

MUSKOKA SENIORS MAGAZINE

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

Spring 2024

**Waste Not,
Want Not**

**A Walk
Through Memory Lane**

**Faith Got Me Through
One of the Least Expected Places**

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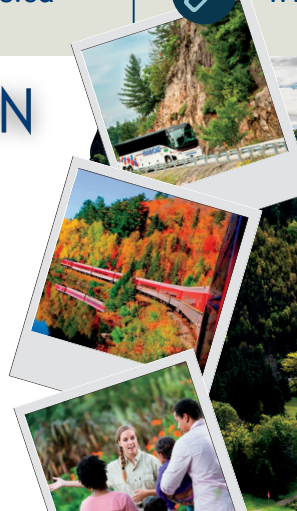
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CONTENTS



Waste Not, Want Not, P 20

SPRING 2024

VOL 9, ISSUE 3

NOT JUST A READ... IT'S A CONNECTION



Consumption for You and the Environment, P 8

DEPARTMENTS

- 8 Nutrition
- 10 Family Matters
- 12 Cannabis, with Heather Huff-Bogart
- 14 Support for Stress
- 15 Mind Health
- 16 Oral Health with Andre Petrov
- 17 Faithfully Speaking: Your Story
- 19 Sports Corner
- 19 Gardening; Did You Know...?
- 27 Creative Corner
- 29 Business Directory

HIGHLIGHTS

Planning for Your Future Health Care Needs,
by Dr. Pam McDermott

“Advanced Care Planning...Directives...Substitute Decision Makers...No wonder there is confusion and lack of clarity...”

“Waste Not, Want Not, by Bessie Grimes

“What can we do...?”

“A Walk Through Memory Lane,
by Nancy Goodman

“Although I came out of the shop empty handed, it was a day that has lingered inside of me...”



Faith Got Me Through... P 16

17

20

23

ON THE COVER

FAITH GOT ME THROUGH.....	16
WASTE NOT, WANT NOT.....	20
A WALK THROUGH	
MEMORY LANE.....	23

FROM THE PUBLISHER



Cheryl Patterson,
Publisher

MUSKOKA SENIORS MAGAZINE

Not just a read... It's a connection!

Spring... Need I say more? The sunshine, comfortable temperatures, daffodils, tulips, and apple tree blossoms, birds returning from the south, and the list of why it's such a delightful season can go on and on. It's a time to behold...and to protect.

To maintain these joys of the season that we delight in so much, we need to nurture it back.

What do I mean by nurture it back? We're at a point in time where it's critical to be conscious of what we're doing to our environment on a daily basis. Are we giving too or just taking? Are we buying products with packaging that will end up in landfill sites (sections of mother nature) that take hundreds of years to break down, or worse end up in the belly of a wild animal? Are we supporting products that put chemicals into the air we breathe and the water we drink?

Being mindful of what goes into products we buy or bring into our home is easier than you may think. A simple way to do this is to consider whether items are a need or a want. For instance, do we need that item that was manufactured in a way that is damaging to the environment that we eat from, breathe in, and that has nurtured us since the beginning of time, or can we decide NOT to support that and consider an alternative instead?

In this edition we provide you

with some helpful information and tips in Bessie Grimes' "Waste Not, Want Not" article, and in our MSM Recycling Tips and More feature, and Nutrition section. It's the little things that we do everyday that can go a long way. And the more people that get on board the bigger impact we can make.

And as a digital magazine we're proud to say that we're doing our part, not putting chemicals into the air, land, or water, while still putting maximum care into giving you the quality read that you've come to

know and love for almost nine years now.

We've packed this edition full of helpful information, interesting stories, and a few chuckles along the way. And as always, we hope you enjoy it all as much as we enjoy putting it together for you.

Enjoy your spring!

A handwritten signature in black ink, likely belonging to Cheryl Patterson.

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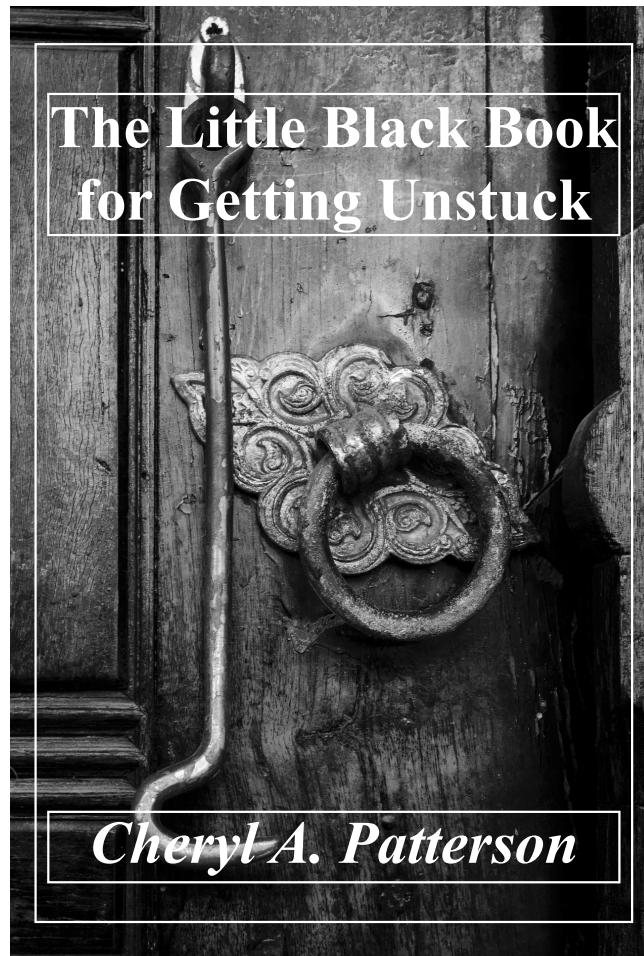
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Feeling Stuck?

