

The background of the cover is a white, distressed wooden surface. Scattered across it are several snowflake ornaments. There are four large, gold-glittered snowflakes and several smaller, white snowflakes. The gold ones have a textured, sparkling appearance, while the white ones are more delicate and matte.

MUSKOKA SENIORS MAGAZINE

Not Just A Read... It's A Connection, Fall 2022

**In Honour of
Her Majesty**

**The Tiniest Real
Christmas Tree**

**Finding Joy
in the Trenches**

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FROM THE PUBLISHER



Here we are once again, in the midst of another holiday season.

Is it age or does the year go by in what feels like a blink of an eye?

I certainly don't remember sitting in high school (back in the day) feeling like classes were going by this fast. One minute seemed to go by excruciatingly slow. They say, "Time flies when you're having fun," but maybe it just flies when you're living life fully.

Speaking of full, this edition is packed with everything from Halloween to Christmas features, and everything in between, including 'more and less' when it comes to nutrition, important information about cannabis and travel (even if you have a medicinal licence for use), "talking versus action" regarding faith, and much more.

For something special, we included a section in honour of Her Majesty, and how one of our contributors, Geraldine O'Meara, went to the school the Queen visited when she was a student. Geraldine also reminds us to 'find joy' even during times of adversity. We always have things we can be thankful for.

The holidays are a good reminder to take a moment to appreciate what we have, as our time fills up with friends, family, and community gatherings, and travel. Although fun, it can be stressful too, and we have you covered there as well.

It's amazing how a little learning can go a long way...especially the positive kind.

Positive information can be a welcome reprieve from the negative happenings. And we've worked hard to provide you with information that will leave you feeling informed yet inspired. And while we're on the topic of feeling good, we have some good news for you...

You may have seen it on our Facebook page, website or in an email, or picked up a copy from the library or recreation centre, or heard about it, or will see it on page 30 of this edition of MUSKOKA SENIORS MAGAZINE... *It's All Good* MUSKOKA is our new monthly good news brief, for those of you that want to be informed about news, but are tired of the constant negative stuff, and it being through catastrophic, anxiety provoking ways. It's short and sweet, and gives you a break from the bad

stuff we tend to be inundated by these days. We hope you enjoy it when you read it and welcome your feedback.

And as always, we have enjoyed putting this edition of the magazine together for you and hope you enjoy it too. And for those of you that aren't aware yet, we are planning to bring back the print edition of the magazine for the summer and possibly spring of 2023 – a hybrid model between print and digital, fitting with the times where people enjoy both.

In the meantime, Merry Christmas, and all the best to your traditions over the holidays!

Cheryl Patterson, Publisher, **MSM**

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Feeling Stuck? One Step Forward, two steps back?

Many of us find ourselves in unwanted circumstances, and if it's happening regularly you may be feeling tired of the struggle. Having the same problems in the same area repeatedly can be frustrating and overwhelming. No matter how hard you try, you can't seem to move forward from it, like a hamster in a wheel, going nowhere fast.

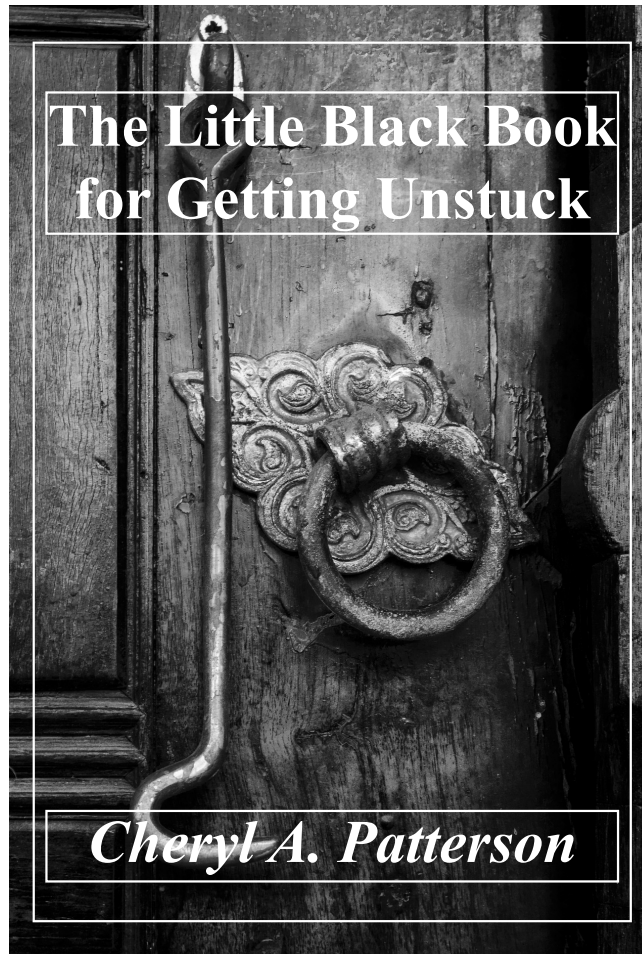
If you'd like to start to easily get unstuck in ways you're destined to, and move forward in leaps, and have a peace of mind knowing that you're living to your potential, don't miss this book!

A great gift for someone going through a tough time over the holidays!



*"I got mine yesterday...
Loved it.
Finished very quick. Totally hit home. You know my story...
No more being stuck!"*

- C.C., Muskoka, ON, Canada



"I received your book last week. It was amazing. Since I have been going through a lot of changes so it really did help me out. It was great timing."

*- D. B.,
St. Catharines, ON, Canada*



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MUSKOKA SENIORS MAGAZINE

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Mission:

Inform, include, support and inspire you!

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EDITORIAL NOTE

The information presented in this
magazine is not intended to substitute
medical advice from a licensed practi-
tioner.

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CONTRIBUTORS FALL 2022



Shirley Cambray, spent many summers on Oxbow Lake before taking up full-time residency in Huntsville. Now in her senior years, she is enjoying the writing of poems and short stories.



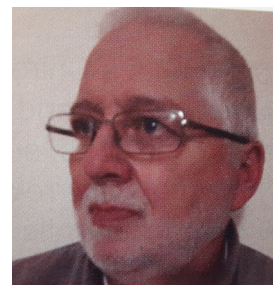
Geraldine O'Meara, spent 21 years in England, working for a spirituality/Environmental centre before residency in Huntsville. As a senior, she is enjoying writing, painting, her grandchildren, and great-granddaughter.



Nancy Goodman, is a lively senior, a prolific co-author of the book "My Affair With Cancer", who lives in Penetanguishene, and enjoys walks on the beach, and fireside chats.



Wendie Donabie's love of language drives her passion to write. When words won't do, she turns to her easel. Her creative work focuses on the beauty and fragility of Planet Earth.



Kenn R. E. Page, is proud to be Canadian! Born in Toronto, raised in Pickering, worked for Bell and IBM. Moved to Muskoka in '75 to design and build homes for 40 years. Hobbies: Fishing, reading, painting, gardening.



Sandra Hartill, Master Gardeners of Muskoka and Parry Sound. Our goal is to share, inform and advise avid and amateur gardeners with tips for indoor, outdoor and balcony gardening.



Peter Cassidy, born in Scotland and came to Canada in 1948. I played Canadian sports, and loved hockey and boxing. I love to write stories of those wonderful players and characters who were the stars in my day.



Bessie Grimes is the author of Bible Stories From a Different Point of View, Little Pigs and Big Carrots and Other Amazing Tales, and the editor of Pioneer Homemaking in Muskoka.



Peter Meraw is a pharmacist and owner of the Dorset Village Pharmacy, Pharmasave, Lake of Bays. He visited cottage country often in his youth and was thrilled to move here permanently in 2006 to run his first pharmacy. He lives in Minden with his wife, two daughters and golden retriever Simba.

Mineral Collection in Muskoka

Muskoka is known for its rock formations. Large granite rock faces signal to the traveller arriving from lush meadows and farmlands further south that they've entered the Canadian Shield and cottage country.

