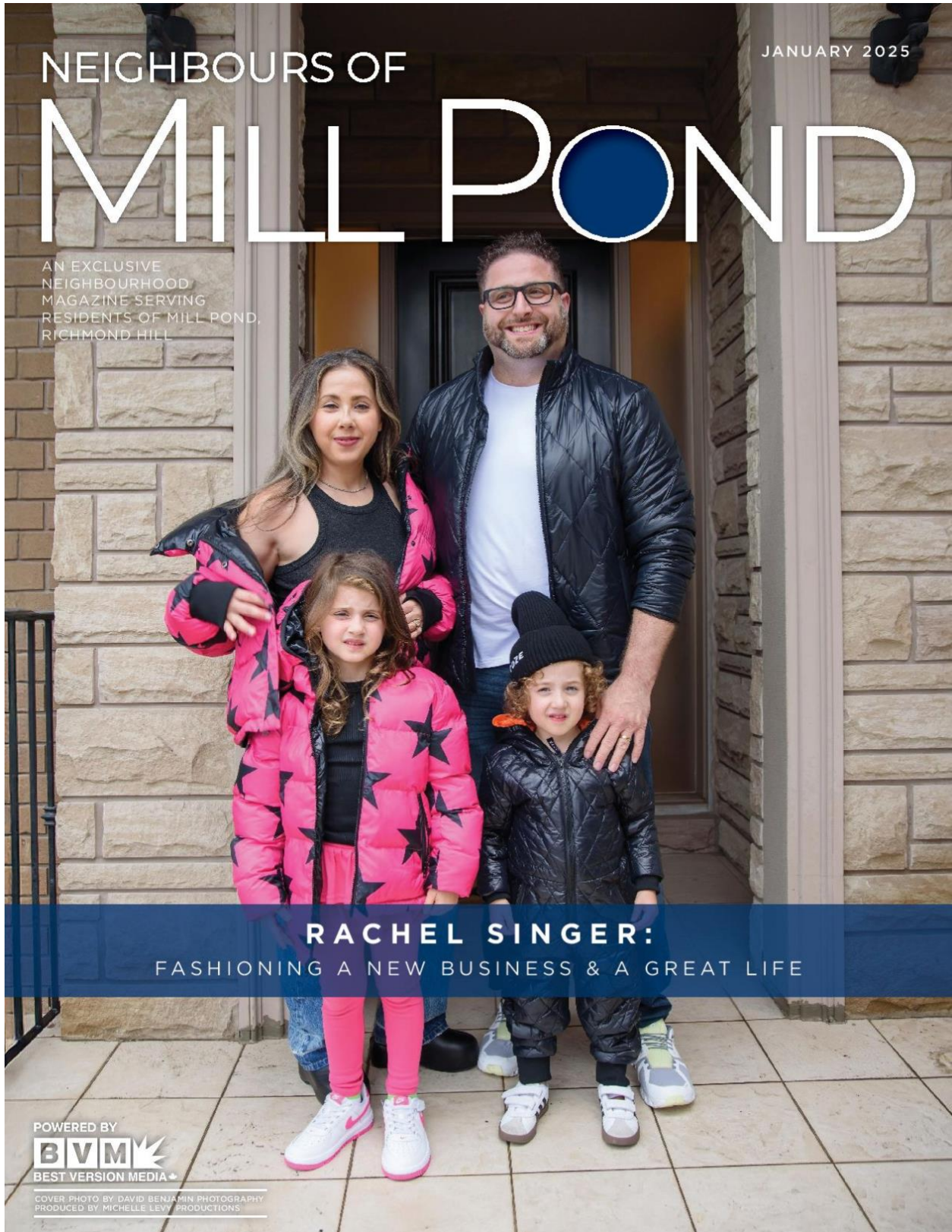


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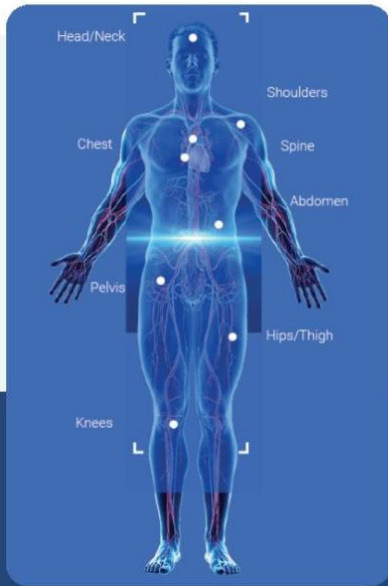
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FEEDBACK / IDEAS / SUBMISSIONS
Have feedback, ideas or submissions? We are always happy to hear from you! Deadlines for submissions are the 1st of each month. Go to www.bestversionmedia.com and click "Submit Content". You may also email your thoughts, ideas and photos to hrosen@bestversionmedia.com