Many of us find ourselves in unwanted situations, 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 get unstuck and move forward with the 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!



The Little Black Book for Getting Unstuck

*"I got mine yesterday...
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- C.C., Muskoka,
ON, Canada

Cheryl A. Patterson

"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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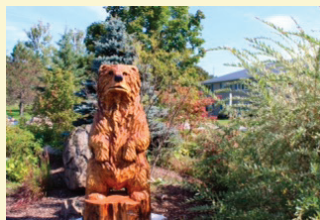


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MUSKOKA SENIORS MAGAZINE

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

**Our Mission:
Inform, inspire, support and include you!**

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MUSKOKA SENIORS MAGAZINE is published quarterly.

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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Digital has it's advantages!

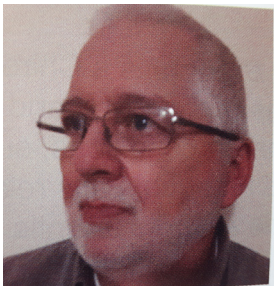
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Kenn R. E. Page is proud to be Canadian! Born in Toronto, raised in Pickering, worked for Bell and IBM. Moved to Muskoka in '75 to design and build homes for 40 years. Hobbies: Fishing, reading, painting, gardening.



Bruce Liddle retired in 95, joined a writer's group to write memoirs for his children, is a writer of poetry from memoirs, and resident of Huntsville for 38 years.



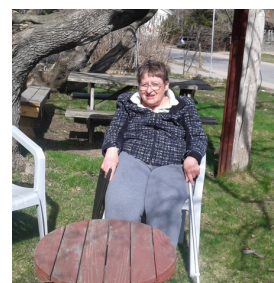
Linda Smith. I wrote a book of cartoons with commentary called: The Senior Boomer – Whatever happened to the Baby Boomers? The cartoons tell the story of where we landed up!



Rose Meyer, 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.



Consumption to Nourish You and the Environment

“Nutrition and our environment are inextricably linked.”

When we think about nutrition, the focus is typically about how our body benefits from the food and drinks we consume. This can include areas such as vitamins and minerals, fatty acids, antioxidants, fat, calories, sugar, salt, and so on. However, it's equally important to pay attention to what else we might be consuming with those foods and drinks, which not only impacts our health but the environment that nourishes us (or not).

Did you know that when you purchase a hot or cold drink the inside of the paper cup is lined with a coat of plastic? It makes sense when you think of pouring hot liquid onto a piece of cardboard... It soaks through without a barrier. At first thought it may seem harmless, however, there's no nutritional value to drinking plastic along with your drinks but according to experts that's what's happening. This goes for plastic water bottles too.

Our health is constantly being compromised for someone else's bottom line when it comes to what we eat, and how it's prepared and contained. And when we suffer, the environment suffers, and vice versa... What we do to our environment comes back to impact our health and very existence.

The following are some tips to support nourishment for yourself and the environment:

- **Prepare your own food.** This way you'll know what you're

eating, and will avoid the excess sugar, salt, and chemicals put in prepared foods, and the packaging they come in.

- **Avoid drinking bottled water.** Get a reusable BPA free water bottle that you can refill. This way you're not drinking the chemicals and plastic absorbed in the water you buy, and saving the environment from the damage caused by the manufacturing process of millions of disposable plastic bottles that pollute our air and fill our land with the plastic and chemicals that leach out from them into the earth we eat from.
- **Use refillable mugs at coffee shops,** rather than drinking from plastic lined disposable cups.
- **Grow your own herbs, veggies, and/or fruits.** You get optimum nutrition from freshly grown produce and eliminates the use of plastic containers from store bought (i.e., strawberries and blueberries, and prepared salads).
- **Buy organic produce.** Even if you get a few items this way, you're boosting your health and the earth with healthier choices. And the more consumers avoid buying foods with harmful chemicals, the less of them producers will grow.
- **Avoid the use of pesticides and chemical fertilizers** in your vegetable gardens. These are

toxic to your health and to your environment, including residue in the air you breathe and killing the microorganisms in the soil that nourish you and every living thing around you.

- **Preserve or ferment veggies and fruits** that you may not consume in time, before they go bad, instead of throwing them out. This saves on more consumption from the stores.
- **Learn to forage** for wild herbs, mushrooms, and food from the earth. Being out in nature is nourishing in itself, reducing stress, strengthening your immune system, and of course eating food that is packed with nutrients that are lost in foods shipped from thousands of miles and doused in pesticides and other chemicals.
- **Get involved.** Advocate for healthier food or produce packaging with a petition to parliament.

Nutrition and our environment are inextricably linked. What we consume not only impacts our nourishment, but also affects the very surroundings that we breathe and eat from, thus impacting our overall health for better or worse.

What are some simple things you can start now to nourish your health that includes the air you breathe, the land you eat your food from, and mother earth who nourishes us all? **MSM**



"Mother" at 4 years old in the story.

Planet Dementia

A friend's story as told to Linda Smith

I sank down at the end of my mother's bed as the painful reality washed over me. She would never again return to this beautiful room with its lovely bedspread, Tiffany lamp, and books to transport her to other worlds of relief. It had been her oasis to briefly retreat from father's turbulent planet of dementia and hoarding.

This space had been my room growing up. As the years rolled on, my father's illness picked up speed. Mom had found a corner of escape from the chaos by moving into my boyhood bedroom.

Her recent sudden death had silenced the sweet voice that was like a song in my memory. The gentle fragrance of her talc powder remained in this room. I slowly looked around the organized, clean and carefully put together sanctuary, an anomaly in this house. My mother was an orderly person. I can only imagine how my father's habits must have grated on her spirit. I stared at the portal; her bedroom door. It was the entrance from her world into my father's planet of chaos and madness; his incomprehensible hoarding.

