

MUSKOKA SENIORS MAGAZINE

Not Just A Read... It's A Connection

Spring 2023

**Sleep:
Often Overlooked,
With Dr. Annabelle**

**Dustyn's Top Tips
for Spring Gardening**

**What Businesses
Can Do for the Environment**

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Pilates keeps you young**

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Pilates
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*Cheryl Patterson,
Publisher*

MUSKOKA SENIORS MAGAZINE
Not just a read... It's a connection!

Welcome to spring! At least that's what the calendar tells us. Either way we have lots of great information to help you on your way to a healthy and fulfilling new season.

Huntsville Family Physician, Dr. Annabelle Dufour-Lamontagne kick starts us off with important information about our health – specifically, about how sleep is often overlooked. This is a part of a special Chat Series providing free workshops in Huntsville and Bracebridge that will highlight various aspects of our health. Who better to hear about important health issues from than the professionals themselves!

Pilates instructor, Christine Kirkland, shares interesting information about how Pilates can help keep us young (who doesn't want to hear about that!).

Landscaper, Dustyn Pilger, gives

us some helpful tips in his new "Top Tips for Gardening" column. We especially like the tip about how adding fungi to the garden can increase the plants access to water and nutrients.

Geraldine O'Meara and Bessie Grimes remind us about the importance of cherishing our beloved mother nature, whether it's through the sheer enjoyment of it or to challenge businesses to step up to making the changes needed to protect the very thing that sustains us.

As a business, MUSKOKA SENIORS MAGAZINE is proud to say that we've officially gone digital to reduce our carbon footprint on this precious planet, and in line with the District of Muskoka's Climate Action Plan.

On another note, Linda Smith warns "Seniors Beware" in her art-

-icle about scams that you may be encountering, or will be more so given the warmer weather encouraging scheming strays, such as fake business representatives knocking on your door.

George Brooks touches our hearts with a childhood story about staying with his uncle, when his mother decided he needed to be "straightened out."

We've put this and more together for you, in line with our mission to inform, inspire, support, and include you, and your loved ones.

We hope you enjoy it as much as we enjoy creating it for you.

Enjoy your spring!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Cheryl Patterson'.

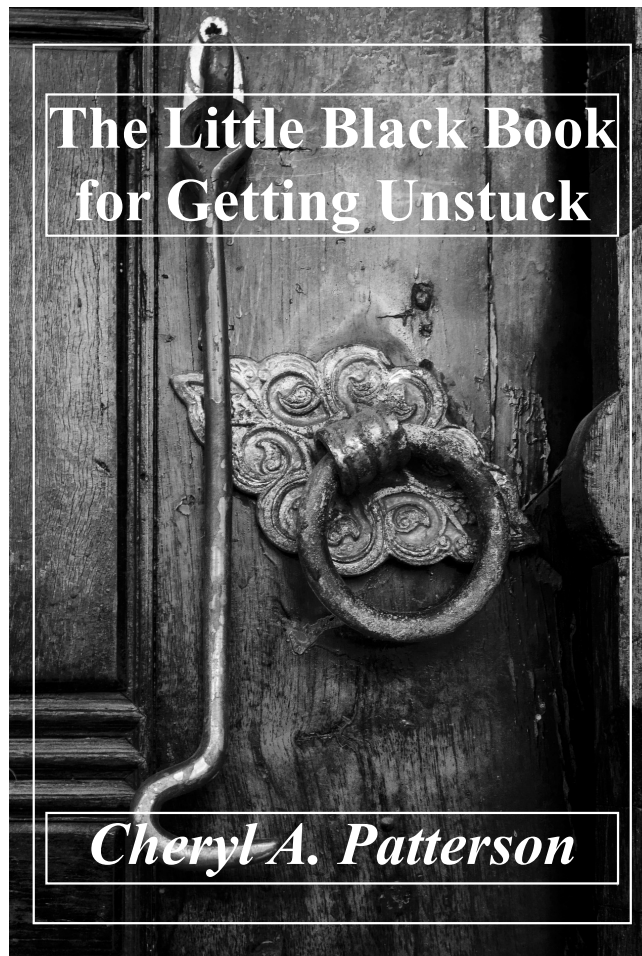
Feeling Stuck?

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!



*"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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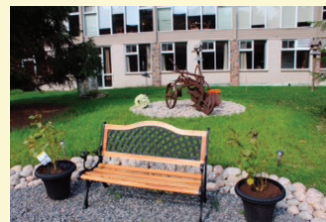
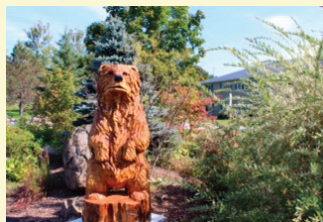
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Mission:

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 practitioner.

Your suggestions and submissions are welcome. However unsolicited manuscripts will not be returned.

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Dr. Annabelle Dufour-Lamontagne, Family Physician, Huntsville, Ontario. Teaching and empowering patients to get engaged in making healthy choices for their lives is one of my favourite aspects of my work as a family physician. It is an immense privilege to have the chance to work as a team to make tangible changes that contribute to disease prevention and improve quality of life.



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.



George Brooks, is a retired elementary school teacher. He and his wife Susan enjoy travel, hiking, and sailing, which round out their lives, and they are very involved in their community.



Dr. Kevin D. Willison ... Born and raised in Orillia Ontario, Kevin (Dr. Willison, PhD – Faculty of Medicine, University of Toronto, 2009) currently teaches with Lakehead University (Orillia) and resides with his wife in Toronto.



Linda Smith. I wrote a book of cartoons with commentary called: The Senior Boomer – Whatever happened to the Baby Boomers? The cartoons tell the story of where we landed up!



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.

YOUR HEALTH: SLEEP



Sleep: Often Overlooked

*Dr. Anabelle Dufour-Lamontagne
Family Physician, Huntsville, ON*

This spring, I am teaming up with the *Algonquin Family Health Team* and my colleagues Melissa Kilpatrick and Dr. Lindsay MacMillan to open the discussion about important ways you can engage in making a positive impact on your health, longevity and quality of life. I am excited to participate in the Fireside Chat series to discuss the important topic of sleep.

Teaching and empowering patients to get engaged in making healthy choices for their lives is one of my favourite aspects of my work as a family physician. It is an immense privilege to have the chance to work as a team to make tangible changes that contribute to disease prevention and improve quality of life.