Meanwhile, hidden from view, Muskoka residents carry their own internal rock formations in the form of gallstones and kidney stones.

And as we approach the festive season, it's worth reminding ourselves of the early signs of these illnesses and if there are any behaviours we can adjust, to avoid them.

'It felt like a knife in the back'

The words people use when describing the passing of a stone can be bleak. We want to avoid them if we can. So, what can be done?

Let's start with gallstones...

The gall bladder is a sack about 5" long and functions as a reservoir for storing digestive juices that our liver produces. Sometimes these juices and the salty chemicals they contain become too concentrated and harden into stones. We may pass them if they are small, without being aware. They can become quite large, and when this happens, they can get stuck, and this causes an intense radiating pain. Like a late fall snowstorm, these can be surprisingly severe, and can be upon us fast and without warning.

So, what is going on?

When we eat a fatty meal, such as turkey with gravy, our gall bladder releases bile and other digestive juices through tubes called ducts. If the meal is unusually large or fatty, the gall bladder works harder and a larger volume of bile is released and this is typically when larger gallstones attempt to pass and get stuck.

If you've ever felt short bursts of pain in the upper right side of the abdomen, close to the liver, under the right rib cage, or if you've felt bloated after large fatty meal, it could be a harbinger of things to come. Smaller portion sizes, healthier choices, less fried foods, avoiding processed meat can help.

Age is a factor; most people are over 40 before they experience their first attack. Certain drugs can elevate your risk. Women have twice the risk of men. The estrogen in oral contraceptives, elevates cholesterol in bile is one reason. Frequent weight cycling and extreme dieting are other risks.

As we head into the festive meal season, remember to avoid overindulging. Eat a balanced diet and stay fit. If you are concerned, ask your doctor or health professional.

What about kidney stones?

This is different plumbing and different chemistry.

The kidneys are located around the sides of the back on the right and

left. Attack descriptions are equally intense and frightening.

So, what causes kidney stones, and are there any changes we can make?

The kidney cleanses our blood of chemicals, the by-products of our metabolism. There are a few different causes, gout crystals (urea) are the result of protein ingestion, that can also cause kidney stones. Other stones are caused by calcium salts called oxalates and phosphates. The male to female risk is the inversion of what we see with gallstones. Men are twice as likely to have a kidney stone than women.

It is thought that higher protein ingestion and metabolism is why the stones are uric acid crystals. Dehydration, caused by occupational risk associated with jobs like long haul transport are another. A diet high in sodium can elevate your risk. Taking too much Vitamin C can also be problematic.

Many medications can raise the risks of a kidney stone, and genetics can also play a role. Keep yourself well hydrated and fit, avoid sodium rich foods and if you've had gout, avoid high protein foods.

In both diseases, the biggest predictor of a future episode is a prior occurrence, so if you've had one before, the time to avoid the next one is now.



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More or less of the Good and Bad Stuff in Your Holiday Meals

Most of us want to keep it healthy over the holidays, with our Thanksgiving, Christmas and other traditional meals during this time, yet we want to enjoy our food too, especially seeing as it comes once a year.

So, what to do?

Here are some easy ways to cook what you enjoy, but with a healthier spin:

- More fresh herbs and seasonings and less salt
- More healthy oils, like olive, sesame seed, grape seed, and coconut oils, and less butter and lard (you can even do 1/2 and 1/2, as every little bit can make a difference to your health.)
- More soy, cashew or almond milk, and less dairy milk
- More yogurt, and less cream
- More fresh fruit in baking and less rich desserts (i.e. blueberry tarts versus butter tarts)
- More low glycemic sweetening, and less white sugar
- More oat, brown rice, millet, quinoa and other flours, and less bleached all purpose wheat flour
- More healthier desserts with fruit, and less pastry types

- More vegetables, and less meat
- More poultry and fish, and less red meat
- More portion control, and less filled big plates of food
- More meal planning, and less impulsive eating
- More homecooked meals, and less take out
- More water, and less sweet drinks
- More fresh fruit juice, and zero soda drinks
- More exercise, and less napping
- More fresh air, and less of being a couch potato
- More garden, green, or bean salad, and less of the rich, heavy mayonnaise types
- More rice or vegetable noodles, less pasta

Basically, you incorporate more of the healthy stuff, and less of the foods that aren't, into your favourite meals.

You can have fun with this and improvise in small areas where you think you can, while still enjoying the meal. It's amazing how little you will notice some of these changes.

Keep it simple. Pick the areas where you can improve, and you'll feel better for trying, and reap the physical rewards too. **MSM**

AGING WITH A GUSTO: WHAT WORKS FOR YOU



*Peter Cassidy,
Bracebridge, ON*

Growing older...and wiser?

This is a question I ask myself every day. I have lived in Muskoka for almost 35 years. I have made lots of friends from my years with the school board and have enjoyed living here. Lately I am thinking of downsizing. I am tired of cutting grass and shovelling snow.

So I am looking at Condos and not just in Muskoka. I might be speaking for a lot of readers when I say, "I am tired." I spoke with some men my own age at a recent breakfast. Perhaps we might have sounded like a few old "windbags" talking about the way life used to be but I like to think our discussion revolved around acceptance.

We're not young anymore. Having always been active in a lot of contact sports it is even more difficult for me. I watch minor hockey and baseball and have often been seen in the local arena or soccer field.

I have also found myself to be very critical. If for example I am watching a minor soccer game, I will say to myself "that kid should never have played the ball like that. He should have passed it back to the goalkeeper." Or, "He should have shot the puck instead of carrying it." I suppose I might be accused of living some of my life through these kids.

This is what I mean when I say we are getting older, but are we any wiser? This begs the questions: Do we have to learn to get older? Are we ready to accept the fact we are not young anymore? My personal theory is it seems we age fast. Even now at 75 my reflexes are slower now than they were a year ago.

So my suggestion is to enjoy and relish what you are able to do comfortably now. If you have grandchildren, take them to the beach (if age appropriate), to the park, or for a walk. Invite your adult children for dinner or a barbecue. Visit them if they will have you.

If you drop a dime or a quarter...leave it. It may cost 10 dollars for a tube of liniment if you bend over to pick it up. Watch sports and realize you are long past participating, and stick to card games. When we accept these minor suggestions, we might be more ready for the good life the Good Lord is allowing us to enjoy.

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Heather Huff-Bogart - Heather has more than a decade of experience in the Cannabis industry and holds certificates in cannabis marketing / production and is a certified Cannabis Sommelier. Her passion for cannabis and helping people shines through in every interaction she has with customers at The Green Bouquest Cannabis.

Travel and Cannabis: What To Be Aware Of

Are you thinking of travelling and leaving the country soon? Are you wondering if you can bring your edibles, oils, or cannabis products across the border or to the airport with you? What are the laws for this? Can one travel in Canada with their cannabis?

Cannabis is Federally legal in Canada as of Oct 17, 2018, so if you're travelling within our Canadian borders you can travel with a maximum amount allowed, 30g for individuals over 19 of age, some Provinces have different age requirements, so make sure to check that before crossing into another Province.

However, if you have a prescribed medical cannabis license, then you can carry your allotted monthly allowance amount with you up to 150g or your 30-day supply or dried cannabis or equivalent in cannabis products. Make sure you have your medical card handy just in case, and that your cannabis products are in the Licensed Producers packaging.

When travelling in Canada, you can have your cannabis in your

checked-in luggage or carry-on. Something to think about though when flying within Canada, before you get on a plane, is whether there is a chance the plane could be diverted to the US. If so, I strongly suggest leaving cannabis at home, as it is Federally illegal in the States and most countries, and the airlines will not help you if you are travelling with it. You are unfortunately on your own. Call the Canadian Embassy and be prepared for an unpleasant visit.

Going to Europe or Asia? Depending on where you are travelling, you may be able to join a club or purchase cannabis once you have arrived at your destination. If you do purchase cannabis abroad, I strongly suggest not bringing it with you to the airport when departing. Even though it is federally legal in Canada, you can not enter Canada with cannabis from another country.