I knew it fell to me to sort through years of paranoid stockpiling. My father's academic mind had crumbled, leaving me no choice but to find a nursing home for the twenty-four-hour protection he desperately needed. I had to work and could not be with him to monitor his erratic behavior. Dad's care must be sourced out to others who would understand his illness and keep him safe. Now the mountain of debris he left behind was

my responsibility to unsnarl. Maybe I would even occasionally laugh over the ludicrous stashes I was sure to discover.

It was time to roll up my sleeves and get to work. I stepped through the portal; mom's bedroom door, the entrance into my father's bizarre, meaningless and even dangerous collections. I can't say the discoveries were uninteresting because they did fill me with wonder. It began with a bin of match jackets from hundreds of companies collected over decades. I fantasized that I could get a contest going online: Guess how many match packages are in this bin! Who was I kidding? Dad's agonizing landfill was my lonely task - mine alone. Nobody else cared about this. The tinder box of matches was positioned beneath his failing handy man attempts at wiring. I called in an electrician who was slightly horrified.

Some would tell me to just get a dumpster and be done with it, but I felt an obligation to sift through the hoard more carefully. After all, this was the remains of my parents' marriage. Didn't that deserve some respect? There were treasures to be found in this honeycomb of material. I found the photo of a grandfather in Europe who died before I was born. My own face stared up at me as I held it in wonder. Another photo was of my smiling four-year-old mother on the doorstep of war. One of the greatest treasures I unearthed was my mother's diaries. I was determined to discover what lay beneath bags, boxes, newspapers, years of teaching supplies and several cartons of expired Tylenol and Beeno; essentials he had salted away for the next war.

My father was haunted by his childhood in war-torn Germany. Something he kept at bay, was now released from its cage by dementia. I found stashes of serious knives he thought he would need to fend off the enemy. His true enemy was the disease that dredged up childhood fears and suffering from another time and place; hunger, soldiers, looting and violence inflicted upon his parents. The lethal time travellers in his mind had breached the barrier and marched into his present to terrorize him once more. I'm sure he thought he was building some kind of protection by stockpiling his home against invasion. As his mind failed, the fear grew. Putting this together helped me understand him.

I am the keeper, the one fate assigned to be 'the sorter' in this madness. It fell to me to tie up loose ends. Accepting my mission, I began to restore this little house

FAMILY MATTERS CONT'D...

where I was raised. I relinquished my apartment and moved in. Mom's room became a bunk house on a construction site. As the cleared-out rooms took shape and regained their dignity, I began to feel at home once more. Perhaps I needed this trip into the past so I could come to terms with the present.

The nursing home just called to say dad had thrown his television into the hallway while ordering everyone out of his room forever! His story of struggle continues while I dedicate myself to mining his planet. Rome wasn't built in a day and it has taken decades to layer this house with his belongings. It may also take years of diligent effort to disassemble this planet, but this has all been therapy somehow. My peace has returned.

Have a family story to share?

- *A challenge*
- *A funny tale*
- *A heartwarming family experience*
- *Or a story that others can relate to or enjoy in some way...*

We want to hear about it!

Email it to:

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Having a Hard Time With the Loss of a Loved One?

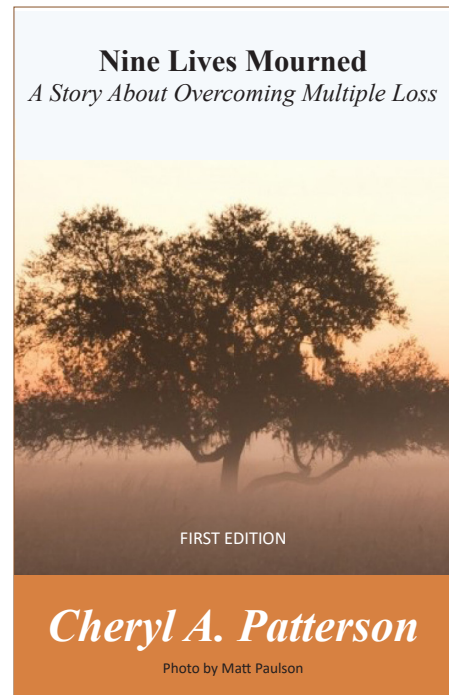
We have this notion that we should stay suffering to somehow prove our loyalty to the loved one that passed, but is that what they would have wanted?

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

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CANNABIS: FOR YOUR INFORMATION



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.

The Endocannabinoid System

Having worked in the cannabis industry for a long time, I have heard time and time again that people are not aware that they have an Endocannabinoid system.

What is the Endocannabinoid System (ECS)? Well, it is a complex cell-signaling system within us that helps regulate our bodies functions, like sleep and mood, among other things.

The ECS was discovered in the 1990's by a researcher working on THC. There is still a lot of research being done as experts are still trying to get a full understanding of how our bodies work with our ECS but so far they have concluded that it supports a wide range of regulating factors within our bodies, including sleep, mood, appetite, memory, and reproduction and fertility.

Our ECS works within us naturally, even without cannabis.

How does the ECS work?

There are a few factors that have major roles to play within our ECS, Endocannabinoids, and internal receptors. Endocannabinoids are called Endogenous Cannabinoids; They are cannabinoids that our bodies naturally produce. Experts have identified two key endocannabinoids so far, which are Anandamide (AEA), and 2-arachidonoylglycerol (2-AG).

These endogenous cannabinoids work naturally within us and produce the cannabinoids when needed by our bodies. The National

Library of Medicine has found that the ECS contributors regulate our Endocannabinoid Receptors. These receptors are found throughout your body. Endocannabinoids bind to them to signal that the ECS needs to act.

There are two main endocannabinoid receptors. CB1 receptors, which are mostly found in the central nervous system, and CB2 receptors, which are mostly found in your peripheral nervous system, especially immune cells.