I chose to speak about sleep because I think it is often overlooked as one of the big pillars of health. Along with exercise, nutrition and risk/substance avoidance, sleep is a habit that you can learn about, work at and modify to make positive changes in your health.

According to the latest Statistics Canada survey, approximately 25% of Canadian adults report having difficulty falling or staying asleep. Even individuals who don't identify as having difficulty with sleep may

be surprised to find out that they have insufficient or excessive sleep according to the guidelines, both of which are considered risk factors for a number of health problems and chronic diseases.

My goal will be to create a learning environment where we can review what constitutes good sleep, and why it is so important to our health. I will also be reviewing a number of evidence-based strategies to help you take actions towards getting a good night's sleep. I will specifically be touching on some Cognitive Behavioural Therapy for insomnia (CBT-i) strategies that you can take home and build on.

I hope to see you on April 18th and look forward to discussing and learning with you. Feel free to check out mysleepwell.ca if you are interested in learning about some of these topics before our chat. I would even like to invite you complete a sleep diary (template available on the website), which will be the first building block towards understanding and improving your sleep.

I look forward to meeting with all of you on April 18th. Be sure to also check out Melissa and Dr. MacMillan's talks on the important topics of fall prevention, and on healthy eating and drinking.

Meet your healthcare providers in the Fireside Chat Series, for FREE

**Huntsville: 7-8pm,
Active Living Centre**

Tuesday, April 11
Healthy Eating and Drinking,
Dr. Lindsay MacMillan

Tuesday, April 18
Optimal Sleep for Good Health,
Dr. Anabelle Dufour-Lamontagne

Tuesday, April 25
Balance and Fall Prevention,
Melissa Kilpatrick, Nurse Practitioner, and Melissa Lang,
Physiotherapist

Register in Huntsville online at:
www.huntsvilleLEG.ca/community
or call Paula Paunic at:
705-789-0022 x 2720

**Bracebridge: 7-8pm,
Rene M Caisse Theatre**

Tuesday, May 2
Connected to Care, Jennifer Houston, Mgr. Home & Community Care Support Services,
North Simcoe Muskoka

Tuesday, May 9
How the ICU (Intensive Care Unit) Takes Care of You, Dr. Luke Wu,
Internal Medicine, SMMH

Tuesday, May 16
Navigating Dementia: Resources in Your Community,
Michael Schneider, and Team,
Alzheimer Society of Muskoka

Register in Bracebridge at:
www.southmuskokaLEG.ca/community, or call Paula Paunic at:
705-645-4404 x 2720



Christine Kirkland is a Certified Pilates Instructor. She specializes in helping adults over 50 to increase their balance, strength, mobility and feel their best every day. Visit www.my-pilates.ca to learn more about her online Pilates classes.

How a Regular Pilates Practice Keeps You Feeling Young

Do you experience stiffness in your body upon waking? Less stamina for the activities you love? Frequent aches and pains?

As we age, our muscles can weaken and become stiff. This affects our mobility, which can lead to losing our balance, developing osteoarthritis, and becoming injured more easily. It happens to all of us.

This is why it's so important to use exercise to promote strength, balanced muscle development, flexibility, and increased range of motion for the joints. Doing so can help keep your body moving optimally for years to come.

I teach online Pilates classes to adults over 50. As my clients will attest to, there are immense benefits to incorporating Pilates into your weekly schedule. Pilates is an excellent at-home workout because all you need to get started is a Pilates mat.

Whether or not you've heard of Pilates, I hope this article inspires you to give it a try! Here are the top 3 benefits Pilates has for people over 50:

Improved Balance

Our balance starts to decline between the ages of 40 and 50. Balance work is like a muscle that needs to be worked regularly to be

improved.

With regular Pilates practice, you will build the stabilizing muscles of your body and work your core. The result is you will feel more stable, confident in your body, and avoid any nasty trips or falls.

A study in the Journal of Bodywork and Movement Therapies, found that participants who worked with an experienced Pilates Instructor had a significant increase in their balance after only 10 sessions.

Strengthens Your Core

There's a very good reason the central part of our body is called our 'core'. It's the muscular engine to everything we do. Keeping your core strong is key to feeling flexible, playing sports and living actively.

Pilates works your core in all 3 dimensions; front, back and sides. Surprisingly, many people fail to properly "engage their core" on a daily basis. Working with an experienced Pilates Instructor you will actively engage your deep inner core as well as the more superficial muscles of the abdominals, leaving you feeling stronger and more mobile.

If cycling, walking, gardening, golf, tennis or pickleball are activities you enjoy, Pilates will make

those activities easier and more enjoyable.

Increases Total Body Strength and Mobility

The biggest lie I hear in the fitness industry is that strength is all you need to stay healthy. The truth is strength without mobility is like a car without gas.

In Pilates we focus on mobilizing the joints throughout your entire body. It's the secret recipe to feeling your best.

In a well-designed Pilates class, you can expect a variety of low impact exercises that work from the centre of the body outwards. This means you work to strengthen and mobilize through the core, back, shoulders before progressing to the legs and arms. A full body workout that is gentle on your joints and leaves you feeling taller, more powerful and more flexible.

Conclusion

If you're considering trying Pilates, I encourage you to start slow and modify if needed. I may not have the secret to feeling young forever, but Pilates is pretty darn close. Once you begin your practice you will start to notice all the above benefits and wish you started it years ago.



A Dietary Challenge

By Bessie Grimes

One dietary problem that is surfacing more and more is lactose intolerance. Lactose occurs naturally in all dairy products that originate from cows. These include milk, butter, cream, sour cream, whipped cream, ice cream, yogurt, sweetened condensed milk, evaporated milk and cheese. While there are lactose reduced products on the market, they do not guarantee the problem will be avoided. Basically, a lactose intolerant person suffers from severe bloating and gas.

This is not surprising. A cow is a herbivore with four stomachs, all presumably able to process the grains and gases it eats. Even though a cow constantly chews its cud—food that is passing from one stomach to another—it produces a lot of methane gas. Sometimes the gas does not completely escape and it ends up in both the milk and the meat of the animal. This becomes a human problem when we consume these items. While most people are able to cope with the gas, others cannot.

Milk is processed into a great variety of foods. The number of cheeses that exist are myriad. Many restaurants and food processing plants consider cheese to be an essential part of a meal and include it in almost everything they produce. Beef and cheese are often combined in dishes. This doubles exposure to the harmful gases the cow produces and can clog up the digestive system.

