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Winter – It's Not Over Yet

By Bonnie P. Carrier

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While reading the news on the Internet this morning I came across an article on that furry little groundhog, better know as Punxsutawney Phil.

As happens every year at this time, the little fur-ball emerged from his burrow, as he's done since 1886 – wow, he must be really old by now - to give us the updated winter forecast.

Yes sports fans it's official, good old Phil saw his shadow, which means six more weeks of winter.

Now your reaction to this news will vary depending on what part of the country you live in. Here in the Northeast, many of us - this author included - do not jump for joy.

If you happen to be one of the winter sports people you know the ones who ski, ice skate, snowmobile etc. this was probably welcomed news.

However, speaking strictly for myself - and anyone else that might agree – the thought of having to continue going out into a cold morning and cleaning off my car or having to dress like I'm crossing the tundra just to take my dog out for a walk doesn't exactly excite me.

Even my pets have had enough. Paths have had to be shoveled out in the yard for Toby - our little Shetland Sheepdog - if we didn't do this a red flag would need to be attached to his tail so he would not get lost in the snow.

Now the cats, you've heard the expression "Cat Fight", well it's happening a little more frequently here these days. Normally the four of them get along fairly well, but I think they have had just about enough of these close quarters

I can totally relate to how they feel, so I've come up with a plan to help make the next six weeks - give or take - go by a little more smoothly.

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1)Every day that is sunny, I'm going to open the curtains as wide as they will go, place a chair in front of it and sit facing out for as long as possible. Sound funny, well not really, there is a medical benefit from this as anyone who suffers from Seasonal Affective Disorder - or SAD - knows.

2)Purchase every Home Decorating & Garden magazine that has any articles or pictures dealing with spring that I can find.

3)Looking through the Home Decorating magazines, I'm going to begin making a list of all the projects I want to do, to change my décor from winter to spring.

4)Since moving from our large home into a townhouse, I don't have an opportunity to do a lot of gardening anymore. But I love looking at garden magazines anyway; the pictures are always so

beautiful. Now I do have planters outside the back door, so I can still plan on some flowers and getting my hands dirty.

5)Begin watching the Travel Channel a little more frequently. I'm not planning on taking any trips, but to sit for a half hour to an hour looking and imagining myself in some warm, sunny places will be wonderful.

Well, I think this is a pretty good start. Oh, one more thing, every morning after getting up, going to the kitchen to pour my first cup of coffee I'll then stand at the back door look out at the mounds of snow and repeat several time

"This will not last, Spring is coming".

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Bonnie P. Carrier is the creator of Savvy Home Decorating. She is the mother to two grown daughters and a very spoiled 4yr old Blue Merle Sheltie named Toby. Having been a homemaker for over 23yrs has provided years of experience in budget decorating and organization. Stop by Savvy Home Decorating –www.savvy-home-decorating.com – for ideas and tips on budget decorating:

Winter Tire Myths Revealed

By News Canada

(NC) —True or false - your vehicle is only as good as the tires it sits on? While you may have your own opinion on this, Michelin believes that tires are an essential part of your vehicle's safety, handling and performance.

Tire manufacturers like Michelin, as well as associations like Transport Canada and the Rubber Association of Canada, are working to increase awareness of the importance of tires as well as

dispelling some common tire myths.

"The biggest tire myth is that they are a low-tech commodity," explains Tony Mougios, Michelin Brand Manager in Canada. "The reality is that advancements in tire technology have improved the quality and performance of today's tires. Few people seem to realize the additional safety obtained from installing four winter tires on their vehicles."

The following is a basic example of a common winter tire myth.

Myth: All-season tires are so good that winter tires are never needed.

Reality: In some parts of the world, where temperatures and snowfalls are moderate, this may be true. But this is Canada - our winter weather is unpredictable and can be harsh. Just ask anyone from Halifax who endured the city's record snowfalls last winter.

The reality is that harsh winter conditions can appear anywhere in Canada, and when they do, the traction and added safety provided by winter tires cannot be beat. Winter tires reign supreme in rural areas where snow can remain on the road for extended periods of time. They provide 25 per cent improved traction over all-season tires.

To learn more about the advantages of winter tires and other advancements in tire technology, visit a local authorized Michelin dealer or visit www.michelin.ca.

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