Driving to the United States? Even though many states have passed laws for cannabis consumption, it is still federally illegal to bring it into the states or back with

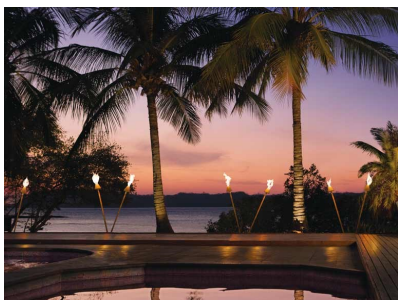
you. So, my suggestion, leave the herbs at home and swing by a state where you can purchase cannabis and consume it in that state. Be cautious of purchasing cannabis in a legal state in the US, as then continuing to travel with cannabis in a state where it is illegal could get you into trouble. So be aware of the laws.

Smoking or vaping cannabis at the airport is also not permitted unless you have a medical license, then you must adhere to the Smoking Act, where you can smoke or vape cannabis in the designated smoking areas.

Do you work in the cannabis industry and are thinking of travelling to the states for pleasure? If you are travelling for pleasure, you should not have any issues, just don't advertise that you are in the cannabis industry. If you're travelling for the cannabis business, then that is a different category and article.

The bottom line is to be aware of the federal laws in the country that you are travelling to and have fun. Safe travels everyone.

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SUPPORT FOR STRESS



How Learning Can Help with Stress

You wake up tired from a disrupted sleep, which seems to permeate your mood and reactions to things that happen. You have some ‘go to’ tools that you can use but this time nothing seems to work. So, what do you do?

You can brush it off and distract yourself, with the hope that the problem stays gone.

You can try talking to someone that is supportive.

You can exercise to try and burn off the adrenaline from the stress.

But what if nothing works and you still feel stuck in a rut that feels impossible to kick? Learn.

Learning changes how we think about things. And having encouraging information in front of you can help you feel better instantly, in addition to the tools it can provide for getting out of your rut now and in the future.

National Health Services (NHS) indicates that learning isn’t just for new skills but can improve our

mental well-being. They add, “Mental well-being means feeling good about yourself and the world around you, and being able to get on with life in the way you want.”

NHS also indicates that learning is linked with the ability to cope effectively with stress, and suggests, “Learning can boost self-confidence and self-esteem, help build a sense of purpose, and help us connect with others.”

The alternative is to continue to feel the same way and do the same things - creating the same outcomes over and over again - until next year rolls around and you’re still stuck in the same ruts. Why torture yourself? Look up information about your mood or situation for inspirational or ‘how to’ articles, listen to a positive video or podcast, read a book... Just learn.

Think about how you want your life to go... What can you learn today that can help things go better in your life moving forward? **MSM**

“Old habits die hard,”
or so they say...

It may depend on how much these old habits are affecting your health, relationships, goals, or life in general.

Sometimes these pesky habits are happening right under your nose and you don’t even realize it. You just know things can be better.



You have two choices:

1. Keep on keeping on, and hope for the best. (Don’t hold your breath for positive change to happen this way!)
2. Learn new ways of creating positive, fulfilling and meaningful change in your life.

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Is Your Mental Health at Risk from Stress?

“Mental illness affects 1 in 5 Canadians. Of the 10 leading causes of disability worldwide, 5 are mental disorders,” according to the Canadian Institute of Health Research (CIHR). They add that it “accounts for 30% of disability claims, which translates into \$15-33 billion annually in Canada.” No small feat!

Mental health is a critical part of our overall health. It involves our thoughts, feelings, and actions, which in turn affects how we handle life’s challenges. It impacts our ability to deal with demands, which includes areas such as decision making and how we adapt to difficult situations, including how we cope with stress.

When we feel bogged down by pressures, we don’t feel as motivated or energized as we might normally. It can be hard to get excited about life or things you normally enjoy, and you may feel like you’re just functioning – barely skimming by.

Epidemiological studies have found that stress is related to adverse psychological states, such as depression and anxiety. These states can have a significant impact on

other areas of our lives, such as socially, including difficulty relating to others, which can affect both our personal and professional lives.

Ways to cope with stress, in support of your mental health:

Remember the basics. Maintaining a balance in diet, exercise, sleep, leisure, down time, and social support (including utilizing community resources for help, fitness, or fun). Maintain these buffers for stress and realign what’s out of balance or dragging you down.

Be assertive. Figure out your needs, concerns, and frustrations – things that matter to you – and deal with them constructively as they arise. Define your problem, communicate your feelings (without blame) to the appropriate venues, and create an action plan clearly defining what your solution will be.

You’re in the driver’s seat of your life, and nobody can make the necessary changes but you. Creating a balance between the demands in your life, dealing directly with your problems and defining solutions reduces stress. This will help you feel more in control of your life and supports good mental health. **MSM**

Having a hard time with the loss of a loved one?

Sadness, frustration, isolation...

It’s still surreal looking back at that period, where I felt like I couldn’t breathe, feeling overwhelmed, and without the needed support that most people have.

It had taken its toll and consumed enough of my life. It was time for me to turn my life around, which I did, and so can you.

If you’re struggling with loss, you’re not alone, and it can get better.

In this book I show you ways that I got through. And if I can get through 9 in a row, you can get through your grief too.

We have this notion that we should stay suffering to prove our loyalty to the loved one that passed, but is that what they would want for you?

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Nine Lives Mourned

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FIRST EDITION

Cheryl A. Patterson

Photo by Matt Paulson

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Faith: Talk Versus Action

Some people talk to friends and loved ones about the strength of their faith, yet they go through life closed off to people outside of their groups, have a difficult time trusting, and cling on to control. They want to micro-manage every little detail in life, are quick to blame and point out the faults of others. Yet faith is letting go and the ability to trust in that higher power that gives comfort that life can unfold in its own way and work out just fine, if you let it.

The following are some indicators to highlight whether you may be moving closer to or away from practicing faith in your daily life.

Action signs of faith:

- Believing that people have good intentions (before believing the worst)

- Inclusiveness
- Engaging in acts of kindness
- Welcoming people's acts of kindness, even if you don't understand it
- Welcoming change
- Opening your heart to what's different and unique
- Giving
- Forgiving
- Warmth
- A caring attitude
- A positive attitude
- Generally happy and content with life

The opposite of faith:

- Blaming
- Accusing
- Gossiping
- Lack of trust
- Taking, as a priority
- Believing the worst of others

- Fault finding
- Controlling behaviour
- Complaining
- Criticism
- Negative actions
- Confrontational demeanour
- Being closed off to new people and experiences

Like the old saying goes, "Actions speak louder than words." And the quality of our actions in our experiences and connections to others reflects the strength of our faith.

The late Reverend S. Derek Shelly once said that our spirit connects us to all of creation. He added, "Faith is enhanced when we let ourselves feel connected to that which has and continues to be sacred" (MSM, July 2017).

What are your actions saying about you? **MSM**



Mike Baum is one of Dorset, Ontario's most prominent real estate agents with extensive experience and knowledge of the area of more than 50 years. He excels in waterfront recreation property sales, land development and commercial business ventures, is driven to service his Buyers and Sellers and be as informative as possible, given the unique circumstances involved in "cottage country."

What Price Do We Ask For Our Property?

There are many variables that influence the value of a property.

Often, properties in subdivisions within city or town limits share a fairly standard uniformity between them, so it is an easier task for realtors to assess value, when making recommendations about what price to ask. However, properties that are more rural or have a waterfront component, along with other variables (3 or 4 season road vs. island, exposure, grade or slope, type of shoreline, proximity to hospital and amenities, distance from the Greater Toronto Area, small vs. large lake, access to internet, etc.) all influence value in different ways, unlike very similar properties beside one another in larger towns or cities.

It's not uncommon to ask several realtors for a value estimate and be given several different answers. Hopefully there is a consistent grouping of values, where one

typically discards the values on the extreme ends of the spectrum. In this light, it is recommended to ask different realtors from separate brokerages to come out to assess the value of your property, and hope they are all very similar in their price predictions, based on market sales and conditions. This is a good opportunity to meet realtors face-to-face and determine if there is a feeling of comfort and trust, together with finding out what services and marketing strategies that they will provide.