ASSOCIATION SUBMISSION INFORMATION
Are you on the association board for your subdivision? Contact us for information on how you can submit articles, updates, reminders, events and more to the residents. We create customized homeowners/ratepayers' association sections at no cost to the HOA/RPA or the residents.

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CONTENT DUE:	EDITION DATE:
December 1.....	January
January 1.....	February
February 1.....	March
March 1.....	April
April 1.....	May
May 1.....	June
June 1.....	July
July 1.....	August
August 1.....	September
September 1.....	October
October 1.....	November
November 1.....	December

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DEAR RESIDENTS,

Greetings to all my wonderful friends and neighbours in our "hood." I would sincerely like to wish each of you a healthy and joyful 2025, and beyond!

Our company policy at Best Version Media is to not touch on anything political or religious. So obviously, I will not stray from our guidelines. I will, however, pray for world peace and the end of these wars. I feel that 2025 is going to be a great year. I think the economy will improve and, hopefully, life will be better.

I would like to introduce to you my newest sponsor. Jacqueline Smith, the owner of Tripinsure. She is a truly local business owner, with over 20 years in the travel insurance business under her belt. Having recently launched her business, she is in our Mill Pond community and is ready to assist you with your travel insurance requirements. Please reach out to her! (Look for her ad on page 13 in this issue.)

I am always seeking ways to improve this magazine. I sincerely hope each one of you enjoys receiving it monthly, and that it offers some informative articles and perhaps brings a smile to your face.

As always, I love to hear from our readers; honestly, I am just a call or text away.

Should you have any comments, we welcome them. Yes, we can take the bad stuff, too!

Wishing each of you happiness and health in 2025 and beyond. From the Mill Pond team: Heather, Brie, Karen and me.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL J. GALLOWAY, PUBLISHER

Direct: 416 409 0377 | mgalloway@bestversionmedia.com

Please reach out to me to become a sponsor. All comments welcome.

THE MILL POND TEAM



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January

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

THURSDAY, JANUARY 16
FRANK & COS LIVE IN YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD

Frank Spadone and Cosimo Tucci bring their hilarious sketches and characters to life at Richmond Hill Centre for the Performing Arts. Come see these social media sensations in "your neighborhood." This event is suitable for anyone age 14 and older.

Time: 8pm
Cost: \$60 + HST/Fees
tickets.rhcentre.ca

SATURDAY, JANUARY 25
RHCPA PRESENTS - CLASSIC ALBUMS LIVE: THE LITHIUM EXPERIENCE

The Lithium Experience celebrates the music of Pearl Jam, Nirvana, Alice in Chains and Soundgarden, four groups from 30 years ago that changed music forever. The sound and energy of classic grunge will take you back to that time, thanks to the talents of the world-class musicians of The Lithium Experience.

Time: 8pm; doors open at 7:30pm
Cost: Standard: \$52; Club RHCPA+ Members: \$44.20. HST/Fees extra.
tickets.rhcentre.ca

FRIDAY, JANUARY 31
RHCPA PRESENTS - 54•40

Over the past 40+ years, 54•40 has left their mark on the Canadian music industry with a legacy of gold and platinum albums, as well as stellar performances. Generations of music lovers will enjoy a concert featuring many of their classic hits, including "I Go Blind," "Ocean Pearl" and "One Gun."

Time: 8pm; doors open at 7:30pm
Cost: Standard: \$55; Club RHCPA+ Members: \$46.75. HST/Fees extra.
tickets.rhcentre.ca

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 1
RHCPA PRESENTS - BRENT BUTT

Saskatchewan-born comic Brent Butt figured out early on that the way to get attention as one of seven children was to be funny. He honed his stand-up skills at the local coffee shop and at high school variety nights, and moved to Saskatoon to perform in the city's new comedy club at the age of 20. A regular at the JUST FOR LAUGHS festival, he has appeared on A&E, HBO, CBC, CTV and Global; guest-starred on several TV shows; created, produced and starred in the award-winning TV series, *Come as You Are*; and toured the world as a comic. He brings his unique take on comedy to Richmond Hill Centre for the Performing Arts for one night only.