Butter and margarine also present problems. One brand of margarine—I Can't Believe it's Not Butter—is butter. It's made from leftover buttermilk—a side product that occurs when you churn milk into butter.

If you suffer from lactose intolerance or a full dairy allergy, here are two words that signal danger when you find them in product ingredients: lactate and whey powder.

Dairy products are hidden in a lot of packaged foods including TV dinners, baked goods, breads, soups and candies. (Milk chocolate and butter are the main culprits here.) If a product label lists a dairy item under “Contains”, avoid it completely. If it says “May Contain”, the product has been processed in a factory that deals with dairy foods. Their equipment may not have been thoroughly or correctly cleaned before the item you are buying was made. You may be safe, but you are taking a chance.

Things are looking up, though. There are many items you can use that contain similar nutrients. One superior beverage that you can cook with is almond milk. Other “milks” include oat, coconut, soy and rice. Avoid coconut milk if you are dieting. The calorie count is high. Unsweetened Almond Breeze has only 30 calories per cup.

Always read the Nutrition Facts label on anything you buy. This is vital. This way, you can calculate the nutritional value of what you consume and stay healthy. Include everything in the ingredients list in your reading. Many beverages, for instance, are fortified with vitamins and other essential nutrients. Avoid products that list too many extra ingredients whose names you cannot pronounce. Many of these are chemicals meant to preserve the food. They aren't necessarily nutritious or even really safe to consume. Avoid anything that lists aluminum or ammonium either alone or in a compound. Believe it or not, these two things appear in some ingredient lists; notably breads and crackers.

In restaurants, ask questions and don't be afraid to admit it is you cannot digest something. Make it clear that you have a medical problem and that you are not criticizing the menu the restaurant offers.

By being careful and curious about what you are eating, you can stay healthy. Salmon, for instance, contains a lot of the calcium you might get from milk. Always be curious about breaded chicken or fish. The breading often contains either butter or milk. If you have a yen for fried food, be sure to use a small amount of olive oil not butter to prepare the dish.

Hopefully, this article can help some of our readers who are struggling with lactose intolerance. Please get in touch if you have any tips to share concerning food allergies.

Happy Eating!

AGING WITH A GUSTO: WHAT WORKS FOR YOU



Kevin D. Willison, 62,
Orillia, ON

As an individual nearing the age of 62 years, what keeps me young at heart is having purpose and meaning in life. For me, having faith in God has been an important part of my life. As well, having earned three university degrees opened an opportunity for me to work my dream job – as a faculty member with Lakehead University (Orillia campus). This too has provided me purpose. There I have taught over 18 different post-secondary courses to literally hundreds of students over the years, from Canada and around the world. Remember the former TV program Welcome Back Kotter? Well, I was born and raised in Orillia, and going back to my hometown of Orillia to teach reminds me of that show.

Teaching courses such as Sociology and Gerontology has entailed in part exploring different cultures and ways of living. To this end another aspect that helps to energize both my wife and I is travel. Indeed, doing so enables me to better relate to the material I teach to others. In my youth I volunteered to assist in a construction project in Merida Mexico (with Teen Missions), which entailed two weeks of training in Merritt Island, Florida. In my early 20s I taught conversational English near Aomori, Japan with Overseas Missionary Fellowship (OMF). Pondering a career in physiotherapy in my later 20s I also worked as a volunteer at what is now called the ALYN Woldenberg Family Hospital, based in Jerusalem (Israel). After I became married (to my wife of 22 years to date), we have traveled to such places as Vancouver, Egypt, Varadero (Cuba), Shanghai and Beijing (China), Anchorage (Alaska), Washington DC, Galveston and Dallas (Texas), Paris (France), Rome, Venice, Panama, St. Lucia plus Salzburg and Berlin (Germany). Indeed, variety can be the spice of life.

What keeps you happy, healthy, vibrant?

We'd love to hear about it!

Email it to:

editorial@muskokaseniorsmagazine.ca

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.*

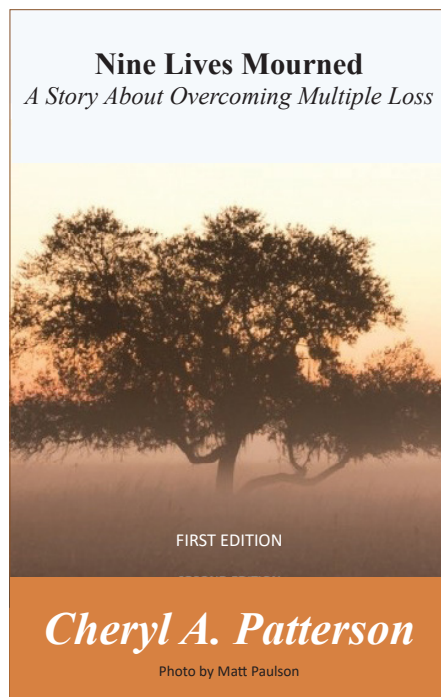
It took its toll and consumed enough of my life. It was time for me to turn things around, which I did, and so can you.

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 losses in a row, you can get through your grief too.

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

This book shows you how I got my life back, and how you can make the most of your time again too.



Get your paperback copy today!

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<https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B01595ALEK>



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.

Rapheal Mechoulam: AKA The Father of Cannabis

Rapheal Mechoulam's journey started with many challenges when he first decided to research cannabis. It was because no one else was doing it and he was curious about why the plant had been used as medicine for many years prior.

He was unsure about how to locate cannabis to conduct his research. So, he spoke with his superior and they obtained hashish from their local police. Later, he found that he had to apply to the Ministry of Health. Instead of going to jail he had to officially apologize for obtaining the hashish illegally and let them know he would not do it again. He had to fill out forms for the Ministry of Health before he was able to obtain more hashish from the police, which he did for forty years without further issues. Once this was out of his way, he made his first discovery in 1964 where he found the isolated cannabinoid Delta 9- Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), which at the time, was considered a huge discovery.

Because of this man's passion for botany, he is one of the main reasons why we know so much about cannabis, even though it has been an illegal plant to research for many years. He started his journey back in 1930 as an Israeli Organic Chemist and Professor of Medic-

-inal Chemistry, at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. He worked alongside Yechiel Gaoni, where they focused on isolating the Phyto cannabinoid Delta 9- Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), Cannabidiol (CBD), Cannabigerol (CBG). They also had assistance from all their students, post-doctoral students, and their collaborators.