Then, once a realtor and value estimation is established, there's the whole question of what price to ask.

In an unprecedented seller's market, where there is little for sale and many buyers, it is quite typical now to see owners purposely select a price at the lower end of an estimated range of value, and implement a no-offer clause of at least one week or more. By instructing your realtor (via form 244) to not convey any offers during a specific time period, it seems common, as in the last

3 years, to see a large number of buyers come out to view a property and then fight for it with an auction-like mentality, to the point where more often than not offers exceed the asking price. An owner should also discuss and think about the merits of perhaps considering preemptive or bully offers, instead of turning away any and all until an affixed deadline.

A lot will depend on the type of property, its overall condition, the motivation and needs of the owner, etc. It's also important to discuss the Irrevocable deadline to be inserted within offers, so that you can have peace of mind knowing how long you have to consider terms of competing offers rather than feel rushed.

It's a big decision and a new way of marketing that differs from what we were all used to only a few short years ago. Trust a seasoned realtor and take their advice. It's your realtor's obligation to net you as much money as possible from a given marketplace, by utilizing whichever tools and strategies work best to that common goal.



The Christmas Coin

By Wendie Donabie

My brother, Zack's decision to join the military came as a surprise to everyone in the family. We called him our humanitarian hippy, having determined at age 12 that his hair was to be grown and not cut and that everything he owned was to be shared or given away. Becoming a social worker, a doctor or a Peace Corp worker was what we expected, not a soldier.

When we asked what possessed him to make this decision, he said, "Well, I figured it was time to grow up and cut my hair and the only thing that would make me do that was joining the army. Besides, it'll be a great way for me to help people. It's not all about shooting and killing. If I end up deployed overseas, I could be removing land mines in Afghanistan so no more kids lose their legs, or building a bridge for an isolated village. And here at home, I might help in a disaster or simply dig out a snow-covered driveway for a senior citizen." I remember him pausing, running his fingers through his still, shoulder-length, chestnut-coloured hair, as if reflecting on how important this choice was to him. "But, mostly it's about honour and serving my country. I've been volunteering since I was a kid and I just want to up the ante and do more."

No one ever talked about or questioned his decision again. That was two years ago.

Now it was Christmas Eve with the family gathered at my parent's home, hoping that Zack would be with us. He had expected to be on leave but with action heating up in the Middle East, we knew this might not

be possible. The last Christmas he spent at home he'd been the lucky recipient of the traditional Plum Pudding Silver dollar. As a family, we held the belief that the one who found the coin baked into the pudding would have good luck. We took it as an auspicious sign that Zack would come back to us safe and sound. However, tonight our usual Christmas spirit and celebrations had been dampened by the nightly news of ongoing engagements involving Canadian troops. To add to this was the weather.

My younger sister, Lili, had been camped out by the living room window all day hoping for any sign of her big brother.

"Will the snow ever stop?" Lili moaned. "How is Zack going to get here?"

As if in response to her question, Uncle Steve turned on the tv just as the announcer got to the latest forecast. "Environment Canada has issued severe storm warnings for southern Ontario from Windsor to Toronto. Expect 20-30 cm of snow overnight. As of 6 pm tonight, all flights in and out of the Pearson Airport have been cancelled. Many roads are already closed, and the police are advising drivers to avoid any unnecessary travel."

Silence filled the living room. Did Zack get out in time? Even if he made it into the airport today, how would he get to us?

My mother choked back a sob and reached for my father.

Dad wrapped Mom in his arms and held her close. "You know Zack, if there's any way to get here, he will."

"Let's everyone stay positive." Aunt Hilda, always the cheerleader, spoke up. "Come on, let's sing some Christmas carols."

With reluctance, we gathered around the piano as my aunt started off with "Deck the Halls." The music began to lift our spirits as we belted out one song after another, laughing at the forgotten words and missed notes.

Then suddenly, during "I'll be home for Christmas", a brilliant white light filled the living room and the roar of a large engine drowned out our voices. As if choreographed by an unseen director, we turned in unison when a gust of frigid air blasted into the room. Lili screamed and ran to the door.

CONT'D NEXT PAGE >>>

FAMILY MATTERS CONT'D...

He was home. All 6 feet, 5 inches of my brother, Zack. Hugs, kisses and pats on the back went on for endless minutes with all of us asking how he managed to get there.

“Okay everyone, let me get in and I’ll tell you all about it.” Zack gently pushed his way to the couch and sank into the comfort of home and family.

“Honey, we were so worried about you. Why didn’t you call?” Mom asked.

“Well, when I got into Toronto, I had to find a way to get here and my phone battery was running low. I figured it was better to use what I had left to get transportation. That’s the amazing part. You know, Simon Drake, from the Salvation Army where I volunteered for so many years? Well, there he was at the airport heading back home from the States. He offered me a ride. And he drives a Hummer...those things can barrel through anything. Well . . . almost anything. When we got into town, I learned our roads out here were impassable. But my friend, Jim Baker, drives a snowplow for the county. I got hold of him on the job. He was scheduled to be out this way so he brought me with him. He pulled right into your driveway.”

“That’s what got our attention.” Dad piped up. “The headlights and the sound of the plow.”

“You know, my life’s been like this since I got that silver dollar two Christmases ago. I meet the right people, end up in the right place all the time. Serendipity’s my middle name to the guys in my platoon.” Zack reached into his shirt pocket and pulled out the silver dollar.

“This baby never leaves me because I know somehow it’s always going to bring me home.”

A shiver passed through my body when I noticed the dent in the coin and how battered it appeared. I shook my head and decided that would be a question for another time.

Have a family story to share?

A challenge, or a funny, or heartwarming story that others can enjoy or relate to in some way...

We’d love to hear about it!

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IN HONOUR OF HER MAJESTY: Part I



A Sweet Memory of a Beautiful Princess

By Geraldine O'Meara

It was 1951 when I was 14 and attending Loretto Academy School in Hamilton, Ontario. It was that same year that Princess Elizabeth II took her ailing father's place, King George VI, to visit Canada with her husband, the Prince of Wales.

I was excited to hear that the Princess and Prince were coming to my city, Hamilton, Ontario, and that my school and the school of many others were going to have an opportunity to see them. So with great enthusiasm, I decided to do a school project of their visit by scanning the Hamilton newspaper everyday and cutting out photos and clippings to put into a scrapbook. Three photos and events particularly stand out for me, all of which happened on that visit.

Firstly, our school along with many other schools, crammed into Civic Stadium as we watched the Princess inspect the march of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders. This held a special place for me, as this was the regiment in which my dad was in during WWI. I also had watched, as a small child sitting on the shoulders of a family adult, many marches of the A & S H on the main street in Hamilton.

Secondly, I remember watching from the sidelines on the main street in Hamilton, as the young, beautiful Princess, with a tartan blanket over her knees for warmth, and her handsome husband, the young Prince, beside her, both sitting on the back of a black limousine, with her shy, sweet smile as she waved to the crowd and his broad smile as he pointed to the crowd.

Thirdly but not least, on that visit, a tea was given in the honour of the Princess, and my aunt Helen, my mother's sister, was the one who was asked to pour tea for the Princess. My recollection is that the tea was held at Loretto Academy, but being 70 years ago, this is a bit of a stretch to remember. However, the interesting aspect of this story is that the china tea cup that the Princess drank from was given to my aunt Helen, and somehow it filtered

down through the family to my mother and in turn to my sister Judy who, a few years ago, donated it to the Hamilton museum for the royal archives.

Unfortunately, these three photos have been lost over the years, but not lost to my memory. Upon the death of Queen Elizabeth II, then Princess Elizabeth, these memories flooded back to me. I'm grateful for her 70 years of devotion and faithfulness to her country, her positive presence she had on the world stage, and perhaps the influence she had unknowingly on me when I was fourteen years of age.

Geraldine O'Meara, spent 21 years in England, working for a spirituality/Environmental centre before residency in Huntsville. As a senior, she is enjoying writing, painting, her grandchildren, and great-granddaughter.