Time: 8pm; doors open at 7:30pm
Cost: Standard: \$55; Club RHCPA+ Members: \$46.75. HST/Fees extra.
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RACHEL SINGER:

FASHIONING A NEW BUSINESS & A GREAT LIFE

BY HEATHER ROSEN
 PHOTOS BY DAVID BENJAMIN PHOTOGRAPHY
 PRODUCED BY MICHELLE LEVY PRODUCTIONS

Rachel Singer, 41, and husband Jamie Rusen, 42, have busy lives with both their young family and their respective careers.

The couple first met on a popular dating app – but were soon properly introduced by a close mutual friend who thought, “This makes perfect sense! I don’t know why I didn’t think of [this match] before.”

The couple has been married for eight years. They tied the knot in what Rachel describes as “a casual, intimate ceremony” in the backyard of Rachel’s aunt, who lives in Lawrence Park, with just close family, friends and the family dogs in attendance. The couple spent their honeymoon in Maui, Hawaii.

They now have two young children: Chloe, 6, and Sonny, 4. Chloe is a gregarious child who makes friends wherever she goes, while Sonny’s trademark laugh and beautiful curly hair make him stand out.

Jamie attended the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg, his hometown, where he played varsity football for the University of Manitoba Bisons. He completed medical school and his residency in orthopaedic surgery there. As a newly minted surgeon, he then moved to Toronto after earning two fellowships. One was an upper extremity trauma fellowship at Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre, through the University of Toronto. The other was at the Roth Macfarlane Hand and Upper Limb Centre at St. Joseph’s Health Centre in London, Ontario, which is affiliated with Western University.

Jamie now works at Scarborough Health Network as a staff orthopaedic surgeon, where he specializes in comprehensive upper extremity surgery and hip and knee replacement surgery, with a particular expertise in minimally invasive partial knee replacement surgery.

Rachel grew up in the Heritage Estates area of Mill Pond in Richmond Hill, graduating from Alexander Mackenzie Secondary School. While contemplating the focus of her upcoming post-secondary studies, she told her family she wanted to enter the fashion industry, a challenging, highly competitive field. Her career dreams were always connected to fashion: as a young girl, she began using a sewing machine at the age of eight, and even had a mannequin in her room! Her interest was also inspired by the 25-store fashion retail chain her family owned for a number of years, with locations in various small towns throughout Ontario.

However, her parents warned her against entering this cutthroat and ever-changing area of endeavour. She relented, and instead went on to earn a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Toronto.

While still at university, she landed an internship with Rogers in their fashion publishing division. She spent a number of years creating fashion and beauty content, moving around to different magazines within the company’s publishing portfolio. She later landed at Transcontinental, another major magazine publisher. Over her 12-year career, she gained a great deal of experience working for a range of titles, including *Canadian Living*, *Elle Canada*, *Style at Home*, *Fashion Magazine*, and the now-defunct *LOULOU*, where she first started as an intern.

Fashion is in clearly in Rachel’s DNA. A self-taught apparel product developer and clothing designer, she first designed a 30-piece collection of knitwear tops and bottoms, as her strong desire to create clothing remained with her well into adulthood.

She says, “I have been designing clothing since I was a young girl. My family members were in fashion retail, and I come by it honestly. Although my grandmother and father are no longer with me, their influence is in everything I make.”

After her daughter was born, she felt compelled to pursue her longtime dream of getting into fashion design full-time – which she calls her destiny.

Rachel now heads up her own company, COZE, a line of outerwear for mothers and their kids who want to

have fun in the snow. The idea was hatched in 2017, when she noticed that there were no stylish snow pants for women to wear while playing with their kids during skiing and skating lessons, or while tobogganing at the park. Wanting to be sure there would be a viable market for her idea, Rachel did a great deal of global trend research for 18 months before embarking on the design process.

Inspired by this gap in the marketplace, she began designing her own outerwear in 2020. Her first COZE insulated jumpsuit, which she launched in 2021, sold out in Toronto *in a matter of days*. The timing of the launch may have played a large role in its success: it was during the pandemic, with many kids still involved in remote learning at home, allowing for plenty of outdoor breaks with the many parents who were working remotely themselves.

She immediately knew she had found her fashion niche.

