Brown, 18, Tamir Rice, 12, and Trayvon Martin, 17, to name a few. In Canada, solidarity protests broke out, with Canadians calling out racism and police brutality within their own country including protests in Little Current, Espanola and Massey standing in solidarity with the movement and acknowledging Indigenous racism as well.

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In 2020 COVID-19 Disproportionately Infected The Words Of Women.

and Brexit about to dismantle that kingdom, Queen Elizabeth must be studying her Latin thesaurus to find a word way worse than horribillius. Abominationsis? Indecentibus? If at the end of the Brexit fiasco, Elizabeth winds up as the Queen of Europe, I think she'll be relieved. The last noteworthy quote goes to a frustrated mom and a reluctant homeschooler who posted: "We have 2,450 pencils in this house and that kid can't find one of them!" Moving on to Lesson #2 — fudging an answer so as not to lose face is one thing. Wild guessing by the teacher in the house? Not so good. When asked "What's a 'synonym'?", suffice to say Mom now realizes

that blurting out 'a spice' was not a wise decision.

Summing up last year, the editor of Parade Entertainment said: "Excuse our French but in many ways the year 2020 has been complete and utter crap — we're talking an absolute flaming pile of garbage that reeks and needs to be over, like yesterday."

Amen. 2020, the year that needed to be picked up and dispensed with in a pooper scooper bag.

Any of the ten books written by William Thomas are available at www.williamthomas.ca
Comments: williamjthomas@gmail.com

Recipe

We had these tasty appetizers on New Year's Eve and I almost ate the whole platter by myself. They are easy to prepare, have a delicious flavour and are impressive when served! I think they would also be wonderful served at brunch or for a lunch. You can prepare them ahead, bring them to room temperature and cook when needed. The recipe calls for mild cheddar cheese, but we also used sliced smoked cheddar and Havarti. Feel free to change up the cheese slices and you can half the recipe for a smaller group of people.



Ham and Cheese Asparagus Rolls

- 40 asparagus spears
- 20 slices Mild Cheddar Cheese 1 package, cut in half
- 20 slices of thin deli ham
- Preheat the oven to 425 degrees F
- In batches, steam the asparagus until bright green and still crisp, about 3-5 minutes. OR lay on a parchment lined baking sheet, spray with a bit of cooking spray and cook 3-5 minutes until partially cooked. Let cool.
- Top a ham slice with a slice of cheese. Place one asparagus spear on top of the cheese and roll the ham and cheese around it. Place crease side down on a large baking sheet. Repeat until all the asparagus are wrapped.
- Bake 5-10 minutes until cheese is melted and asparagus are tender.

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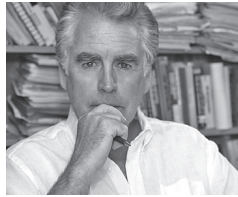
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All The World's A Circus

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In 2020 COVID-19 Disproportionately Infected The Words Of Women.

“COVID! COVID! COVID!” yelled President Donald Trump when the virus was getting more media attention than he was. (Then he slapped Giuliani in the back of the head and screamed: “Mommy! Mommy! Rudy hit me first!”)

The word ‘Bizarro’ does not completely describe the year 2020 in which a bunch of monkeys stole COVID-19 blood samples from patients in India, Elon Musk named his kid X Æ A-12! and two prison guards in Newfoundland performed root canal surgery on an inmate.

However some things that women said last year came very close. It all began with the prophecy of an anonymous woman: “Eventually, everyone will be quarantined to their houses with no sports to watch... and in nine months from now a boom of babies will be born... and we will call them Coronials.” I like the sound of that.

Following Randy Quaid and Kayne West down the rabbit hole of reality, Roseanne Barr claimed COVID-19 was a conspiracy. “It’s a plot to get rid of Baby Boomers.” But if it’s also a plot by Bill Gates to get mind-control chips into our bodies and since Bill Gates is a Baby Boomer — doesn’t that make COVID-19 a suicide pact for seniors? Inexplicably Madonna called the coronavirus “The great equalizer” in a video revealing her in a bathtub surrounded by rose petals. But equality is not something Madonna has always paired to. “I won’t be happy ‘til I’m as famous as God.”

