

Grudgingly getting in the spirit

By Sarah Sobanski

So something happened.

I don't want you to freak out.

I know you might not have seen it coming, but it came all the same.

Let's do it like a Band-Aid. Ready?

It's two weeks until December. It's ?that? time of year.

What?!

I know, I know, how the heck did this happen? I really don't know.

It feels like last week I was prepping content for our Getaway Guide, now I'm budgeting my pay cheques for gifts and rolling my eyes at Facebook memes counting days until Christmas. One of my co-workers has lights up at her desk!

Every year I think, ?The holidays should happen biannually.?

Yes, bah humbug! Seriously, the City of Toronto put up its Nathan Phillips Square tree two Mondays ago ? Nov. 6. Not one, but two!

That six-storey tree comes from our area every year, by the way ? go, North Hastings! It goes to the city on a flatbed and has to be lifted into place by cranes, according to a release by the city.

I'll tell you something, there have been a few Griswold-envy trees at my parents' house over the years. Some people are fake tree people, but my dad, he's a choose the worst snowstorm of the year to snowmobile out and get a tree kind of person ? those are fond memories.

The release by the city also said it takes a crew of six people and approximately four hours to install the tree. After that it takes three days for the tree to settle. It will take a four-person crew two weeks to decorate it.

Clearly, they don't have cats in Toronto. No one with cats is decorating their tree until the day before Christmas. Unless they have better behaved cats than mine, who knocked the tree ? in its entirety ? over thrice last year. Come to think of it, that was actually pretty funny.

Unlike indoor trees, the North Hastings-Toronto tree doesn't need to be watered.

When I got my first tree, at my first apartment, I thought indoor trees didn't need watering. What can I say, it was an evergreen, I forgot rain existed ? I got nothing. I bumped into it Christmas Eve and all of the needles fell off. Chalked that one up to life experience.

OK, so, now, having thought about it ? maybe I'm looking forward to making more memories like the ones I've described this year. Maybe I can take solace in the fact that there is no time like holiday time.

I suppose, if I think about it further, I'm also looking forward to all the area holiday bazaars and craft shows ? and dragging my boyfriend to all of them. In my defence, I just can't decide what to buy everyone by myself. I need someone to say they like one thing better so I can pick the other anyway.

Last year I got my parents and most of my friends done by visiting local holiday festivals. If you do it right, you can plan it into a tour. Just watch our community calendar and ads ? pick a weekend with lots going on and make an adventure of hitting as many as you can in one day. I found such unique and cool things last year, I don't know how I'm going to out-do myself this year.

That's half the fun of it though, isn't it? Finding that special something to light up someone's world. It's not always something material ? sometimes it's showing up and surprising them with your company, or baking something, or sending a card ? somehow brightening their day.

Maybe I got ahead of myself, maybe I am excited. Fine, the holidays should happen every year. I guess we should just embrace the season.