The line was picked up by a number of boutiques across Canada, including several in Toronto and Montreal, and in the United States. Some of her pieces can be found at two boutiques along Upper Avenue Road in North York, and she sells to individual customers directly via her website as well.

Rachel is launching the fourth season of COZE designs this fall. She says the brand has become "a favourite of dog walkers and moms." She says the coolest part is that moms and kids can wear the matching jumpsuits and coats!

Although busy with her young family and growing business, Rachel has another passion: photography. She has been doing photography professionally for about 15 years; her work has been published in



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She says the cousins had a great time seeing one another. They make an effort to visit Winnipeg at least once a year - even in February!

The family loves their neighbourhood. "Being close to so many great shops, services and restaurants makes it ideal for us," Rachel says.



newspapers, magazines and online. In fact, in addition to designing her own clothing line, she also does all the original photography for the brand. So passionate is she about this other artistic endeavour that she has established a permanent photography studio right in her home.

In her spare time, Rachel likes to stay involved in the school community and volunteer as class parent. Although Jamie has a very busy surgical practice, he does enjoy down time with the family. He loves to cook, and has been working hard to perfect his pizza-making skills.

Rachel and Jamie enjoy travelling with friends and family every year. They recently went to Disneyland in California with various members of Jamie's Winnipeg relatives.

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BEAT THE WINTER BLUES: INDOOR ENTERTAINMENT OPTIONS IN RICHMOND HILL

SUBMITTED BY HEATHER ROSEN

As the winter chill settles in Richmond Hill, it's tempting to hibernate at home. But don't let the cold weather dampen your spirits! Our city offers a wealth of indoor activities to keep you entertained, active and warm during the cooler months. Here's your guide to beating the winter blues in Richmond Hill.

- Richmond Hill Public Library:** The various library branches offer a wealth of activities for all ages. rhpl.ca
- David Dunlap Observatory:** This popular attraction features tours, lectures and activities for those interested in astronomy. richmondhill.ca/en/learn-more/David-Dunlap-Observatory.aspx
- McConaghy Centre:** This venue specializes in activities and events for people 55 years of age and older, ranging from Bridge and knitting to fitness, dance and art classes, workshops, and more. richmondhill.ca/en/things-to-do/ml-mcconaghy-centre.aspx
- Richmond Hill Heritage Centre:** This centre offers galleries and exhibits showcasing the rich heritage and history of Richmond Hill. Suitable for all ages. richmondhill.ca/en/learn-more/Richmond-Hill-Heritage-Centre.aspx
- Mill Pond Gallery:** Home to the Richmond Hill Group of Artists, this charming venue offers rotating gallery shows, art classes, Open Studio times, Artist Demo Evenings, and workshops. Open weekends September thru June, daily in the summer. millpondgallery.ca
- Treehouse Play Centre:** This combo playground/café is a safe, hygienic environment for young children to just be kids. The on-site café accommodates various dietary restrictions. facebook.com/treehouseplaycentre
treehouseplaycentre@gmail.com
- Jungle Land:** This indoor playground is perfect for kids – including birthday parties. Features include a ball pool, trampoline, rainbow ramp, bungee spider web, wave slides, music panel, life-size jungle animals, and more. jungleland.ca

Don't let the winter weather keep you down. Richmond Hill offers a plethora of indoor activities to keep you entertained and energized throughout the colder months. Whether you're looking for solo adventures, family fun or romantic escapes, there's something for everyone to enjoy without braving the chill.

Remember to check the websites or call ahead for the most up-to-date information on hours and admission prices. Stay warm, stay safe and make the most of your winter in Richmond Hill!

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BY STEVE EDAN,
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BATHROOM RENOVATION:

GATHER QUOTES & CHOOSE THE RIGHT CONTRACTOR

Bathroom renovations are expensive! They can range from \$3,000 to well over \$20,000, depending on the project's complexity and materials. No matter your budget, hiring the right contractor is essential for a successful outcome. Here are some tips on how to gather quotes, compare them and choose the best professional for your needs.

BEFORE YOU REQUEST QUOTES

Before contacting contractors, clarify your vision for the new bathroom. Will it be a serene retreat, modern, traditional or a rustic style? Knowing the purpose of the renovation will help you determine your must-haves, whether it's a larger shower, soaker tub, additional storage or updated fixtures.