Endocannabinoids can bind to either receptor. The effects that result depend on where the receptor is located and which endocannabinoid it binds to.

What are its Functions?

The ECS is complicated, and experts haven't yet determined exactly how it works or all its potential functions. Experts are still working to determine how it all truly works and what potential functions it has yet to be found.

The National Library of Medicine has linked the ECS to appetite and digestion, metabolism, chronic pain, inflammation and other immune system response, mood, learning and memory, motor control, sleep, cardiovascular system function, muscle formation, bone remodeling and growth, liver function, reproductive system function, stress, skin and nerve function, All these functions contribute to homeostasis, which refers to bal-

-ancing our internal regulatory functions. Experts believe ECS is the primary reason why our bodies maintain homeostasis.

So, how does our ECS work with cannabis?

Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) is one of the main cannabinoids found in cannabis. It's the compound that gets you "high."

Cannabis has phytocannabinoids (plant cannabinoids) which bind to our endogenous cannabinoids. THC has been found to bind with our CB1 and CB2 receptors, which is why you can get high from THC.

The other major cannabinoid found in cannabis is cannabidiol (CBD). Unlike THC, CBD doesn't make you "high" and typically doesn't cause any negative effects.

Researchers are 100% positive on how CBD works exactly within our bodies because it does not bind precisely to our CB1 or CB2 receptors. However, they do know that it reacts much differently than THC. Many believe this is because CBD works because it prevents our endocannabinoids from being broken down. This allows CBD to have a different effect on us when we consume that cannabinoid. There is also the belief that CBD binds to other receptors that have not been discovered yet.

The main point is that the ECS plays a large role in keeping our internal processes stable and creating balance within us.



Andre Petro began practicing denturism in Ontario in 2009, serving in Newmarket, Sudbury, and Bracebridge. A distinguished graduate of George Brown College Dental Technology program, he formerly practiced dentistry in Ukraine.

The Impact of Dentures on Oral Health and Overall Wellbeing

Dentures have long been hailed as a practical solution for individuals experiencing tooth loss, offering restored functionality, aesthetics, and confidence. However, beyond their cosmetic benefits, dentures play a crucial role in maintaining oral health and contributing to overall wellbeing.

Let us explore the profound impact dentures have on oral health and how they influence one's quality of life.

One of the most immediate benefits of dentures is their ability to restore proper chewing and speaking abilities. Tooth loss can significantly impair these basic functions, leading to difficulty eating certain foods and articulating speech clearly. Dentures fill the gaps left by missing teeth, allowing wearers to chew a diverse range of foods and communicate effectively without impediment. This restoration of basic functions not only enhances quality of life but also promotes proper nutrition and social interaction.

Moreover, dentures help preserve the structural integrity of the jawbone and surrounding oral tissues. When teeth are lost, the underlying bone may begin to resorb or shrink over time due to lack of stimulation. This bone loss can lead to a sunken facial appearance, instability of any remaining teeth, and even

further tooth loss. Dentures provide essential support to the jawbone, preventing deterioration and maintaining facial aesthetics.

Beyond preserving bone structure, dentures also play a role in maintaining the alignment of remaining teeth. When there are gaps in the dental arch, adjacent teeth may shift or tilt into the empty spaces, leading to bite misalignment and potential occlusal problems. Dentures fill these gaps and provide stability to surrounding teeth, helping to prevent undesirable movement, and preserving the natural alignment of the bite.

Furthermore, dentures contribute to improved oral hygiene and the prevention of dental diseases. Properly fitting dentures cover the gum tissue and underlying bone, reducing the risk of irritation, inflammation, and infection. Additionally, dentures can be easily removed for thorough cleaning, allowing wearers to maintain optimal oral hygiene practices and prevent the buildup of plaque and bacteria that can lead to gum disease and tooth decay.

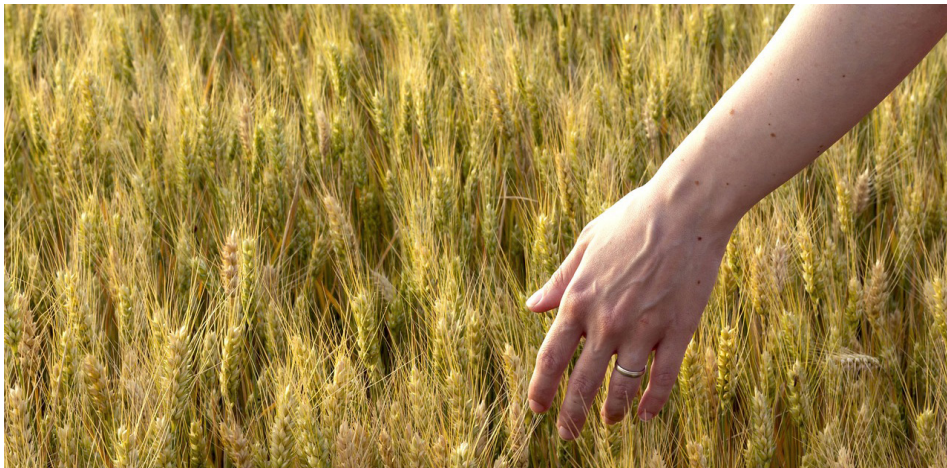
From a psychological standpoint, the impact of dentures on overall wellbeing cannot be overstated. Tooth loss can have profound effects on self-esteem, confidence, and social interactions. Many individuals who experience tooth loss may feel self-conscious about their

appearance and avoid smiling or speaking in public. Dentures provide a means to restore a natural looking smile, boosting confidence and self-image. This improved self-esteem can have far-reaching effects, positively influencing mental health, relationships, and overall quality of life.

Furthermore, the ability to eat, speak, and smile comfortably with dentures can significantly enhance social interactions and participation in daily activities. Individuals with dentures are better able to enjoy meals with family and friends, engage in conversations without hesitation, and participate in social events with confidence. This increased social engagement can lead to a greater sense of belonging and fulfillment, contributing to overall happiness and wellbeing.