"Further years of collaborative research showed that THC is the key ingredient that activates specific receptors in the brain just as similar chemicals in the human body do. These compounds work with the receptors to protect against many symptoms and conditions, including the nausea caused by chemotherapy and the pain from degenerative muscular diseases" (The Israel Pharmacologist Who Kish-Started Marijuana Research By: Abigail Klein Leichman, May 14, 2012. Updated February 25, 2018).

These two scientists also discovered the other endogenous cannabinoids found in humans, called Anandamide and 2-Arachidonoylglycerol (2-AG), leading to the discovery of our Endocannabinoid System by other scientists in 1988, by Allyn Howlett and William Devane, at the Saint Louis University School of Medicine, in a government-controlled study. The Endo-

-cannabinoid System has also been pegged as a "super computer that regulate homeostasis in the human body."

Mechoulam has received numerous accolades for his research over time. He has won over twenty five academic awards, including: The Heinrich Wieland Prize in 2004, and Honorary doctorate from Complutense University in Madrid in 2006, The Israel Prize in exact Sciences, Chemistry, in 2000, to name a few. He was also a founding member of the International Association for Cannabinoid Medicines and the International Cannabinoid Research Society. He has been one of the only scientist to study cannabis and Epileptic patients, and found the results to be very positive regarding how people dealing with this health issue reacted to cannabis.

Without this man's curiosity to learn about cannabis, we would not be where we are today, having cannabis legal medically and recreationally.

While writing this, Mechoulam passed away at the young age of 93. He researched from 1930-2023 and is known as the only scientist to have focused on these compounds longer and more thoughtfully than any other scientist.

LANDSCAPING: DUSTYN'S TOP TIPS



Dustin Pilger - *Dustyn is an entrepreneur in Muskoka. He is the business owner of NuScape Landscaping since 2019, opened The NuScape Garden Centre in 2021, which sells trees, shrubs, perennials and annuals. And this year he has become a partner in Muskoka Mosquito Solutions.*

Dustyn's Top Tips for Spring

Hi, I am Dustin Pilger, an entrepreneur in Muskoka.

I'm 23 years old and opened my first business a day before my 20th birthday.

Before beginning my own business, I was always an avid gardener and someone who loved plants. My parents often left me in the care of my retired grandmother, Mary, and as a curious child I would ask everything about anything plants, and luckily for me my grandma always had the answers.

In public school I helped install a pollination garden, and was the only student to know all the plant material used. As I got older my passion for gardening and plants left me a little as my life got busier.

High school was a lot more work and commitment than I was used to, so I didn't have as much extra time for my hobby. It renewed itself when a previous teacher of mine asked me if I was interested in a summer job. This summer job was at a Registered Show Garden in Oro Medonte that belonged to Gary and Liz Carlson.

Gary Carlson had Ontario's largest daylily collection with over 1300 cultivars before passing away of a heart-attack in 2013. At the age of 14 I was responsible for the upkeep of the gardens, such as weeding and separation of Daylilies.

I also enjoyed taking new visitors on tours of the grounds. They sold some of their collection and donated 100% of the proceeds to the Orillia Soldiers Memorial Hospital.

Following that I worked really hard to finish high school on the honour role and ended up going to University of Guelph. I felt so much pressure to make a choice about what to do after school, and I picked Bio Resource Management, a program that lent itself to environmental science, biology, and business. This well-rounded program was great, but after one year and a lot of a debt, I was unsure about whether this was something I could commit to for another three years or longer.

I took a year off and got a job landscaping, and really enjoyed that. The next year I still didn't know what to do, so I opened my own business called *NuScape Landscaping* in 2019, and in 2021 we opened *The NuScape Store*, which is a garden centre that sells trees, shrubs, perennials and annuals. And this year I have also become a partner in *Muskoka Mosquito Solutions*, which offers both traditional and organic methods of pest control for mosquitos, spiders and ticks.

In this column, I will share ways to help you in your gardening and outdoor endeavours, which I hope

you will find helpful and share with your friends and family, as follows:

Top Tips for Spring Gardening:

- Start your tender bulbs like Begonias and Dahlias indoors in early March. This will ensure you get more blooms before the frost in the fall.
- Leave the leaves for the bees. Bees and other pollinators live inside the stems and debris of last years perennials. You should wait until the daytime temperature warms to a consistent 10°C (or 50°F).
- Plant your perennials early. Perennials, shrubs and trees are not affected by frost, so you do not have to wait until the last frost to put them in. Getting them in sooner allows them to take advantage of the rain and cooler temperatures without stressing factors like excessive heat and drought.
- Fertilize and over-seed your lawn in the first week of May. Are you having issues with seeds germinating? Mix seeds in potting mix for best results. If you are overrun with Crab Grass, use corn gluten weekly

CONT'D PAGE 14 >>>

DUSTYN'S TOP TIPS, CONT'D FROM PAGE 13...

- in the month of May. This will stop the annual weed from germinating.
- Add 2-3 inches of mulch to your gardens to freshen them up and save time weeding. Mulch also helps the soil hold in moisture. Be careful not to over mulch or add it over the trunk of woody shrubs and trees. It's important not to create mulch volcanos over your trees as this can create rot on the trunk and cover the roots where gasses are exchanged near the soil's surface.
- Prune your shrubs and evergreens for shape early (before leaves emerge). If your Shrubs are blooming in the spring and on old wood, hold off until later in the season when it's appropriate. Note for Hydrangeas, you can prune smooth and panicle Hydrangeas as they bloom on new wood. Lightly prune notably dead parts of Hydrangea aspera, Hydrangea serrata and Hydrangea quercifolia, Hydrangea macrophylla in spring. This article is helpful if shared online: <https://www.gardenersworld.com/plants/how-to-prune-a-hydrangea-in-spring/>
- Add Mycorrhizal Fungi to all new garden additions. When mycorrhizae are connected to your plant's roots, their access to water and nutrients (particularly nitrogen, phosphorus, zinc, manganese and copper) are increased. This promotes healthy growth for your new additions. We sell this product online at nuscapestore.com with shipping.

- Pinch your perennials before they bloom. Pinching your perennials like Echinacea, Daisies, Salvia will promote better branching, denser foliage and overall, more blooms and therefore colour.
- Feed your annuals on a weekly basis. Providing your annuals with a constant liquid feed of fertilizer on a weekly basis will allow them to flourish. Using a fertilizer like (15-30-15) will boost blooms.