Assess the current condition of your bathroom. Can any fixtures or materials be reused to save costs? While your contractor will provide



guidance, setting realistic expectations upfront will make the process smoother. Establish a budget within a range or a maximum amount and communicate it clearly to contractors to get quotes that align with your financial goals. Have a contingency fund set aside for any unforeseen items.

FINDING THE RIGHT CONTRACTORS

Reach out to three or four local contractors for quotes. Platforms like Google, TrustedPros & HomeStars can provide you with reviews and connect you with professionals with strong reviews, solid reputations, and verified credentials. Recommendations from friends, family and neighbours can also be helpful.

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Providing each contractor with consistent information about your project will get you quotes that are easy to compare. Clarify whether you're planning a remodel and updating finishes and fixtures, or a full renovation which potentially involves structural changes or moving of fixtures. Discuss your timeline, including any deadlines, and ask about building permits. If you already have a design or blueprint, share it. If not, find out if the contractor can assist with the design phase.

MEETING CONTRACTORS ON-SITE

Arrange a site visit with each contractor to discuss the project in detail. This is an opportunity to evaluate their expertise and approach. Ask about their experience, licensing, insurance, and warranty. Inquire about timelines for delivering estimates/quotes/contracts, completing the project and whether they run several projects at once. Ask if they work alone, with a team, or sub-contract any of the work. Remember, you will be working with the contractor closely for several weeks.

Take note of their observations. An experienced contractor will identify potential challenges/obstacles and provide practical suggestions and solutions. Contractors who only focus on the positives and avoid addressing potential challenges may lack the necessary experience to manage the complexities of a bathroom renovation. For example, they might overlook signs of underlying water damage, outdated plumbing, or structural issues that could arise during the project. While an overly optimistic approach may sound appealing at first, it can lead to costly surprises and delays once the work begins.

COMPARING QUOTES

After collecting quotes, compare them carefully. Consider the overall price but also consider what's included, and which contractor you best connect with. Quotes that seem unusually low might overlook essential details that may be added later, while higher quotes could include extras you don't need. Verify that the scope of work matches your expectations and ensure all necessary costs – like permits and delivery fees – are accounted for.

A reputable contractor should offer a contract that indicates the Parties, Scope of Work, Insurance, Payment Schedule and Warranties for both labour and materials. A contract is essential to ensure there or no miscommunication as to what is included and not included in the renovation.

MAKING YOUR DECISION

Choosing the right contractor involves more than just comparing numbers. Evaluate their communication skills, professionalism, and ability to address your concerns. The process of gathering and comparing quotes and contractors takes effort, but it's essential to ensure your renovation goes smoothly.

By doing your homework and selecting a contractor with the right experience and approach, you'll set the foundation for a bathroom renovation that adds value to your home, meets your expectations and goes smoothly.



YOUR NAME IN PRINT. RIGHT HERE. INTERESTED?

Would you like to contribute articles to this magazine?

Are you a budding writer who would like to build a portfolio of work? Or are you a seasoned scribe who is looking for more exposure?

Neighbours of Mill Pond Magazine is looking for family-friendly content in the following areas:

- Parenting Tips
- Household kitchen or repair 'hacks' (i.e., tips on how to make something easier)
- Gardening (for April through October issues)
- Favourite Toronto Attractions
- Local History - Stories, Points of Interest
- Neighbourhood Events
- Resident or Community Groups (such as book clubs)
- Recipes
- Wildlife/Nature
- Travel
- Day Trips from Toronto
- Humour
- Pet of the Month submissions (including photo as a separate file, and a short write-up)
- Sports
- Poems

Please send your submissions to hrosen@bestversionmedia.com!

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Active	53 Highgrove Cres	1,999,000
Active	13 Beasley Drive	1,945,000

STATUS	ADDRESS	ASKING PRICE
Active	390 Kerrybrook Drive	5,118,000
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Active	9 Mill Walk Court	1,659,000
Active	60 Marbrook Street	1,999,000
Active	3 Marbrook Street	2,388,000
Active	122 Mill Street	1,250,000

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A Colourful WINTER WONDERLAND