In conclusion, dentures have a profound impact on oral health and overall wellbeing, providing essential functions, preserving oral structures, and enhancing quality of life. Beyond restoring aesthetics and functionality, dentures contribute to improved oral hygiene, prevent dental diseases, and bolster psychological wellbeing. For individuals experiencing tooth loss, dentures offer a path to renewed confidence, comfort, and vitality, allowing them to smile brightly and live life to the fullest.

SUPPORT FOR STRESS



How Acceptance Can Alleviate Stress

There are many experiences in life that cause us stress. It's a part of life. And we don't have to like it, but we can move on from it, as challenging as it may be at times.

It can be easy to stay stuck in the residual emotions from stressful events especially if you're used to this state or don't know how to cope. However, the chronic physiological impacts to that include a constant flow of adrenaline, cortisone, sugar, and fats pumped into your bloodstream, eventually result in burnout, illness, and disease because of the ongoing compromise to your immune system.

As the saying goes, "you can't change the past," however, you can get through it, and acceptance can play a big role in moving forward.

First, it's important to understand that acceptance doesn't mean you have to like a situation or condone it. It means you're experiencing life as it is, rather than festering about what it should have been like, or fixating on ways to try and control everything, or fighting the reality of it, which ultimately makes you feel worse and keeps you stuck.

Sometimes things are simply out of our hands, and the sooner you

realize it, the easier it will be to let go and accept the reality of your situation, as tough as it may be.

When we accept a painful situation, it can help eliminate the suffering because we're no longer trapped in that place where we're desperately trying to hold onto how

we think things should be. It frees us up to move on from the emotional chaos.

The path to acceptance is understanding that we can't control everything all the time. It's not realistic to believe we can. You can start by realizing that your situation can't be changed, or it's not within your power or control to do so, and then decide to accept it as it is.

An easy way to look at it is to understand that non-acceptance is suffering, as it represents holding on to a situation and resulting pain; whereas acceptance is acknowledging it as it is, including the emotions you feel, and then letting it go.

Accepting and letting go of things we can't change frees us up to new experiences and healthy emotions, including a greater sense of peace. **MSM**

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How Being Present Keeps the Peace

“Stuck in my own head,” “spinning,” “ruminating,” are some of the terms many people use when they feel like the mind is taking on a world of its own, which can often leave us feeling overwhelmed or experiencing emotions we don’t want to feel.

On one hand, you have thoughts about past experiences, which if positive, cause you to feel happiness and gratitude. However, if they are negative, it can leave you feeling sad or depressed.

On the other hand, if you have anticipation about the future, which if it’s positive and something you’re looking forward to can result in feeling excited, eager, and hopeful. However, if the future event or anticipation of it is negative or something you feel unsure or weary about, it can leave you feeling wor-

-ried, anxious, and afraid.

How do you find peace if you’re feeling depressed about past events and anxious about the future?

Experts have a system called 10/80/10. This is helpful when you’re in those dark places in your mind, you focus on this ratio of not allowing more than ten percent of your negative thoughts to be about the past or future and keeping eighty percent of them focused on the present.

The point here is that you give majority of your attention to what’s happening in the present. It’s a way to “snap out of it” so to speak.

For instance, if you’re in a low or sad mood because you’re ruminating about negative memories from the past, it’s okay to feel the emotions, however, not to stay there and let it consume your whole day or

life. Remember to move on to the life events going on right in front of you.

The same is if you’re feeling anxious about the future... Bring it back to what’s happening right in front of you.

When we focus on what’s in front of us – not dwelling on the past or present – we’re able to embrace life more fully, rather than float through it preoccupied and on autopilot unable to experience it.

This 10/80/10 tool can help prevent you from remaining trapped in negative emotions that can keep you unhappy and stuck in your life.

So, when your mind wanders to those places causing you to feel upset and overwhelmed, remember not to stay there. Get back to the eighty so you can make the most of the life you’re living right now. **MSM**



Faith Got Me Through One of the Least Expected Places

*By Marsha O'Toole
(names changed for privacy)*

I've had some interesting encounters with faith in my lifetime. Recently I had a health scare with my 11-year-old dog, Sam.

Sam has always been a healthy guy, who is strong, energetic, vibrant, and intelligent the way German Shepherds tend to be. But as the years went on, skin problems seemed to get the better of him, with constant scratching, hot spots, and all kinds of tell-tale signs that something was going on.

A few years back he had cracks between his toes underneath his paw pads. I tried every home remedy I could find first, but nothing seemed to work. Finally, I braved walking into what could be a money free for all at a clinic (vets seem to think we're made out of money these days) to see what was going

on. Turns out it was a "severe skin allergy" and a yeast issue, and he was prescribed two medications. It wasn't as bad as I feared.

The symptoms disappeared and my boy was fine again, until a year ago when the problem came back, but only on one paw. Back to the vets, but a different one now, who prescribed three medications this time. And this time the medication seemed to be doing a real number on his bowel... He couldn't stop going, if you know what I mean, for what seemed like hourly and sometimes three or four times on one short walk.

I was worried about what this medication was doing to his gut and decided to try making his food for the allergies instead to see if that would help, especially seeing as the

new high end kibble that was supposed to help with skin issues didn't make a difference.

Making his food was working, until I tried adding canned wet food. Now he was the opposite... completely blocked. He couldn't go at all with the canned food added.

Back to the vet, and this time instead of leaving with a peace of mind, they recommended a \$315 blood test (not including taxes of course), ultrasound, and others I don't remember, if he doesn't improve. That wasn't all. If scaring me with the low down on all of the tests he might need wasn't enough, she added to my worry by saying that it could be cancer, kidney or liver disease... Talk about stress, especially given that he's an older dog!