“Prune your shrubs and evergreens for shape early, before leaves emerge.”

- The key to a well-balanced planter is not crowding with too many annuals and using a ‘filler, spiller and thriller’. A filler plant is something that provides a nice effect on its own, with colour and is vigorous in filling in gaps within the planter. Fillers would be, petunias, calibrachoa, verbena and euphorbia. A spiller is something that is placed to spill over the front of the planter, things like bacopa, sweet potato vine, ivy and dichondra. A thriller is an annual that typically grows larger than the rest and stands out. Good examples of this are Canna Lilies, annual Salvia, Coleus, Colocasia, but Spik Rush are more basic examples.

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SUPPORT FOR STRESS



Biophilia: A Fun Way to Reduce Stress

Renowned Harvard University Biologist, Edward O. Wilson, coined the term “biophilia,” a hypothesis that suggests that the deep affiliations that humans have with nature are rooted in our biology and that we instinctively have a bond with other living systems.

In his book, *The Creation: An Appeal to Save Life on Earth* (2007), Wilson attributes our tendency to gravitate to natural environments, such as the lovely one we live in here up north, as “the connections that human beings subconsciously seek with the rest of life.”

Spring offers many opportunities for us to reconnect with this nurturing environment we live in, whether indoors or outdoors.

For those that want to bring the outdoors in, think about creating a special area near a window or other part of a room that you can enjoy and that will give you a moment to pause, reflect and feel good.

Do you like to collect pretty stones or seashells that you can put in or around favourite plants or flowers, or like the sound of water? Get a portable little water fountain

or noise maker with that sound option and surround it by greenery and treasures of your choice. This way you’re stimulating your visual and auditory, senses, and you can build on this tranquil area as you desire

over time.

For those that want to create a special spot outdoors, the same ideas apply. Maybe you can create a special area where you can walk or sit bare feet to stimulate the touch senses, or plant scented flowers or herb garden to add favourite aromas to the mix. Growing your own vegetables is another special connection to nature because you get to reap the taste and health benefits of what you’ve nurtured.

Another option is to spend more time out in nature, going for walks, hikes in the woods, or being near water, including a canoe or boat ride.

The opportunities are endless, and the rewards are great for connecting with nature, and increasing your sense of tranquility. The point is to open up, have fun with it, and allow it to nurture you. **MSM**

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How Clearing Clutter Makes You Feel Better

Many of us try to be organized. It's no fun living in chaos – messes here, lost items there. Especially frustrating are situations like not being able to find things when heading out the door. It's stuff many of us go through. But when it gets to the point where it's in the way of having a functional home or being productive, chances are it's also impacting our emotional health and desires.

Our environments are an important extension of our well-being. External clutter impacts our psychological health and is linked to functional effectiveness.

Professional organizer Rowena List finds that people are often hard on themselves for not having things together or for living more functionally, and indicates that guilt and shame tend to go hand-in-hand with clutter, and research concurs.

Studies on clutter indicate that when the physical environment interferes with achieving objectives it fuels stress, which can limit motivation, performance and social inter-

-action, depending on the degree it's limiting our needs.

The degree of comfort we experience in our surroundings depends on meeting needs such as hygiene,

safety, mobility, and a sense of control over the space, according to research on environmental comfort.

The more these needs are met, the greater the possibilities. Integrative doctor Isaac Eliaz, MD, Lac, MS, indicates "In addition to being more productive and having more time to do what they love, most people experience a sense of freedom, clarity, inspiration and spaciousness after getting organized."

Start small, with areas causing you stress, or with things you don't need, and ask for help if needed.

Clearing clutter is for greater physical and emotional functionality. When our space is cleared we can move on, or as Eliaz says, "Like a huge weight lifted, we can experience freedom from unnecessary distractions and disorder when our physical, mental and emotional energies are best optimized in a clean, organized, health-promoting environment." **MSM**

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My Faith Walk

By Linda Smith

“It brings me great peace realizing my creator knows me and cares for me.”

It began for me as a child in Sunday School hearing about Jesus. I just loved him but felt sad I didn't live two thousand years ago so I could know him. I didn't understand that I could know him – now. Then came

the sixties. I was just far too cool for God or church or rules. However, at twenty-eight, a friend challenged me about what I did actually believe. Through a long journey of the soul, I ended up reading the

New Testament again. Jesus' words were so pure, holy and loving. My heart remembered and I loved him again! I asked him to be my God and to forgive me for all the stupid stuff I did too. >>>

FAITHFULLY SPEAKING CONT'D

On my worst day, a policeman came with the news my daughter had been killed in a car accident. I heard myself say, “The Lord has given and the Lord has taken away. Blessed be the name of the LORD.” A divine strength came into me. I was “struck down but not destroyed” which is another Biblical promise. Yes, my heart was broken. Yes, I was in grief. But still, I found myself at the hospital bedside of the young man in the other car telling him this was not his fault. Now I was the mother. Who else did he need to hear this from to believe it? I told him my daughter was in heaven and I had peace, because of Jesus.

I have never seen an angel but the Bible tells me they are “ministering spirits sent out to render service...” I felt them walking beside me up the hallway to his room that day. They strengthened me. In the spirit, I saw white robes and movement as a number of them walked on either side. I can still see it. It’s the only time in my life I’ve experienced this, and I sure needed it! I felt calm and full of purpose reaching that young man with the love of Jesus.

Another watershed moment happened when I was living with a family member. After a disturbing argument one day, I walked in the snow to a bench near the lake and talked to Jesus pouring out my broken heart to him. As I bent over with my face resting on my fists, I

watched my tears fall into the snow, making circles where they fell. Help me Jesus.

A year later, I sat at that very bench with a wonderful godly man after he asked me to go for a walk. We shared our life stories on that same bench, and fell in love there. We married in 2013. We are both musicians, songwriters and authors now exploring our creativity together. I would never have dreamed such a future, but JESUS saw my tears in the snow that day. I am always comforted and helped when I lay it all down before him. He brings me solutions – some too wonderful to even imagine.

Without Jesus, I shudder to think how my life would have turned out. Being seventy-two makes me thoughtful about how many more years I will be on the earth. God has promised me that when I am finished living here, I have a home in heaven with Him - and my daughter too! I want to make my time on earth count – loving others – fulfilling my God-arranged destiny. It brings me great peace realizing my creator knows me and cares for me. A song says, “He’s as close as the mention of His name.” For me – it’s Jesus.