BY GRACE SCHULTE

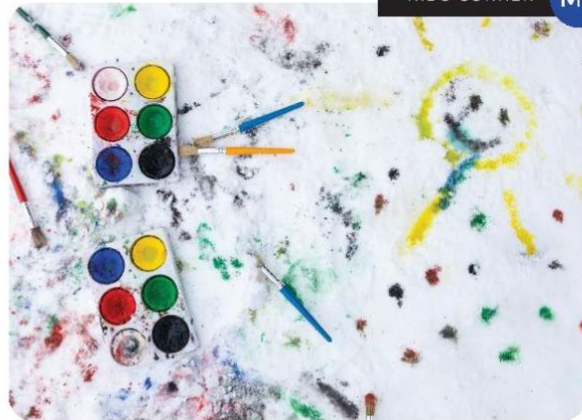
Winter doesn't have to be all about staying indoors—so why not bring some colour to the know with some DIY snow paintings? This fun, easy activity is perfect for both kids and adults alike and only requires a few simple items: food colouring, water, and some spray bottles. If possible, use naturally sourced food dye in consideration of the environment!

GETTING STARTED

To make your snow paintings, fill your spray bottles with water and a few drops of food colouring.

Tip: The primary colours of the colour wheel are red, yellow, and blue. You only need these three to complete the rainbow. Mix red and yellow to create orange, mix yellow and blue to create green, and mix red and blue to create purple!

Once you have prepared your spray bottles, you can take them outside and let your creativity run wild. Spray patterns and make swirls, the snow is your canvas! You can even use them to decorate a snowman and give him a fancy outfit.



TIPS FOR EXTRA FUN

- **Add stencils:** Place stencils on the snow and spray around them to create unique shapes.
- **Use assigned bottles:** Give each person their own colour to work with for collaborative creations.
- **Try "snow graffiti":** Use the bottles to write messages or draw fun shapes for neighbours to enjoy!

Not only is snow painting a fun way to enjoy winter, but it also adds a nice splash of colour to those sometimes otherwise gray days. So next time the weather isn't too frigid, bundle up and turn your backyard into your very own winter art gallery!

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KIDS & NONFICTION BOOKS

BY DR. JOANNE FOSTER

"A capacity and taste for reading gives access to whatever has already been discovered by others." ~ Abraham Lincoln

WHY NONFICTION?

Nonfiction is a HUGE literary category. It encompasses factual books featuring content that uncovers truths (or perceived or documented truths), and ways to understand and navigate the world. Nonfiction books provide information, strategies for doing and learning, and new perspectives. Material can be conveyed through use of creative language, images, humour, interviews, quotes, and other means of expression. Topics span **A to Z** – astronomy to zoology – and all matter in between. Find a match with a child's areas of interest, and nonfiction books can make great gifts for any occasion, opening portals to pleasure and possibilities!

Sure, fictional stories (adventure, fantasy, mystery, etc.) can be exciting. However, here are two key considerations: 1) *nonfiction offers insights into real-world complexities and authentic contexts*, and 2) *open-mindedness about what to read helps fuel a life-long love of reading*.

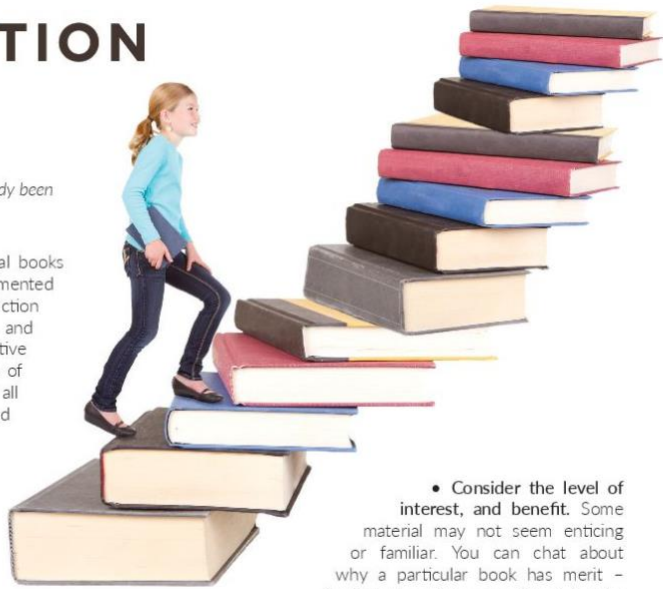
When kids discover topics or ideas that they're keen to investigate, they may seek out and read nonfiction books. Reinforce their investment in reading! It's important for building comprehension and inquiry skills, and for strengthening cognitive ability, including creative and critical thinking processes.

