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Chalk Talk

Greetings | Feature | News | Happy Holidays!

PLEASE SHARE CHALK TALK WITH YOUR COLLEAGUES!!!

Letter from the Editor

Dear Educators:

**Show the people you love with love
Show them the way you feel**

**Things are gonna be much better if you only
will — James Taylor**

My most memorable Christmas occurred during a trip *back* to Italy with my mother and little brother when I was 18 years old. Though we had immigrated to Canada 16 years before, this was our 1st trip back to visit family. We were returning triumphantly by airplane, albeit without my Dad who had to work and my older brother who was away at university. We arrived in Turin 24 hours late as a result of missing our connecting flight in fogged-in London. After much confusion and mishaps worthy of a Fellini film, we were met in the wee hours of the morning by an aunt and a cousin (*strangers* to me and my brother, and we to them!) outside of the train station. Grinning with tears in their eyes, they were so happy to see us — their flesh and blood family.



For the next three weeks we survived an onslaught of tears and hundreds of exchanged kisses and ribcage crunching hugs. As Christmas approached, the only frantic shopping was to buy fresh food items to prepare the traditional Christmas eve dinner of seafood dishes and 10-course Christmas day meal. No presents, no tree, no Santa, just walking to midnight Mass arm-in-arm with family singing carols. After Mass, the streets were filled in every direction with parents, children, grandparents, talking and laughing on their way home to enjoy a sweet snack and to toast the season. Family, Friends, Love and nothing more.

Life is so fast here in North America that sometimes we forget to feel fortunate, to spread joy and to give what we can to others in need.

From all of us at CoEd, we wish you a safe and happy holiday season. See you in 2009!
[As always, we'd love to hear from you!](#)

Mary Kovack

'Tis the Season to Give, Share and Care

Giving, sharing and caring can help to make this time of year memorable. A recent [study](#) showed that there is in fact a happiness quotient. We feel happier if our friends, neighbours and family are happy. Therefore, we all have a vested interest in affecting the happiness of others. Even in these economically difficult times, it's important to remember that Canadians are among the most fortunate people in the world. Giving of ourselves, whether it is sharing our wealth or our time, is meaningful. Getting together with family and friends to share a meal, take a walk, go for a skate, watch a favourite movie, listen to music, play games will feed the spirit.

Holidays offer a great opportunity for good times and good will but for many it can also be a time of dealing with loss, illness and other heartaches. In addition to the economic hardship that is being felt in many sectors, our thoughts are with those Canadian families who have loved ones serving in Afghanistan. It was indeed an extraordinarily sad and poignant event a week ago to see Canada's busiest highway brought to a hushed standstill by the repatriation of three fallen Canadian soldiers. Please take a moment to watch [a short video "The Trip Home" produced by the Toronto Star](#) chronicling images and commentary by those who waited for hours in the cold and dark to pay their respects to the fallen along the route of the "Highway of Heroes".

Most of our young people live in a world of privilege. Check out the websites of [Veterans' Affairs](#) and the [Department of Defence](#) for ways that students can write to our troops and learn our military history. In addition, [Right To Play](#), [WorldVision](#), [Plan Canada](#), and [Unicef](#) offer classroom resources that will help students learn about and connect with kids around the world. Finally, why not show our planet that we care? [EcoVoyageurs](#) offers ways that we can all reduce the impact of the holidays on our environment.

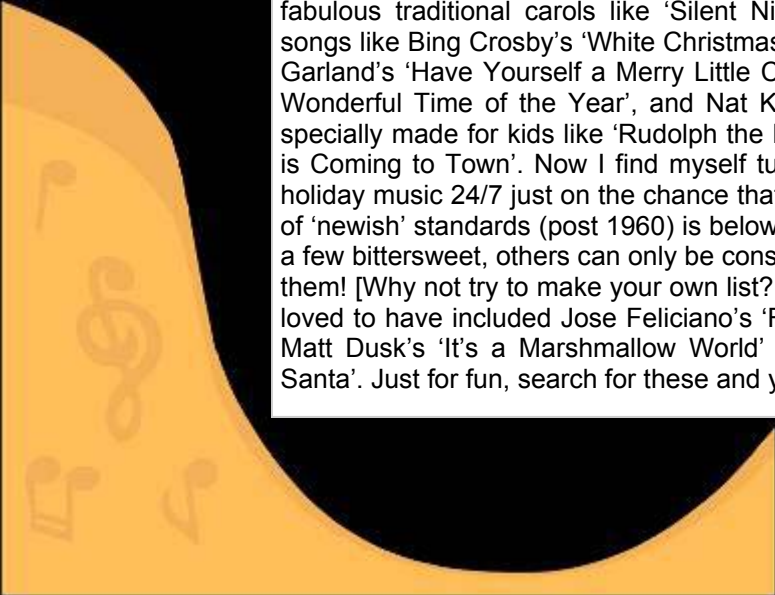
**No more lives torn apart,
That wars would never start,
And time would heal all hearts.
Everyone would have a friend,
And right would always win,
And love would never end.**

— *My Grown Up Christmas List*, David Foster



All I Want for Christmas is an iPod with My 10 Favourite Holiday songs ...

It seems that every year there's a new crop of holiday song 'wannabes' that hope to burrow their way into our collective consciousness. It can take a long time for a song to become a standard primarily because people, like me, resist for 10, 20 — even 30 — years before embracing a new seasonal tune. I grew up with so many fabulous traditional carols like 'Silent Night' and 'Little Drummer Boy'; classic songs like Bing Crosby's 'White Christmas' and 'I'll Be Home for Christmas', Judy Garland's 'Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas', Andy Williams' 'It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year', and Nat King Cole's Christmas Song; and those specially made for kids like 'Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer' and 'Santa Claus is Coming to Town'. Now I find myself tuning into those radio stations that play holiday music 24/7 just on the chance that I will hear one of my favourites. My list of 'newish' standards (post 1960) is below. While some are definitely sentimental, a few bittersweet, others can only be considered guilty pleasures. Hope you enjoy them! [Why not try to make your own list? It's difficult to pick just 10. I would have loved to have included Jose Feliciano's 'Feliz Navidad' or my most recent faves, Matt Dusk's 'It's a Marshmallow World' and Carrie and Wendy Wilson's 'Hey Santa'. Just for fun, search for these and your favourites on **YouTube**. MK]



[My Top Ten List in no particular order—MK]

- **Driving Home for Christmas – Chris Rea**
- **Last Christmas I Gave You My Heart – WHAM**
- **All I Want for Christmas is You – Mariah Carey**
- **River – Joni Mitchell**
- **Happy Xmas (War is Over) – John Lennon**
- **Christmas Time is Here – A Charlie Brown Christmas**
- **A Wonderful Xmas Time – Paul McCartney & Wings**
- **Hard Candy Christmas - Dolly Parton**
- **This Christmas – Donny Hathaway**
- **Merry Christmas Darling – The Carpenters**

Your CoEd Team
(clockwise from top centre)
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