Linda Smith. *I wrote a book of cartoons with commentary called: The Senior Boomer – Whatever happened to the Baby Boomers? The cartoons tell the story of where we landed up!*

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By
Geraldine O'Meara

Her Heart Beats with the Rhythm of Nature

I have been getting to know, with delight, my late sister's great granddaughter. She is nine year old Mieke, who moved four years ago with her mother, father and younger brother Renny, to a piece of land in Perth, Ontario that they call their "Homestead" and which currently has become a "Flower Farm". Along with them live thirty chickens, one guinea hen, one bunny, a barn cat, their beloved fourteen year old dog and a new puppy.

Mieke and her brother have been attending Blueberry Creek Forest School and Nature Centre which gives the children time to sit, watch, study, climb and defend various plants and trees on the school property, as well as integrate this with the school curriculum. Both the school and the land they live on has drawn out of Mieke a love, respect and deep appreciation for all things of nature. It was her mother who said, "Her heart beats with the rhythm of nature," and she remembers this in Mieke since a very young age.

When Mieke was five years old, her teacher did a study with the children on Narwhals, also known as medium-sized whales that live mostly in the deep Arctic waters of Canada, Greenland, Norway and Russia. In response to this endangered species, Mieke said a quote, "We are not the most important," and expressed that she wanted to look after them. The quote is now a plaque hanging in the entrance of the school hall. The teachers say it's her Forest School legacy.

This past October, Mieke squealed with excitement when she found a blue spotted salamander in the grass. After carefully picking it up and spending sometime delighting in it she and her mother carried it to the edge of their field and placed it under some logs in the hopes that it might hibernate for the winter. I recently saw a picture of Mieke, at school, holding a yellow and brown, fuzzy caterpillar in the palm of her hand, look-

-ing at it with curiosity and seemingly no fear, and then releasing it back into nature.

The first summer at their Homestead, Mieke spent many hours hovering over an incubator patiently waiting each day for their new chicks to hatch; learning as she went along about the process and carefully holding the eggs up to a light to see their development on the inside. When the little yellow chicks finally hatched, she considered herself their momma, and took seriously the gathering of their eggs.

There are some sad aspects to loving nature as Mieke has found out. This school year her teacher did a study of the beauty and importance of trees, which prompted Mieke to go and check out the two willow trees that she and Renny use to play on and under last summer. She discovered that the larger of the two trees had fallen on the ground. She was sad, and noticing that the branches and green leaves were still growing, she whispered to the willow, "Can I take your fallen branches?" She carefully took some of the branches and leaves and wove a crown to place on her head, and then flitted over to visit the fallen tree.

Her father thought the tree was blown over in a bad storm, but not entirely sure if that was the cause. She told her mother that she was sad, but would be even sadder if it had been cut down by a person. Her mother asked her why. She said, "Because if they cut it down maybe they just want more wood and I don't like that. They don't let the tree grow and be happy."

I have been watching with curiosity, Mieke growing into being an advocate for the species which inhabit our earth. My hope is that there are and will be more schools such as the innovative Forest School that Mieke and Renny are attending. Holistic education is crucial for the present and future generations of young people in order that we may have responsible, affective leaders in the field of the environment; study and first-hand experience, along with a supportive home environment, are the ingredients that foster this much needed learning for our young.

When we find ourselves in this kind of setting we have the time to reflect, respect, care for and love all species that we share our beautiful Earth Home with. And when we love something, we are much less likely to want to harm or kill the "other". You're absolutely right, Mieke, "We are not the most important." I'm proud of you the way you want to protect and care for our natural world, and I know your great grandmother would be, too!

Have a family story to share?

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SPORTS CORNER



*Sports Corner
with Peter Cassidy*

This is What Coaching Minor Sports is all About

I have always been addicted to sports in one way or another. On nights when the team I was coaching was not playing I could be found at the rink or the diamond. Quite often I was asked to referee or do some umpiring. I was tough because I have always believed in teaching the rules and good sportsmanship.

If there is one thing I have learned about being a referee or a baseball umpire, it's whatever call you make is the wrong one.

One night at a soccer game both coaches asked me to help out. Being Scottish, I knew and loved the game.

The losing team was down 9-nil. I felt so sorry for these boys. So, I decided to look the other way a couple of times. That might have proved the wrong thing to do.

During half time a mother approached me. She had a big smile on her face, and said to me, "Pete, I know what you are trying to do," and told me she understood.

One boy could not keep his hands off the ball. Due to my personal policy, I was forced to blow the whistle every time. So, I went over to his coach and gave him a suggestion. I said to him to put this little boy in goal, which he did. The end result was that even though his team lost, the boy did not let in a single goal.

As a matter of fact, my suggestion backfired on me. When my team played him, we had a tough time scoring on him. So, a potentially unhappy night turned out to be somewhat positive. This is what coaching minor sports is all about.

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...?



Creating Annual or Perennial Borders in Your Garden

By Sandra Harthill

One of the most important design plans in creating borders is the use of colour. We all have different perceptions of colour and it's shades of density.

Warm colours include red, orange, and yellow. These warm colours are called advancing colours as they appear closer to us than others.

Cool colours include violet, blue and green. They are called receding colours as they appear further away to us.

Contrast is made by using two complimentary colours from the colour wheel, such as red and green or violet and yellow. Good composition uses complementary primary colours with care. The amount used of each depends on the space available and how bright they are. Red, which is very bright, should occupy a smaller space than green. Balance and repetition are also important in bedding design. Using several densities of grey can make the design very pleasing to the eye.

Happy Gardening!!

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.

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WHAT BUSINESSES CAN DO FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

By Bessie Grimes

While we seniors can do a lot to help improve our environment, sometimes we need to rely on others for assistance, especially when we are circulating in business settings.

Every day we deal with recyclable materials that cannot easily or correctly be disposed of. Businesses could help. Here are some ways.

Provide an adequate number of refuse bins and label them correctly. Then put the right collection bags in the bins. These include:

- A) compost bags for food waste
- B) black bags for garbage
- C) clear or blue bags for recyclable items. These need to be labelled for plastic, cans, glass, paper and card-

CONT'D FROM PAGE 22...

Insist on using recycled materials for manufacturing new items. This makes recycling worth our bother.