For example, a nonfiction book may be about climate change, marine conservation, history, space exploration, sports, biographical revelations, video game design, or how to do something such as bake, garden, or spark creativity. Such books can motivate, enlighten, and empower kids to learn – to reflect, predict outcomes, question ideas, make connections across different disciplines, identify problems, and appreciate solutions. Kids may even devise their own solutions, or follow up with activities or additional reading. Resourcefulness is good!

SUGGESTIONS FOR PARENTS

How can parents encourage kids to read nonfiction books? Here are six tips (and some questions) to keep in mind:

- **Don't pressure.** Give young people ample time to think about book recommendations to investigate, and to make choices. Respect their reading preferences.



- **Consider the level of interest, and benefit.** Some material may not seem enticing or familiar. You can chat about why a particular book has merit – for instance, why you enjoyed it, why it might be useful, or how it's funny or intriguing.

- **Check out reviews together.** What do other readers say about the book? Look at advance or current reviews, overviews, or brief comments. What's on the author's website? What else has the author written?
- **Is the reading level appropriate?** Does the nonfiction book relate to your child's ideas, experiences, and enthusiasms in ways that aren't too juvenile or too advanced? Is the length reasonable? Is it geared primarily for children, teens, or more mature readers?
- **Is the book engaging?** Does it include examples, or compelling or suspenseful accounts of people's challenges or journeys? Are there any pictures, charts, or pointers that will spur kids' thoughts about how to analyze or interpret content, or connect it meaningfully to what matters to them?
- **Set fair and flexible expectations.** Can your child read the nonfiction book at a pace they choose? Must they finish it? If they wish, can they read it with you, and discuss it?



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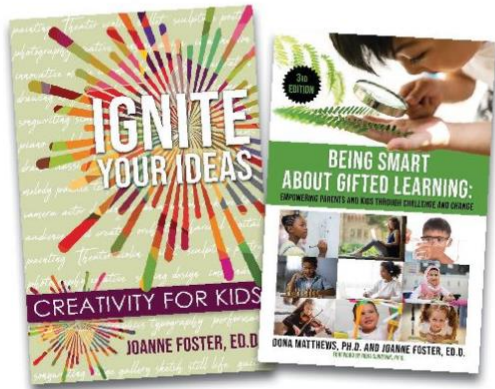
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LAST WORDS

"Any book that helps a child to form a habit of reading, to make reading one of his deep and continuing needs, is good for him." ~ Maya Angelou

Parents may say, "Here's a terrific nonfiction book!" And, a child may reply, "Thanks," or give a quasi-dismissive "Maybe later" or shrug, or offer other responses – some enthusiastic, some less so. Be patient, and continue to demonstrate the value of reading. Adults' book behaviors and attitudes toward reading (fiction *and* nonfiction) can be impactful.

Reading is like a gift for the mind. It strengthens the intellect and the imagination in much the same way as exercise fortifies the body. Encourage kids' interests, their selections, and their reading across genres. Boundless knowledge, joy, and possibilities await!



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A deeper perspective

CARSONIX INC.: YOUR IT PARTNER

STORY & PHOTO BY JASON CARSON, PRINCIPAL, CARSONIX INC.

I was born, raised, and have lived in Richmond Hill my entire life. I spent my childhood riding my bike, playing chess, watching Star Trek and competing on the Track & Field team. Of course I have to mention the Mill Pond! I have fond memories of the winter carnival, skating on the ice, live music, hot chocolate, and racing my GT Snowracer down that massive hill behind the pond!

My love of technology started in childhood way back in the 1980s when I got my first computer, the Commodore 64, to play video games. What sparked my interest in computers came about from my first "hack" when I modified a video game so it displayed "Created by Jason Carson."

As technology has become ubiquitous in our lives, I now have many fantastic memories from my work in this area. The funniest moment – and what stands out the most in my mind – is the time a 94-year-old gentleman named Donald who was living in a seniors' residence called me to help him with his printer. After assisting him, he then asked me if I could look at the new electric wheelchair he had purchased for his wife the year before. The manufacturer had delivered it without setting it up, and the seniors' residence wasn't helping him with it, so he asked me if I could get it to work.

I told him I didn't have any experience with wheelchairs, but that I would see what I could do. I quickly read the manual that came with it, and put it together properly. Donald was so happy, he started doing a little dance; everyone was laughing while watching me drive around his apartment in

the electric wheelchair, which I did to ensure it was working properly. His wife was ecstatic, because she was no longer confined to the bed or the couch. Witnessing their happiness was the most rewarding experience I've had.