I didn't get discouraged though, and held steadfast to my path of making his food completely. It was helping before I tried the new canned stuff, and I had faith that it could work again, and that I didn't have to wreak havoc on his bowel with three medications for life. How long would his bowel tolerate all those medications anyway?!

There's something to be said for holding steadfast and having faith. It gave me the courage to stay on track with my boy, and not only did he NOT need any tests, he gained weight, his coat looks fantastic, no bald spots or yeast smell, his paw is good, no triple dose of medication destroying his gut, and his bowel is fully functioning!

I know that if I had given in to doubt, passivity, and just going along without doing my homework or trying, the outcome would be different for Sam...as it would my pocketbook! I have to say that it was faith that got me (and Sam) through.



Planning for Your Future Health Care Needs

By Dr. Pam McDermott, Muskoka Algonquin Health Care

Advanced Care Planning. Advanced Directives. Advanced Requests for Assisted Dying. Substitute Decision Makers. Powers of Attorney. There are so many nuances and so much overlap amongst these topics, no wonder there is confusion and lack of clarity.

This article will attempt to provide a demystifying overview so that the reader can have a place from which to start addressing this important life task. No matter our age or health status, we should all be considering our wishes for our health and other future care, so that we, or in the event we cannot speak for ourselves, someone else can make well-considered decisions.

Let's start with an explanation of Substitute Decision Makers (SDM)

and Powers of Attorney since these underpin the other topics. A SDM is someone who makes decisions on behalf of another when that person is not mentally capable. A Power of Attorney for Personal Care is someone you assign to make decisions regarding your health care, housing and some personal care issues. (Powers of Attorney for Property make decisions about your financial affairs.) Powers of Attorney are written and legal documents. It's a good idea to name your PoA for Personal Care since otherwise the 8 level SDM hierarchy (family members, friends etc.) is invoked and that might not be the person you wish to represent your interests.

So how will your SDM or PoA

know what your wishes actually are? This is where Advanced Care Planning (ACP) comes in. This involves considering your beliefs and values, what sorts of care you might not wish to have (e.g. CPR, intubation etc.), or type of care (Long Term Care facility). Goals of care however, are something discussed with your health care provider around a specific illness and what is anticipated in the future. Advanced directives and "Living Wills" are not legal entities in Ontario (although one could consider the legal Do Not Resuscitate document as an advanced directive).

A good place to start is with the use of the ACP Workbook on the Advanced Care Planning Ontario

CONT'D PAGE 18 >>>

CONT'D FROM PAGE 17

website which has information relevant to Ontario's laws. This takes you through a number of questions to help you think through what your wishes might be and will provide a document as a reference and guideline for your SDM or PoA.

The next step is to sit down and have a conversation with your SDM because they need to know your wishes should you lose mental capacity. Remember that this person can only give or refuse consent for treatments and are there to represent your best interests (and not what they think should happen). As circumstances change and as we age, we need to update our documents and our SDMS.

For me, part of this planning includes providing information about my finances, passwords, the disposition of my assets, where my will and PoAs are located, what should happen to my dogs, funeral wishes, banking and legal contacts. All of this information should be held in one place perhaps in a binder or file for whomever is tasked with managing my affairs.

Advanced Requests (or Advanced Directives as they may be called) for Medical Assistance in Dying (MAiD) are not yet legal in Ontario, although eagerly awaited by many. A Parliamentary committee is looking at the operationalization of this addition to the existing MAiD legislation. We don't yet know what this will look like. Basically, this would entail a legal document in which an individual requests MAiD on behalf of one's future self under certain circumstances including the loss of capacity to consent at that time. The current basic eligibility for MAiD would still apply (grievous and

irremediable condition, advanced state of irreversible decline, intolerable suffering). Quebec has tabled this law already and requires the individual to already have the diagnosis of dementia (for example early Alzheimers). Some advocates propose that there isn't a need for a diagnosis initially. The difficult issues under consideration include questions about who decides when the conditions are met, philosophic ideas about whether we can know what our future selves would want, and impact on practitioners providing MAiD to someone who isn't consenting at the time.

There is much more that could be said and if you'd like more information on these topics there will be a more fulsome presentation and chance for discussion at my Fireside Chat being held at the Active Living centre on April 9 from 7-8 pm.

Fireside Chat Series with your health care providers!

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Bracebridge: Rene M Caisse
Theatre
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The Flesh Was Willing, But...

By Peter Cassidy

After retirement from working at the high school I found I needed something to keep me busy. Up until Christmas 2022 I was not only driving a school bus but was also doing lunch hour supervision at an elementary school across the street from my house.

I found my day to be very full. There was very little time for anything else. I could not make medical appointments or the like. Something had to go. I told my principal that my noon hour days were over. I still continued to drive my bus.

If you have read some of my stories, you will know even at 76 I am still sports crazy.

A friend asked me if I could help him coach baseball. I said to him, "Let me think about it." I made up my mind before I got home and called my friend to tell him I would help.

My friend said to meet him at the ballpark on Saturday morning. I soon found out a lot has changed from my younger days. I cannot run any more. I could not throw a ball anymore. Even swinging a bat was an effort. I decided right there that I was going to stick to teaching the basics.

I told the boys and three girls to first have fun. We are not playing in a WORLD SERIES. I said to all of them just to take the positions they were comfortable with, and we would take it from there. Obviously, I had children who had played and knew the game. After watching them I decided to make a couple of changes.

I had one girl at shortstop. I put her at 3rd base. I found I had a couple of boys who could really pitch. And 2 boys in the outfield who could throw to Gravenhurst. I thought to myself, "Well Cassidy, you can't play any more but these kids sure could." I have finally found something I love to do.

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.



Fresh Herbs

By Rose Meyer

Fresh herbs can add a punch of flavour and a touch of elegance to any meal.