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Plunging in at 73

By Bessie Grimes

Would most seniors start a demanding never-ending job after the age of seventy? Most would not. Most welcome the chance to retire and enjoy a life without unwanted obligations.

One man, however, is doing it. After waiting almost a lifetime for the job he was destined to do, King Charles III is plunging in. The seventy-three-year-old has pledged the rest of his life to a job with unremitting heavy responsibilities, grinding work and extensive travel attached to it.

Even though the position is mostly ceremonial, there is a lot of ceremony. Charles needs all the skills of a top flight diplomat to meet with heads of state and meet with his government's Prime Minister on a regular basis. His knowledge of current events and issues concerning his nations has to be up to date at all times. This takes a lot of reading and study of documents many people would find dull. He also needs to be available to open special events just about anywhere in his realm. This requires travel and, often, keeping to a very tight schedule. He also needs to be the voice of encouragement when his subjects are going through very tough times.

All this makes his job challenging. But he is taking it on with a definite determination to do a good job.

He is not inexperienced. He hastoured countries on the Queen's behalf, opened parliament, inspected troops and sponsored various charities and causes for decades. He is also a pioneer in organic



farming and an enthusiastic environmentalist.

What drives him? Duty! The desire to be responsible and to accomplish something! Many seniors start to fade when they think there is nothing more for them to do or be. King Charles III won't have that problem. Maybe he is actually a

very lucky man. He'll always have something to do. In other words, he'll always have a reason to live.

Bessie Grimes is the author of Bible Stories From a Different Point of View, Little Pigs and Big Carrots and Other Amazing Tales, and the editor of Pioneer Homemaking in Muskoka.

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Halloween 1965

By Peter Cassidy

This night would prove to be memorable, especially for me for a couple of reasons.

This year the event fell on Sunday. The politicians decided to move the day back to Saturday.

This was the year we were introduced to our new flag. and Neil Armstrong landed on the moon. It was an eventful year indeed.

For myself and my friends, it was an awkward time. Farmer Harvey's pond was not yet frozen.

Our town was a true to life "Happy Days" malt shop, where all the kids gathered for milk shakes, fries etc.

As per the season, it was a cool damp day.

I would always go to Marg's around noon (our Happy Days place downtown) where I knew all the lads would be. Most of them were already there.

It was time to plan our night of mischief. When I began high school, my trick or treating stopped. In a small town with a 2000 population, we had to make our own fun. Poor old farmer Harvey was our intended victim. We arranged with our friend with the truck, to meet us at the strip plaza in town at dark.

He would drive us out to the farm where we could complete our evil deeds. We had to be very careful not to get caught. There were consequences if we did. I was

about to learn the hard way.

We had done the same thing to Harvey for the past couple of years.

It took some effort, but we managed to move his outhouse back a couple of feet. It should have been easy this year because being a Saturday night, we knew Harvey would be at the hotel in town having a couple of pops. This was proven since we had driven past the farm to ensure his truck was gone.

Keep in mind it was a country road. There were no streetlights out there. When it got dark it was pitch dark. It was now the time for action. We would park the truck out on the side road and very quietly walk in. We had a flashlight that helped us see our way.

As we got closer to our intended target, I thought something was not right. Harvey had a dog that was very friendly but sure let you know if someone was around. This night he was not there... Hmmm...

We went straight for his outdoor latrine to make the move, when suddenly the ground went out from under me. That old Harvey had outsmarted us and moved his outhouse back before we arrived. He had put his truck in the barn and gave his dog to his neighbour to look after.

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HALLOWEEN CONT'D FROM PAGE 22

There I was, deep in it past my knees.

The smell was indescribable. All I could hear behind me was a lot of suppressed laughter. I struggled but made it out of the hole and began to follow the lads out to the truck. When I got there, I made the move to the truck and was told very abruptly that I was not getting in smelling like that. I would have to walk back to town.

Fortunately, the farm was only a mile from town. It would be tough, but there was no other choice.

As I began walking, the toughest thing was walking with the wet stinky clothes on. They were so bad I couldn't stand them myself.

I was sure I heard a vehicle coming my way. I turned to look and saw headlights approaching. Thank God I may not have to walk all the way into town.

You see, as I mentioned, it was only a mile into town, but I lived away across town. So the walk could have been another half a mile if it had been a straight road.

As the vehicle got closer, I recognized the driver, it was our farmer friend Harvey. I looked at him and said, "Thanks Harv for stopping."

As I opened the door to get in, he said to me in his gravelly voice, "You are not getting in here smelling like you are. Get in the back."

I said a mild oath under my breath, and it was then, I realized he had not brought his truck but his manure spreader. I nearly died on the spot. As I got in the back of the spreader, my mind began to think back on the events of the evening.

Harvey took the long way back to town. If he drove any slower, he would have been backing up. If he had heard all the names I called him, I would never have made it home.

To add insult to my discomfort, he did not drive me home, and he knew where I lived. He dropped me off downtown, in front of the malt shop. I can still hear his hysterical laughing as he drove off.

I cannot describe the horrible feeling walking home on main street. The old pool hall was still open, and a few guys were standing out front. They already knew about my mischief gone bad. One of many drawbacks living in small town Ontario, everyone knew about 80% of your business. These boys were not kind.

When I finally arrived home, my younger brothers were in bed. Quietly I came in through the back door. I almost made it to the basement.

My mother was a petite Scottish lady. When she was

angry you learned to keep clear of her. When she smacked you, it felt like she had the power of a heavy weight. When it came to me she had a heavy wooden spoon that she knew how to use.

The door opened to the back stairs and all I heard was her broad Scottish accent asking, "What is that smell? I started to tell her, but she did not let me finish and said, "Get your clays aff (a Scottish word for clothes) outside, then get up and into the shower."

I never saw those clothes again, not even my shoes. My mother who was a widow at a young age, had a financial burden raising four young boys by herself. She could not afford to replace my clothes, so I went down to the Salvation Army, and they very generously helped me. As I fell asleep that night, I could not help but think I was the victim of a conspiracy.

It was Sunday October 31st, and I heard a truck pull in the driveway. The driver got out and came to the door. It was farmer Harvey he was there to take me for breakfast. He handed me a brown paper bag and when I opened it, I was shocked. In the bag was a pair of jeans my size, a shirt, and a pair of new sneakers. He also handed me a five-dollar bill.

During breakfast he told me it was his goal to pay us back. He had fallen for our trick both times. I told him I had learned a lesson. He apologized for going overboard a little with me. We shared a good laugh that morning, I left with a very happy heart. With the knowledge I saw a side of Harvey I did not know existed. He had a great sense of humour.

Harvey and I became the best of friends that day. I would go out to his farm and help him with the haying. If he was under the weather, I would go out and do his chores.

I can't help but think that over the next couple of years he went out of his way to make sure we had fun on his pond.

It was a sad day indeed for all of us when he passed away. I always wanted to give him some kind of recognition for his kindness to all of us, especially me.

After some thought, I decided I would not do that. I had it in my head that he might not want anyone to know the kindness he showed me. I think he would want to be remembered as he lived. I like to think I pay him back every time I help someone.

Peter Cassidy, Scotland born. Came to Canada in 1948. Played Canadian sports, and loved hockey and boxing. I love to write stories of those wonderful players and characters who were the stars in my day.

SPORTS CORNER



*Sports Corner
with Peter Cassidy*

Tis the Season for... FOOTBALL

My brothers have said for years that I have rocks in my head. This is because I am not a huge fan of the N.F.L.

I prefer the Canadian Football League. Back in the sixties, every kid knew all the stars. Names like Russ Jackson, Bernie Faloney, Angelo Mosca and Jackie Parker were almost as famous as our hockey heroes.

Sunday afternoon was the official day for football. Our season began on Labour Day weekend. We were blessed with the advent of the trees changing colour. You could smell the crisp air. We always played in Memorial Park in town, where people would walk through all the time.

With all of the elements of fall in our nostrils and the warm weather left over from summer, we were so happy.