I understand the challenges of running a business. I provide peace of mind to clients – known as "Managed IT" – by utilizing the latest enterprise-grade tools to provide a proactive approach to identifying issues to ensure your business functions as smoothly as my own. In fact, I often know about a problem before you do!

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2025 – Make your New Year's Resolution a New Year's "Techsolution"

Windows 10 will no longer be supported by Microsoft as of October 2025. Many earlier-generation Windows 10 computers do not meet the requirements for an upgrade to Windows 11. It is unwise and even a dangerous idea to continue to use an unsupported operating system because Microsoft will no longer be fixing security problems; it is a certainty that hackers will exploit this vulnerability. Now is the time to plan your upgrade strategy; I can help!

To learn more about Jason Carson and Carsonix Inc., visit www.carsonix.com



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A BLAST FROM THE PAST:

JANUARY EDITION

BY GRACE SCHULTE

January isn't typically known for blockbuster movie releases; however, some films have broken the mold and achieved incredible box office success. These top-grossing January films surprised audiences and studios alike, proving that a good film can bring people together regardless of the season. Without further ado, let's dive into some of January's biggest hits!

KUNG FU PANDA 3 (2016)

DreamWorks Animation struck gold with Kung Fu Panda 3, a family-friendly adventure that follows Po the Panda on a journey of self-discovery. Released in January 2016, the film brought in over \$500 million worldwide as fans of all ages joined Po and his companions for another fun and heartwarming journey. Its success made it one of the top animated January releases ever.

THE REVENANT (2016)

Starring Leonardo DiCaprio, The Revenant gained attention for its compelling story and stunning visuals. Released in January of 2016, it earned over \$533 million worldwide and won DiCaprio his first Oscar award.

AMERICAN SNIPER (2015)

Clint Eastwood's American Sniper topped the charts with its intense portrayal of Navy SEAL sniper Chris Kyle. Released in January of 2015, it quickly became one of January's highest-grossing films earning over \$540 million worldwide. The film's mix of action, drama, and real-life heroism captivated audiences and critics alike.

JUMANJI: WELCOME TO THE JUNGLE (2017)

Although Jumanji: Welcome to the Jungle had a limited release in December of 2017, it wasn't released fully until January. Throughout its time in the box office it drew huge crowds. The action/comedy movie starring Dwayne Johnson and Kevin Hart became a true January powerhouse, grossing over \$962 million globally.



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IG WEALTH MANAGEMENT

Making Maple-Syrup Candy in the Snow:

A SWEET WINTER TRADITION

SUBMITTED BY LUCINDA HAHN



In her Little House books, Laura Ingalls Wilder reminisced about making maple syrup candy in the snow, during the coldest months on the frontier. Kids (and kids at heart) will love recreating this charming tradition right in their own backyard. No snow? It's okay—there's an easy workaround!

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- Pure maple syrup
- Fresh, clean snow
- Baking sheet or shallow pan
- Large saucepan
- Candy thermometer
- Spatula or wooden spoon
- Popsicle sticks (optional, for maple lollipops)

DIRECTIONS:

PREPARE THE SNOW

Outside, pack about 2 inches of clean, freshly fallen snow onto a large baking sheet or shallow pan. This will serve as the base where you'll pour the hot syrup. (If you don't have any snow, fill a bowl with crushed ice.)

HEAT THE SYRUP

Inside, pour your maple syrup into the saucepan and attach the candy thermometer. Heat the syrup over medium-high heat, stirring occasionally, until it reaches around 240°F. This is the soft-ball stage, which gives the candy its chewy texture. If you don't have a thermometer, you can test it by dropping a small amount of syrup into cold water—if it forms a soft ball, it's ready.

POUR THE SYRUP ONTO THE SNOW

Now, head outside and use a spoon to drizzle the syrup onto your snow, creating ribbons or small puddles. When it hits the cold snow, it will immediately harden into candy.

LET THE CANDY SET

Allow the syrup to cool and harden for a few minutes. For maple lollipops, stick a wooden stick into the syrup while it's still soft. Enjoy!

Once the candy has cooled and set, enjoy the chewy, maple-flavored treat that's as nostalgic as it is delicious.

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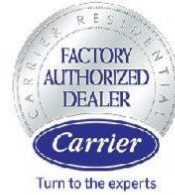
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