Recycle companies can invent ways to use products that cannot now be recycled. A market can be created for black plastic, for instance. This would keep more stuff out of landfills.

Businesses can do more to improve our situation.

- Turn lighting down or off when rooms are not in use or businesses are closed. This saves on energy and reduces light pollution.
- Turn off machinery that is not in use. This reduces noise pollution. Some seniors have difficulty hearing and a silent atmosphere aids communication. Tone down background music for the same reason.
- Insist that truckers turn off engines while goods are being unloaded. This will improve air quality.
- Use solar or wind energy as power sources whenever possible.
- Create parking spaces for bicycles. This encourages seniors and others to bike to businesses whenever possible. These steps seem small, but you'll be amazed at the difference they make.
- Companies with more land than they currently need can turn some of it into community gardens. Seniors can be encouraged to maintain it in exchange for the vegetables they grow. The plants in these gardens will provide some of the oxygen we need to survive and they will also use up some of the carbon dioxide from cars in nearby parking lots.
- A large compost bin could be installed at the side of the garden furthest away from the parking lot. This bin would process weeds and spent garden plants and turn them into fertilizer for use on future gardens.
- Roof gardening can be encouraged on buildings with flat roofs. Restaurants and grocery stores can produce their own fruits and vegetables in this manner. While a roof might not support a tree, bushes might thrive very well. This would cut down on the pollution caused when trucks transport food long distances.

If you have some ideas to share on this subject, we'd love to hear from you at muskokaseniorsmagazine.ca.

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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Uncle Charlie's Molly and Dolly and the Dignity of Work

By George Brooks

“Uncle Charlie played a role in my life as I was growing up. It was to Uncle Charlie that I was sent by my mother when I needed to be ‘straightened out.’”

CONT'D FROM PAGE 24...

I'm not sure why Uncle Charlie gave a name to each of the sawhorses but it sure brought a big smile to his face as he watched my reaction. "Molly and Dolly," I said. "Why names on a couple of sawhorses?" As was often the case there was no verbal response, just Uncle Charlie's great smile. When there was work to be done, joy and satisfaction were his helpers.

Charlie left school and the family farm in Saskatchewan at age 15. Over the years he did different kinds of work and if a job required a set of skills, he learned them. Charlie could have been almost anything that he wanted to be but the lack of schooling and the desire to be on the move held him back. He liked construction work best of all his jobs. "At the end of the day" he told me once, "you can see what you have accomplished." He took great pride in his work and never cut corners.

Uncle Charlie played a role in my life as I was growing up. It was to Uncle Charlie that I was sent by my mother when I needed to be "straightened out." He was the one who let me drive his truck when I was only 13 years old. And when I was older and with a license he let me borrow the truck to go on dates. It was into Uncle Charlie's care that I was put for a summer when at 16 I decided to quit school. Uncle Charlie was insulating a large cold storage building that summer for a winery. The job given to me by Uncle Charlie (to teach me a lesson I realize now) was to tar the large sheets of insulating Styrofoam before Charlie attached them to one of the walls of the cold storage building. By the end of the summer my jeans and shirt were so covered in dried tar that they could stand up by themselves! I hated the job and told Charlie. He looked at me and said, "Georgie, every job has value, and you can be proud of what you do if you try your hardest." A lot of words from Charlie but ones I have never forgotten. By the end of summer, I knew what hard labour was and I knew I wanted something better for my future. Charlie only smiled when I was enthusiastically back at school that September. Eight years later I graduated from university as a teacher, and Charlie was there in the audience with that great smile. I could see the pride in his face, and I loved this man because he had made such a big difference in the direction of my life.

My wife and I bought some cottage property one summer and Charlie was soon on the phone to find out what I was going to build. "Well Charlie I think I need a large garage first, almost a barn actually." "Good," he said, "I like building barns." And I could hear the glee in his voice and could picture the smile. It gave me

such a feeling of well-being. "It will have to be next spring Charlie because of the financing," I said.

"Ok," he said, "I will make up the plans."

Like I said, Charlie didn't have much formal education but he was the epitome of the self-made man who learns from experience and applies it well.

Charlie laid out the plans for me early one spring afternoon. It was a beautiful looking garage not as big as a barn but big enough. He had all the elevations drawn and the measurements for every section. Listed on the side of the drawings were all the materials we would need right down to the number of ½ penny nails. When we finished the building, there was hardly a nail or a board left over. Charlie had figured it out perfectly.

Early one spring morning, Charlie arrived with his tools and his smile. "Let's get started," he said, before I hardly had a chance to welcome him.

"Okay, Charlie. I'll get my hammer and the plans."

"Don't need the plans, Georgie." I was still Georgie after 35 years of being an adult.

"Sure we do, Charlie."

The big smile formed again on his face as he slowly raised his hand and with one of his thick sinewy fingers pointed at his temple. "It's all here," and it was. He never once looked at the plans during the building of the garage. "First," he says, we need a couple of sawhorses." With that he grabbed his saw and within minutes of some sawing and nailing there stood Molly and Dolly ready to work. When we finished the roof, he did a little jig up there and sang out, "Look at me, turning 80 next week and I can still build a barn!"

I had tears in my eyes.

Oh yes, I found out during our many conversations that summer that Charlie had been in charge of a team of horses many years before at a logging site out west. The horses were called Molly and Dolly.

Uncle Charlie is gone now. My son helps me with projects around our cottage, and every time we start one and the sawhorses come out I think of Charlie. I look again at Molly and Dolly, and I say with a bit of a catch in my voice, "OK Uncle Charlie, what are we going to build today?" I know that his smile and guidance and values are there to pass on to my son. Thanks, Charlie, for the lessons. You were never enslaved to work itself but committed to the dignity of labour and to a job well done.

George Brooks, is a retired elementary school teacher. He and his wife Susan enjoy travel, hiking, and sailing, which round out their lives, and they are very involved in their community.



Scams: Seniors Beware!

By Linda Smith

The con game is as old as the Garden of Eden when the serpent tricked Eve into eating forbidden fruit. She was promised it would make her as smart as God! Then came the consequences; an eviction notice.

We are all dealing with telemarketers and scammers on a daily basis. If you want to answer your phone, you are forced to sort through calls that are just annoying – along with dangerous telemarketers. They strike, then slip into the night – untraceable, leaving destruction and heartache behind for their victims. There really is a ‘big bad wolf’ out there. These shysters are cunning criminals who will go to any lengths to steal your money, and can produce an academy award performance to convince you they are legit. This is their nine to five ‘job’ and they are good at it.