They are quite versatile and simple to grow in almost any sunny location. You can customize the size of individual pots for a windowsill, plant a bucketful in a container for a balcony or designate a space in your outdoor garden.

For instance, rosemary with its needle like leaves can make a nice contrast to leafy plants in a planter.

Fresh oregano is better grown solo in a container or garden. Oregano likes space. The flowers also attract pollinators.

Never run out of fresh basil when your garden tomatoes come in this summer. Basil can be re-grown from cuttings. Never allow your basil to flower as this produces bitterness in the plant. Pinch off before flowers form.

Other versatile herbs are parsley, dill (also aggressive), chives, sage, and thyme.

Rose Meyer. 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.



Waste Not, Want Not

By Bessie Grimes

*“What can we do?
We can review our purchasing
and recycling habits.”*

Have you ever heard the saying, “Waste not, want not”? If you’ve lived very long, you probably have. In the old days, people believed it was necessary to make use of anything old if you could possibly manage it.

Take for example some people today think “old” means last night’s leftovers. Whether it’s a stalk of celery, a slice of bread or half a potato, it gets thrown out. Instead, it could be saved for a pot of soup or stew or a casserole.

Soup stock is a convenient staple to have around. It is the liquid meat and vegetables are cooked in and it’s full of nutrients. It also tastes delicious. Why cook rice or pasta in water when a stock is available? It’s a great way to use it up.

How many times have you gone to a restaurant, eating your fill and left half or more of the food on the plate? More food than we can imagine gets wasted this way. If you see that you can’t finish a dish, ask for a take-out container before you even start to eat. Place the extra food in it and you will have either an additional meal or more soup or stew ingredients. It is sometimes possible to get two or three servings from a single plate of restaurant food.

Is it a saving to buy marked-down food? Yes and no. It probably costs about the same as the better quality food when you calculate the cost of what you really have to throw out. Food waste doesn’t have to go into the garbage, however. It can be turned into compost to make fertilizer to grow more produce. Most communities provide pick-up for compost items – rotten fruit, tough outer leaves of vegetables, etc. can be utilized in this manner. Be cautious when you deal with spoiling produce. Visible mold on a lot of fruit actually means the whole fruit is moldy or will be in less than a day.

Now let’s look at food packaging. Sometimes there are double layers of plastic, bulky plastic trays, and cardboard boxes on one food item. These all have to be removed and recycled. About half of the packaging would preserve the food in many cases.

Why can’t the packaging just be tossed? Plastic doesn’t break down easily. It can take centuries to disintegrate. Good land is wasted when plastic is put into it. Animals chew on it and harm themselves irreparably when they try to get to the bits of food still wrapped in it.

I have recently had an opportunity to look at waste in the medical world. Huge bulky bandages come in plastic and paper wraps that need to be disposed of. If one does not separate the two parts of the wrapper there is a good chance that they won’t be recycled. Why not just use one of these materials?

Eye drops come in small individual ampules as well as bottles. Are the ampules necessary? They are used only once. Any excess liquid inside them cannot be kept for another time. The bottles allow a patient to continue to use any medicine remaining in them and ensure that nothing is wasted. The not quite empty ampules often end up in the garbage because there is still liquid in them.

Where does the responsibility for all this start? With the manufacturer! What is the most environmentally friendly way to package a company’s product? Must the interior of the container be sterile? In the medical world, the answer is “yes”. How much product constitutes a full dose? How much is too much?

This is only the tip of the iceberg. Odd bits of paper, plastic, cardboard, and broken glass end up in the wrong bin all the time. We often don’t consider the fact that small bits become big bits when they accumulate.

What can we do? We can review our purchasing and recycling habits. Fresh vegetables don’t come with excess wrappings. It takes a little extra work to prepare them but it’s worth it. We can remove plastic caps from cardboard milk and juice cartons and recycle sales tags. We can also wash out small vials and containers we often overlook and place them in recycling bins instead of garbage cans. After all, isn’t it better to see trees or flowers where dumps might otherwise be?

This article only touches on some facets of the problem. Do you have any ideas to share? How can we make our world better? If you have, contact us at muskokaseniorsmagazine.ca. We’d love to hear from you.

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.

MSM Recycling Tips and More

- Replace plastic wrap with reusable wax cloth covers for storing food items.
- Buy fruits and veggies from farmer's markets to prevent the use of the plastic containers the supermarkets use. Many farmer's markets use cardboard instead or you can bring your own reusable bags to put your produce in.
- Re-use plastic containers, such as peanut butter jars, for food storage when they're empty, instead of buying more plastic storage bags and containers.
- Make homemade cleaners using vinegar and baking soda, or vinegar with pine needles for a natural disinfectant (no chemicals or plastic!).
- Use disposable plastic containers, like the ones you get berries in, for planting vegetable seeds. You can also use some of the lids as a tray underneath to hold the water.
- Use plastic jars for crafting flowerpots or cost-effective containers for food gifts.
- Avoid bottled water in favour of reusable bottles.
- Bring your own reusable mug to coffee shops for hot and cold drinks to prevent unnecessary waste.
- Re-use food jars to make homemade plant or vegetable fertilizers. A simple one is with a banana peel and water. This helps twofold - reusing the plastic container, and saves the environment from adding chemicals into the ground which destroys living organisms in the earth.
- Avoid the accumulation of recycled plastic altogether by preparing your own meals, such as salads, baking and cooking. Think of all of the containers from prepared foods that won't end up on the earth...
- Use paper bags where possible for garbage, such as in the bathroom.
- Contact manufacturers and suggest they use alternate packaging. The less we buy from them and refuse their plastic, the more likely change will happen! **MSM**

Have a Story or Some Tips to Share?

Have you had a funny, sad, happy, or heart warming experience?

Have you been through an ordeal that your peers can relate to?

Do you prefer to express yourself through poetry?