Showing great sympathy for frontline healthcare workers who are sleeping in donated house trailers in hospital parking lots - JayLo posted a video of her young son dressed as a waiter with a tray of cocktails on the grounds of her mansion saying: “We can’t go out to any restaurant but the service and entertainment here is pretty good.” Actress Jaime King also put out a weird video in which she thanked the coronavirus for bringing people together! Really? I thought we were supposed to stay apart?!? Oh, I see, you

meant bringing people together in hospitals and morgues. Right?

“So far, 2020 is like looking both ways before you cross the street, then getting hit by an airplane.” This from a woman who, fearing this would actually happen to her, signed off as ‘anonymous’.

Perhaps the quote that best captures the day-to-day frustration of those in the food and beverage industry came from Pantiles who posted: “If you would like to know how it feels to be in hospitality during this coronavirus pandemic? Remember when the Titanic was sinking and the band continued to play? We are the band!”

The coronavirus seemed to have a serious disorientation effect, even on those who tested negative. Paris Hilton: “No, no, I didn’t go to England. I went to London.” (Whoa, did the UK also give away its biggest city in the Brexit deal?) Christina Aguilera: “So, where’s the Cannes Film Festival this year?” (Venice.)

Brittany Spears: “I’ve never really wanted to go to Japan. Simply because I don’t like eating fish. And I know that’s very popular over there in Africa.” (So is bushmeat.)

Jessica Simpson: “Is this chicken or is it fish? I know it’s tuna but it says ‘Chicken of the Sea.’ (It’s “chuna”, fusion food in a can.)

Governor General Julie Payette’s New Year’s address in part, said: “Even when times are hard, one can always find something positive” which means she’s no longer using a bullhorn to order her staff around.

Summing up the year 1992, after three royal marriages collapsed, Windsor Castle burned down and Sarah Ferguson was caught on camera sucking some guy’s toe, Queen Elizabeth called it her annus horribilis. Now, at the end of 2020 with Prince Harry divorcing himself from the royal family, COVID-19 ravaging the United Kingdom

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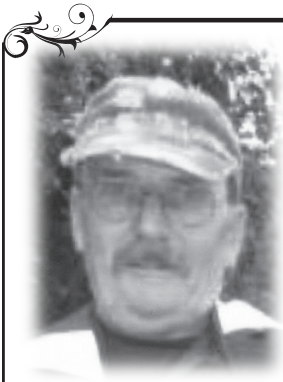
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The Espanola Hospital, Elks Hall, Bourcier Funeral Home, Custodian and friends at the Little Current Senior Apartment facility, Leo Fleurent, Denis & Louise Allard, Friends & Family, Cory Piche who Gilbert thought of as a great friend and Starr Heapy who's friendship and companionship was second to none.

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OBITUARY



Caverley – Eileen Elizabeth of Espanola passed away on January 2, 2021 in the Espanola Regional Hospital at the age of 81. Dear daughter of the late Adelard & Agnes (nee Sauve) Laderoute. Beloved wife of the late Gordon Caverley (1996). Loving partner of Ray Constantineau. Loving mother of Russell Caverley of Espanola and step mother of Benva St. Morris and Paul Constantineau of Sudbury. Cherished by grandchildren Amanda, Alex, Cameron, Wynter, Kirby and great grandchildren Oskar and Holden. Dear sister of Bernice Sokoloski, Terry Laderoute, Marie Rose McGrath and the late Jean Laderoute, late Gerald Laderoute, late Pearl Ouellette, late Wilfred and late Lionel Laderoute. Also, will be sadly missed by many friends & relatives. Cremation with a graveside service at a later date in the spring at the Espanola Cemetery. Arrangements by **BOURCIER FUNERAL HOME Ltd, Espanola.**

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