Players came from all over town. Sometimes we played two games, so we adjusted the time to get in a game.

In one game, there was a large, tall boy who knew he was bigger than all of us and let everyone know! We always played two hand touch, however because of our competitive nature it turned very rough. It became tackle very quickly.

Someone gave the big guy the ball and he headed right towards me. I like to think it was the fearless Scot inside me that got a strong grip on him and brought him down very hard. He was a bit stunned. You know that old expression "the bigger they are...?"

He was desperate to know who tackled him, but my friends said they did not know. We never saw him much after that. I went over to his house to see how he was a short while later, and he told me he was fine but lost his interest in football.

Most of these lads are gone now including the big guy. However, their memories return each fall.

Peter Cassidy, Scotland born. Came to Canada in 1948. Played Canadian sports, and loved hockey and boxing. I love to write stories of those wonderful players and characters who were the stars in my day.

GARDENING: DID YOU KNOW...?



Caring for Your Poinsettias

By Sandra Harthill

Poinsettias certainly are so popular to have in the house over winter by so many of us living in Muskoka. The lovely shades of red add brightness to any living space and are especially popular at Christmastime.

It is most important to ensure that the plant is completely wrapped before you leave the shop as even a few moments exposed to freezing temperatures can cause frost damage or even kill the plant. Have your car heated and it is always best to go straight home with it. Remove the wrapping whenever you get home and always check the soil and water if necessary. The plant should always be in a pot with drainage holes so the roots never sit in water. Water the plant well when the soil feels dry to the touch as it doesn't flourish well if it is allowed to dry out too much. Overwatering can kill the plant and will cause the leaves to wilt.

The plant enjoys being in a warm, humid environment with no draughts. It thrives well in bright, diffused light and does not like to be exposed to direct sunlight. It will not require fertilizing when you first get it as it has been force-fed while growing in the greenhouse.

When the leaves have fallen, cut the stems back to about 4 inches high. Keep the plant quite dry and in a mild, shady place. Repot the plant in late Spring. Continue watering and new growth will appear. Fertilize the plant regularly. Trim the plant back to about 4 or 5 shoots. In early October place the plant in a dark space for approximately 14 hours each day. After 2 months it will start to have coloured leaves and it will look lovely at Christmastime.

Enjoy your poinsettia!

Sandra Harthill Master Gardeners of Muskoka and Parry Sound. Our goal is to share, inform and advise avid and amateur gardeners with tips for indoor, outdoor and balcony gardening.



Finding Joy in the Trenches

By Geraldine O'Meara

I have been asking myself a question for some time now: How do I balance my life between day-to-day activities and all that entails and keeping connected with what is going on in the wider world today?

For two years, we have been struggling with illness, death, isolation as a result of the Covid virus, experienced environmental crisis on a scale we have not witnessed before, and now the horrors of war in Ukraine and Europe that is bringing about the swelling of refugees escaping to safety at a rate we have not seen since WW11.

Do I close myself off, not read the newspaper or watch the television news as it presents graphic pictures of bombings, mutilations, killings and frightening war machines that are beyond imagination; or do I watch them as though I'm watching a late night show, yawn, say ho hum, and then go off to bed.

I'm a person who likes to be engaged in life and take some portion of responsibility as best I'm able to but, as an 84 year old woman, I tend to get overwhelmed and wonder how to process it all. I had a dream recently that gave me some insight and reminder as to how to keep my balance.

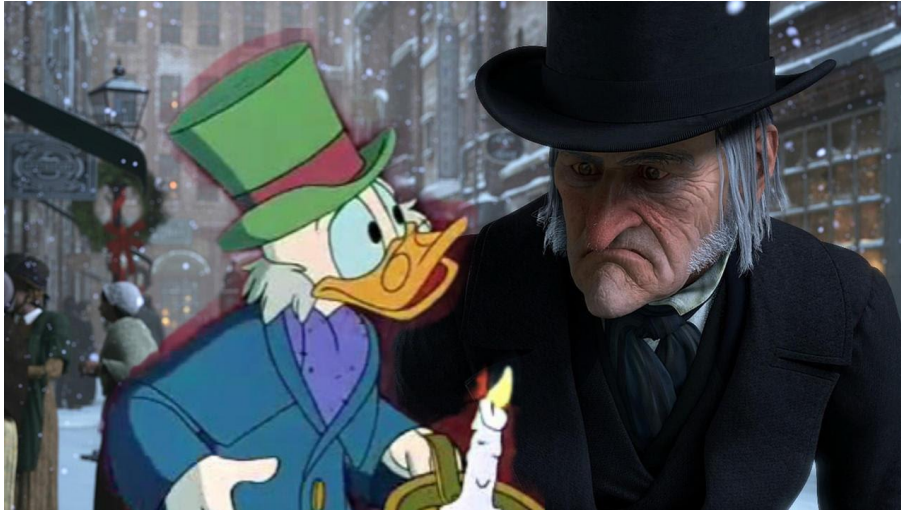
My friend and I are casually leaning our backs against the wall of a dug out trench, and we can hear bombing all around us. We both are eating from a plate

of delicious food, and we hold the food up to show a row of soldiers who, putting down their guns, are leaning over the side of the trench staring down at us with curiosity. We smile, and one of them says, "These two women are finding joy in the trenches!"

At times, life can feel like the trenches, but I need to remind myself, even in the midst of chaos in the world it's important to be open and aware of little things in my life that bring me joy: a walk in the park, listening to good music, a favourite meal, a chat with a good friend, writing poetry, reading a good book, watching a sunset, deep breathing; anything that might lift my spirit, which is a good antidote to being stressed and overwhelmed.

It's not about escaping or closing ourselves off from all that's around us, for what is happening in the wider world is a global concern and we're all part of it; rather it's finding little moments of joy in the midst of the reality of our lives as they are now. It's a challenge, but it's possible to find joy right here in the trenches!

Geraldine O'Meara, spent 21 years in England, working for a spirituality/Environmental centre before residency in Huntsville. As a senior, she is enjoying writing, painting, her grandchildren, and great-granddaughter.



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The Tiniest Real Christmas Tree

By Kenn R. E. Page

As a kid growing up, my parents always bought a real spruce Christmas tree. Ever since then, nothing would do for me but a real spruce. I'm not even sure if plastic Christmas trees existed back then. The closest thing to plastic that I can remember was a Bakelite and that seemed to always be brown and rock hard. Some Christmas tree that would have made!

The smell of a real spruce tree in the house was a part of Christmas for me growing up, as much as turkey dinner with stuffing and cranberry sauce was. That and sitting in a darkened room with only the coloured tree lights on. I would have slept right there on the couch if my parents had let me. Once a year we had a fire in the fireplace.

When I came to have a place of my own, there always had to be a real Christmas tree at Christmas, starting around the 15th, and lasting until the end of the first week in January or all the needles fell off when somebody sneezed, whichever came first.

As soon as my two daughters could hang an ornament on the tree, they would get lifted up to place them where they couldn't reach, including placing the angel on top. Over time they graduated to using a chair to

stand on.

Each year they would be given a special ornament of their own with the year printed on it. As it is with many families, it was a very special family get together time of year.

We attended the Christmas children's pageant at our church, and of course they just had to see the parade down the main street of town. Then came visits to grandma and grandpa's house. I wonder if they miss that. I miss it!

When we moved to Muskoka, my girls and I would go out and wonder around the hundreds of acres of bush behind our house to look for a tree. We discovered back there, much to our surprise, a clearing where there had been an old sawmill operation. We knew that from the pile of slab wood we found there. The clearing was overgrowing with spruce trees of every size, seeded by big spruce around the edge of the clearing. It was like a Wal-Mart for spruce trees.

The first thing we would do was pick out a perfect size tree for that particular year and then we would pick out another tree that with a little growth would be the perfect size for next year. It was a perfect discovery, and it was a sustainable. Every year more trees were being seeded, far more than we could ever use. We moved away from that place and today wandering around on my 25 acres, there isn't a Christmas tree to be found anywhere that I've ever seen. It's mostly open mature hardwood bush once you get back beyond the wet area, an area deer hunters roam in fall. I don't say anything.

