



VCA Annual General Meeting Wednesday, April 15, 2026

HOLIDAY DECORATING COMMITTEE REPORT COMMITTEE CHAIR: Dale Deslslets 2025-2026 Review

Every Holiday decorating season brings its challenges and opportunities, and this year was no exception.

- About a year ago, in April 2025, the company in Virgil where we have stored all our decorations for years in 2 rented lockers, advised that they were increasing our total annual rent by about 50%. This was unacceptable, so we began looking for an alternative. We were relieved to find Kent Farms in St. David's, at an annual cost only \$100 more than previously. The owner, Paul Kent, was very helpful during our search for space and move, allowing us to use one of his trucks to transfer all our materials, sleigh and reindeer herd at no cost.
- Our actual rent expense for '25/26 is about \$450 more than budget because the previous rent charges began in January and we didn't move to the new storage site until April. The new rent period runs for 12 months beginning April 2025.
- Another change was the loss of a local property maintenance company whose owner charged us to move 2 loads of decorations on his truck from our locker to the Village each November, and move everything back at the end of the season. He also decorated 5 of the taller trees (which our volunteer teams weren't able to reach) including putting the big star on the main tree in Dietsch park. Basically, he felt his knees couldn't take the strain of our work in addition to his main services. This loss came as we prepared to move to the new locker, but-as noted above-Kent Farms saved the day at no cost.

- We then needed to find help decorating the taller trees, so I asked the Town's Parks management if they could recommend someone with a bucket truck to do this in future. They suggested a company called SafeTree which does tree trimming and repair work for a number of municipalities in the region. They offered to help put up and remove the lights this season on a trial basis, and since their bucket reach allowed the lights to go higher and more extensively, I hope we can make an arrangement to continue in future years.
- So, though the challenge was quickly finding a new source to help transport and decorate, the opportunity emerged that work might cost somewhat less and provide a better, brighter experience for the neighbourhood henceforth.
- The final challenge, of course, was the weather this year. Decorating in early November went well and the weather cooperated, giving our volunteer teams mainly clear, mild and dry conditions. Tear-down in January was another matter as the snow and cold hit, delaying removal of some of the final decorations for weeks.
- Once again, it was great to see that many residents followed our decorating lead and added lights and decorations to their own properties. Thanks for that.
- As always, I would like to thank the volunteers who took the time during a busy season to help decorate the neighbourhood. Your work is admired and appreciated by all.