- **Never** give your banking or credit card information to unknown callers over the phone, especially if they contacted you first! These con artists pretend to be businesses, the local police, or government agencies attempting to trick or frighten you into co-operating with them to hand over money. They’ve got a bag of tricks to draw you into their web.
- **Never** invite strangers inside your home who say they represent businesses or utilities, or hand over money to them for any reason. When in doubt – call businesses or agencies you have dealt with in the past on their publicly listed phone numbers to verify any suspicious persons at your door or on the phone.
- **Never** hand over cash or gift cards to such persons at an arranged destination or at your home.
- **Never** wire money (example: Money Gram/Western Union), to such persons in response to these demands. Legitimate businesses do not operate this way and once the money is sent, it becomes untraceable and non-refundable.

When in doubt, just hang up on these callers. If you’re unsure, contract trusted businesses and agencies using their public contact numbers to investigate. Ask a trusted friend or family member what they think. A legitimate caller will not object to you taking such steps.

If you receive a call that your beloved grandchild (they often have even their names!) has been arrested and will be released – only if you give the caller money – this is a criminal scam. Our justice system does not work this way. Hang up

and call your grandchild, their parent or the local police department. Chances are, the grandchild is sitting on the couch at home, and the caller is impersonating your loved one, trying to fool you. Don’t be fooled.

When in doubt, contact your local police department – not 911 which is for life-threatening emergencies – but do call the police public access number to investigate such claims.

Take charge! Sometimes we are too polite. Don’t let telemarketers ramble on. Hang up when they launch into their unwanted sales pitches. Arranging the Call Display feature on your phone helps you screen callers. If a long number appears in the top line where a name usually appears on the screen, you are probably dealing with a telemarketer. Scammers often manipulate the system to use your area code and even the exchange, but the call may originate overseas. When in doubt, don’t pick up. Let the call advance to your answering machine to identify the caller on your own time.

If you do answer and there is a pause after you say hello, this means you are talking to a telemarketer. These random solicitations go through an automatic dialing system list which creates a pause after dialing. They are after your money in one way or another for services you probably do not want or need.

Deal only with familiar and reputable companies you have used and trusted in the past.

This manipulative money grab is so widespread that it has probably touched someone in your life as well.

My own father was alarmed when a caller pretending to be a lawyer gave him bad news. He convinced dad that his great-grandson was in jail after being arrested for drunk

CONT'D FROM PAGE 27

driving. If dad would only hand over \$4000 for the damages to the other driver's car, they would release the boy from jail and drop the charges. Dad was ready to write the cheque, but took one last important step of calling the boy's father. He found out the young man was sitting in the truck beside his father.

A cousin was thrown into a panic when she received a call her beloved grandson was in jail. If she would only hand over \$15,000, he would be released and they'd forget all about it. These grandparents reached the point of collecting the 'ransom' from three bank accounts when they took a breath and looked more closely. They too discovered that the boy was at home, and called police.

The officers set up a sting operation to scam the scammer. When the con artist came to their house to collect the money, police were waiting and hauled him away to jail. There was justice in this case, but the family was left traumatized by the whole event.

A neighbour found an amazing deal on the internet and mailed off a cheque to a rental company for a 'too good to be true' apartment in a nearby city. The scammers directed him to drive to Toronto to get the access key in a mail box provided. When he told us about this great deal, we pleaded with him not to do it. It sounded fishy. He was persuaded by glowing reference provided by this unseen on-line agent. I told him I could type a reference letter up too and say any fantastic lie I wanted to. This was not proof. He was sure we were wrong.

What a sad day it was when he walked across the street to tell us he had been cheated out of \$2000 for

first and last rent on a fictional apartment. The police traced the scam all the way back to England and that's where the trail went cold. Nothing more could be done to recover his money or even identify the thieves. These criminals are clever about hiding their tracks, pack up the money, and move onto the next victim.

A friend received a text from someone claiming to be his son at a store. They even had the son's name. He texted: "Dad, I'm in a fix. I've left my VISA card at home. Could you forward one thousand dollars for a purchase through a bank link?" The father sent the money, but fortunately his bank wouldn't process the transaction because it looked suspicious, which saved the day.

A local woman conned into an on-line romance scheme, travelled abroad to meet the man. At an

arranged destination in the route, she received a suitcase from the fake boyfriend through his agent who said it included gifts. When she unwittingly carried it through an airport in Hong Kong, she was arrested for trafficking when authorities discovered cocaine in the bag. If convicted, she is facing life in prison. She currently languishes in jail perhaps for years, before her case even comes to trial.

They're out there stocking us every day over the phone. Let's not be the next victim. Keep your guard up. Be suspicious! Don't make any financial decisions quickly. Investigate! Seniors Beware!

Linda Smith. *I wrote a book of cartoons with commentary called: The Senior Boomer – Whatever happened to the Baby Boomers? The cartoons tell the story of where we landed up!*

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Linda Smith. I wrote a book of cartoons with commentary called: *The Senior Boomer – Whatever happened to the Baby Boomers? The cartoons tell the story of where we landed up!*



Transformation

By Bessie Grimes

The wind sighs.
 The clouds are dark and lowering
 O'er the hills on the distant horizon.
 The wind cries,
 Moans and whistles through the branches
 Of the trees by the stream.
 The sky grows swiftly dark.
 A hush stills the air for a moment.
 Then, wildly rushing o'er the darkening land,
 The storm descends;
 Crushing with stifling swiftness
 All hope of escape. Bringing in its wake
 A wall of rain;
 Drumming the surface of the earth
 With fierce intensity; crushing the bloom
 Of the flowers fashioned in glorious blossom;
 Stilling the lilt of the song;
 Slashing the night
 Ere it sinks with laboured breathing
 To its rest.

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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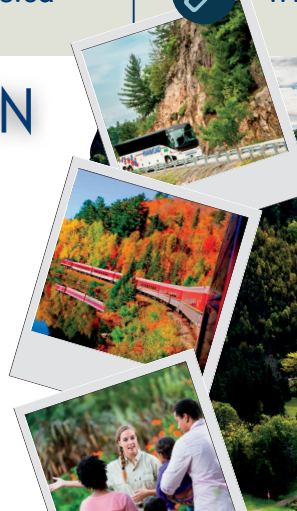
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