The part about there being no spruce trees on my property isn't quite true. There are a few trees the size of cell towers near the road, or they are ones I transplanted to my yard near my patio to create a privacy screen from the road. When those transplanted trees first arrived, they were small. I wasn't about to dig up and move big trees. The small trees went into pails. Although they were all about the same size when moved, they now range from 4 feet to over 12 feet. Clearly some liked the move, and some didn't. It's amazing the discrepancy in size, but all would look good in Christmas tree lights. Each year those spruce trees in my yard were pruned into a nice shape, but as far as being an indoor tree, I didn't have the heart to cut any for indoor use. As I write this, there is a tree just outside my side window that would be the perfect size for indoors. I even went looking for my heavy cast iron Christmas tree stand, but I didn't find it. That may have saved that

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TREE CONT'D FROM PAGE 27

tree's life. I don't really want to cut it, but some of the trees are now so big and spread out I have to thin them out and Susan wants a real tree inside.

Susan thinks some of the other trees would look great covered in outdoor lights. I agree but the only time you can see them is if you are standing at the kitchen sink doing dishes. I don't mind doing dishes, but there are times I'd rather be sitting in my easy chair. In fact, there are a whole lot of times I'd rather be sitting in my chair. Now if I had planted a young tree years ago out on the lawn where I could now see it out the living room window from my chair, that would be reason enough to smother it in lights, or at least semi-smother it.

What I could have, what I should have, it's too late now. By the time a tree the size I can dig up and move, considering the low back damage I have from doing too much stuff like that, is big enough for a few lights, I'll be...well, I'll be doing something else. It's strange how the more than dozen spruce trees transplanted to my yard have grown. Some are tall and some are short. Had I planted a tree out front, where I could now see it at the same time I planted the others, there is no guarantee it would have grown. Perhaps some sort of natural generated fertilizer would have helped.

The end result of not wanting to cut any of the trees in my yard is I have not had a tree inside for several years. When I use to get sustainable trees for free, it was hard to pay what was wanted for a farmed tree and then after a few weeks throw it on the brush pile. The TV news said, for Christmas 2021, trees both real and artificial had gone up 30% in price. Ouch! When I stopped having a tree inside, I had already started to create a Christmas village and it took over from having a tree. The village had houses, shops, a church, a train station, and a train. It also had lots of trees, people some vehicles, and a skating rink.

My Christmas village reminded me a little of the amazing window displays my grandfather use to take me to see at the big Eaton's store in downtown Toronto. The village got so big it was a lot of work setting it up but I enjoyed it. Due to the space required, I started to downsize the village a few years ago and I donated some of it to Habitat. Maybe somebody, or even more than one person, has added parts of what was once my village to their village collection. As much as Susan likes the village, she wants a real tree for Christmas. The problem is, when I stopped having the tree inside,

I donated all my ornaments. Actually, it's not as bad as it sounds. I donated enough of it to Susan for a small tree in her room.

Before Christmas 2020, Susan went out wandering around the yard to find a small tree to cut. I decided to quickly join her and help guide the decision-making process. All I had was scrawny Balsam-Fur, no spruce except for a 40-foot spruce a windstorm had toppled earlier. As it turned out, the top of that tree was a perfect shape. It was still green, and the branches were loaded with golden brown spruce cones. Susan decided how much of the tree top she wanted, and I cut it off. It isn't every day you get a fresh tree already fully decorated.

In 2021, the story was much different. Without a downed tree like before, we had to range farther afield. I drove Susan back to the place I had originally dug up the trees now growing in my yard. It was down a narrow backcountry dirt road. When we arrived at the spot, Susan immediately noticed a tiny little spruce tree and wanted to take it home. No sooner had we started back, and Susan spotted a larger tree at the side of the road. Upon inspection she turned it down. A week later she was saying she wanted the bigger tree.

It was her decision. The smaller tree was the tiniest real spruce I had ever seen anybody take home for Christmas. Three Christmas tree lights, not three strings of lights, and a couple of tree ornaments would have overwhelmed it.

Susan had to go to work, so I drove alone out the narrow dirt road back to where the tree Susan now wanted was growing and dug it up. For a guy with a bad back it wasn't easy. Then for a week it sat in a cardboard box in the garage. Everyday I would open the door to let the sun in. Because it had grown on a sloping bank, the tree sat at a steep angle in the box. Susan bought a fancy white pail to plant it in.

Transferring the tree to the new pail we struggled to get it to sit straight up, but finally we succeeded. It then sat on a table in Susan's room. Susan decorated it in a way it looked like it was decorated in cold. It was beautiful. She did an amazing job.

Maybe in a few years, if it grows, the tiniest real spruce Christmas tree can sit in Susan's room and be decorated like that.

***Kenn R. E. Page**, is proud to be Canadian! Born in Toronto, raised in Pickering, worked for Bell and IBM. Moved to Muskoka in '75 to design and build homes for 40 years. Hobbies: Fishing, reading, painting, gardening.*



One Boy's Best Christmas

By Shirley Cambray

Mom asked what I'd like for Christmas that year,
A toy or game, and perhaps something to wear.
She said, "Make your list short, don't be greedy,
And remember to add a gift for the needy".

I thought of all the things I would like -
A remote-control car or a big shiny bike.
Maybe some ice skates, pads and a stick.
No, better still, a soccer ball I could kick.

I have no sisters or brothers for play,
And when it rains, I'm alone for the day.
So, I don't need games for two or more,
I need a friend – someone to care for.

What I really wanted was a big, shaggy dog.
I'd brush him, walk him and give him a hug.
Feed him kibble and fresh water each day.
And teach him manners like "sit" and "stay".

But, Mom said this is not the best time of year
To bring home a puppy and give it good care.
"No Mom, not a puppy – a full-grown dog."
So we went to the shelter and I was really agog.

So many to choose from, all needing a home.

Some scared, some frisky, some looking forlorn.
How could I choose, which one could I love,
The answer seemed to be 'all of the above'.

And then I saw him with his big eyes so black.
"That's the one Mom, please can we take him back?
They say he's house-trained, won't make a puddle.
Please Mom, he's lonely and just needs a cuddle".

"I'll keep my promise to give him good care,
And when we go out we'll make quite a pair.
A freckle-faced boy, running at top speed,
And a lop-eared dog at the end of the lead".

Many years have passed and I still have him,
His whiskers now grey and eyes now dim,
We've been pals through all kinds of weather,
It's Christmas again and we're still together'

I sure made the right decision those years ago,
Oh, did I tell you, my dog's name is Joe.

Shirley Cambray spent many summers on Oxbow Lake before taking up full-time residency in Huntsville. Now in her senior years, she is enjoying the writing of poems and short stories.



All My Faculties

By Nancy Goodman

They think I don't have all my faculties,
Or all my ducks all in a row.
But I've got news for the youngsters,
I'm more "with it" than they know.

I don't need an iPad or computer,
Or a cell phone to tell me the time.
I'm busy trying to live a full life.
"I can assure you that I'm doing just fine."

I can feel them watching closely,
Every little thing that I do,
What I wear and where I go,
I tell them "It's NOT up to you."

I can wear my big girl panties,
And put my lipstick on just right.
I grab my purse, and sweater,
And say, "I'm heading out for the night."

The kids can spot a retirement home,
From more than a mile away,
And I keep telling them constantly,
"That's not where I'm going to stay."

I have my wits about me,
No need to make any plans.
"I'll stay right here where I am,
Rockin' in the good Lord's hands."

Nancy Goodman, is a lively senior, a prolific co-author of the book "My Affair With Cancer", who lives in Penetanguishene, and enjoys walks on the beach, and fireside chats.

Tired of the stressful, catastrophic, anxiety provoking news that leaves you feeling frustrated and helpless?

It's All Good **MUSKOKA** (a division of MUSKOKA SENIORS MAGAZINE) is your monthly good news brief that keeps you informed but gives you a break from the bad stuff!

This good news brief is available in both digital and print, at libraries, recreation centres, and more.

Here's your copy of the October edition:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1p81nl8badH-D1a2IE6FZUf9H1f0j7xWm/view?usp=sharing>

In case you missed it, here's the September edition:

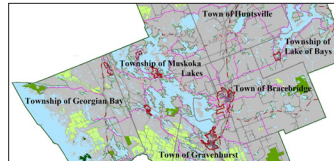
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Click, or copy and paste the links on your browser and hit 'enter,' and enjoy something positive!

It's All Good MUSKOKA

Your Monthly Good News Brief Vol 1, Issue 2, October 2022

2022 Municipal Elections: Your Mayor Candidates, Municipalities, and Responsibilities



Muskoka is made up of six municipalities, and each has candidates running for Mayor. Here is a breakdown of who is running:

- **GRAVENHURST:**
 - Terry Pilger
 - Marc Mantha
- **BRACEBRIDGE:**
 - Heidi Lorenz
 - Paul Campbell
 - Rick Maloney
 - Michael Opara
- **HUNTSVILLE:**
 - Nancy Alcock
 - Stephen Hernan
 - Ruben Pyette-Bouillon
 - Tim Withey
- **LAKE OF BAYS:**
 - Terry Glover
 - Linda Thompson
- **MUSKOKA LAKES:**
 - Phil Harding
 - Peter Kelley
- **GEORGIAN BAY**
 - Peter Koetsier

What is the responsibility of a Mayor?

According to the government of Ontario, the role of a Mayor or "head of Council" has responsibilities that include to, "act as chief executive officer of the municipality, preside over council meetings so that business can be carried out efficiently and effectively, provide leadership – to provide information and recommendations to council with respect to the role of council, and represent the municipality at official functions."

A Mayor is also committed to, "uphold and promote the purposes of the municipality, promote public involvement in municipal activities, promote the municipality locally, nationally, and internationally, participate in and foster activities that enhance the economic, social and environmental well-being of the municipality and its residents."

The role of the Mayor also includes creating a balance between responsibilities and public expectations.

Voting: What's the Point?

Power comes in numbers. Voting is a collective voice that creates awareness and makes decisions about what people want, and what they don't want.

It's also a form of self expression - an opportunity to make your voice heard, act on what you've been unhappy about, and a chance to be a part of changing it; to get closer to where you want to go.

The municipal election is October 24th, and from October 17-24 you can vote to be a part of the changes we'll see in the municipalities in Muskoka over the next 4 years.

Do you want development and condos in your Town, or would you rather the quiet and protection of natural habitat that goes with rural living?

Do you want more affordable rentals and housing?

Would you prefer to have a representative that is willing to get creative regarding ways to generate municipal revenue, other than increase residential taxes?

This is your chance to express yourself about what a quality of life looks like for you, and to support the person that best represents that, as Ward and District Councillors, and Mayors.

You should receive a Voter Information Letter at your permanent address with instructions for voting.

To confirm you're on the list to vote, visit voterlookup.ca. To see who the candidates are for your area, search municipal election, on your Town website, and as a Visitor, you'll see who the candidates are. Here's to having a say!



VOTE Sandi Allan, Ward 1
I am a strong advocate, no matter what subject I am championing. I'm passionate, committed, motivated and experienced; I feel that I can make a positive difference in how we succeed as a diverse and celebrated community, mindful of the beautiful environment we are so lucky to be a part of.

VOTE Terry Pilger for Mayor

MAKING YOUR VOICE HEARD:

- Expanded, Local Medical Services
- Alternative Transportation Options
- Affordable / Attainable Housing
- Enhanced Communication Policies
- Keep Taxes Low and Affordable
- Experience, Ability, Vision & Leadership



Terrypilgerformayor@gmail.com
705-644-1195

New Municipal Committees to be Recruited by Councils After Election

October 24th will signify the end of the term for the Municipal Representatives, once the public votes for who best advocates for what's important to them. Public members will also be given the chance to apply to be a committee member in their town.

In the Gravenhurst Heritage Committee meeting, on September 13, 2022, Town Clerk, Kayla Thibault, announced the end of the existing committee. She added, "New Council means new committees."

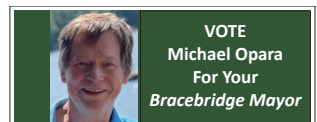
Thibault explained, "Once the election is done, you will see a call out for applications for various committees...adjustments, heritage..." She said to keep an eye out for announcements in the news, ads, the library, and online for applicant requests.

According to Thibault, applications have different committees to choose from. "Council appoints applicants for committees, and you can select ones you're interested in."

For instance, The Town of Gravenhurst has variety of boards and committees that "provide advice and make recommendations to Council on a variety of issues, including environment, arts, culture, heritage, accessibility, community and services, [and] endowment and grant programs."

Each Town has a variety of boards and committees based on their preferences and needs, which you can learn more about on their website or by contacting them.

In the meeting, Chair, Michael Wayling, added, "The time during this term the last few months have resurrected us. I'm infused with more enthusiasm than six months ago. I think about whether you want to be on the committee in the upcoming term."



VOTE Michael Opara For Your Bracebridge Mayor

Your Mayoral Candidate Who Pledges To:

- SAVE DON'T PAYE
- Protect the natural beauty, peace and tranquility of Muskoka
- End clearcutting
- Stop the Mega Quarry
- Review Muskoka Royal
- Freeze water and sewer rates
- Build a sustainable economy
- Enhance our full-service acute care hospital

Learn More Website: www.protectbracebridge.ca or Call or Text: 705-706-4911

MUSKOKA SENIORS MAGAZINE - *Business Directory*

Enjoy the magazine? Please support the businesses in it. How?

Inquire about their products and services, talk about them with contacts, buy from them, and let them know you saw them here. Thank you.

DORSET VILLAGE PHARMACY (Pharmasave) - Your traditional small town drug store. Cough and cold, vitamins, cosmetics, giftware... Forgot your meds? Transfers are easy! We can help! Open 8:30 to 5:30 Mon-Fri. Curbside assistance available. Phone: 705-766-1911. [p. 4, 8](#)

DISTRICT OF MUSKOKA - WISE Mobile Active Living Centre. FREE series for individuals 55+, to promote the health and well-being of older adults who age in place at home. For more info: 705-645-2100 ext. 4199, www.muskoka.on.ca/seniorsprograms [p. 9](#)

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RIGHT AT HOME CANADA - Your exceptional home care for seniors and disabled adults. Your own care team and care planner. Full range of services. Free assessment! Call 705-293-5500., [p. 32](#)

THE BAUM TEAM - Do you know how much to charge for your house? Tri-generational Real Estate sales representatives, serving buyers and sellers in Muskoka and Haliburton. 705-788-4859. [p. 17, 20](#)

THE GREEN BOUQUET CANNABIS - Our team is Cannsell Certified and here to talk to you about your cannabis questions. We have free educational information instore for seniors. Instore or curbside pickup. Open 7 days a week. 705-385-9333, <https://www.thegreenbouquetcannabis.com/> [p. 12, 21](#)

CHARITIES & NON-PROFITS

The Alzheimer Society of Muskoka - Provides free programs to improve the quality of life and ease the burden for people with Alzheimer's disease and other dementias. 705-645-5621 x. 104, www.alzheimermuskoka.ca

Bracebridge Centre for Active Living - Bracebridge Centre for Active Living, 54 Dominion Street. Come and check out our facility's programs for mature adults. Call today. 705 645 9111.

Hospice Muskoka - Person-centred palliative care approach to helping residents and families with life limiting illnesses or end-of-life issues. 705 646 1697, www.hospicemuskoka.com.

The Muskoka Men of Song - A welcoming men's choral group, sharing a love of music, and helping aspiring musicians. Join us! muskokamenofsong.ca

The Huntsville Public Library - Has engaging adult programming and events this fall. We look forward to seeing you at the library. <https://www.huntsvillelibrary.ca/en/sign-up-for-activities/grown-ups.aspx>

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