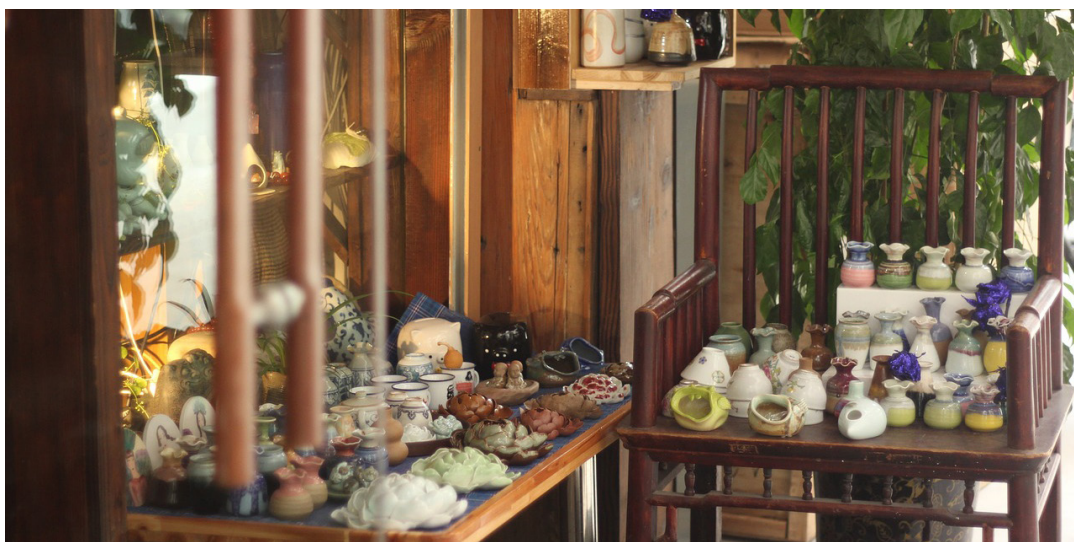
Do you have ways to stay motivated and vibrant?

Perhaps a little family history or moving experience about a pet?

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A Walk Through Memory Lane

By Nancy Goodman

It had been quite some time since I had entered the Thrift Shop. I had anticipated the visit knowing the layout of the store. Surprise!!! It was all new to me, and somewhat crowded with recent items. There was barely a path now; through what had been aisles laid out in an orderly fashion. Now there were racks of clothing, jewelry stands, sunglasses on whirly stands, purses, handbags, shoes, and scarves in abundance; and that was just the entrance of the shop.

That was where my “walk through memory lane” started. From the bookshelves, to the paintings, to the fine bone china sitting on antique dining tables. There were bins full of Tupperware, drinking bottles, and sippy cups. There was a rack of new unused sandwich makers, and various gizmos. Children’s toys, and puzzles of every shape and size. Boxes full of utensils, and racks of tea cups and tea pots, as well as knick-knacks galore. There were loads of furniture enough to fill any room in the home, and it ranged from antiques to the newer brands. There were light fixtures, ceiling fans, and cabinets cold and empty.

My head was on a swivel; and I didn’t know where to look or walk first, but the one special thing in that whole shop that tugged at my heart, was the large basket full of knitting needles. There had to be at least five hundred knitting needles or more, of every shape, size, and length. There was wood, plastic, bamboo, and steel needles just lying there, looking abandoned and lonely.

This left me thinking and visualizing the worn hands knitting items with love for family and friends. The thoughts that crossed their minds while knitting long into the night, waiting for a fever to break, or the phone to ring, a child to come home, or a doctor to arrive.

The worry, the regret, the anxiety, the excitement, or the loss. Loving hands that held faces, held hands, and their hearts, and knit that special something to keep their loved ones warm. Grandmother, mothers, daughters, and the men who liked to create, and watch it grow stitch by stitch, row after row. The familiar sound of knitting needles clicking tirelessly at any spare moment. A sound to soothe the soul, and while away the hours. A tireless hobby that spoke volumes of a person’s quiet demeanor.

I must say that as I walked through the shop, I caught myself reaching out, and touching those things that reminded me of family, home, grandparents and celebrations throughout the years. The texture, the feel, yes even some of those familiar smells.

The hardcover books that were held with interest. The china that was their pride and joy, on which to serve delicious meals, and tea cups filled with laughter, and with tears. The table runners, the embroidered tablecloths, the doilies had brought back my memories at just a glance.

The hours that were spent doing puzzles and chatting. Not having to think about anything but the next piece of the puzzle. There were many moments in that Thrift Shop that sparked those memories and made me smile.

Although I came out of the shop empty handed, it was a day that has lingered inside of me, and it is one I won’t soon forget.

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 fire-side chats.



Foxy Lady

By Kenn R. E. Page

In the early spring of '23 I noticed a new resident addition to our small rural community walking up and down our road on a fairly regular basis, enjoying the warm sunshine. I don't mind admitting I've seen some foxy ladies in my time, but this one pretty much took the cake.

Two property lots to the west of me, my neighbour spotted her one day in his backyard with a chicken in her moth. He yelled and she immediately dropped it, much to the chicken's delight, I'm sure. He didn't elaborate for me exactly the words he used that were so effective, but whatever they were, they worked. I can just imagine the chicken, in its relief, saying something like, "Boy, that was close!" Not in English of course, but in chicken.

I wouldn't be surprised that chicken is so grateful for the rescue that it is now working overtime to produce XXL eggs, safe and sound, locked up inside the chicken coop along with its hen mates. The only downside being that without the usual steady diet of backyard bugs, the eggs are not as rich in colour nor as rich in flavour as they used to be. I guess you can't always have it both ways.

Over the winter my neighbour was noticing a slow

decline in his chicken population. I wonder why. At the same time in the fresh snow in my driveway, I was noticing a steady pattern of footprints coming from the road up my driveway to my front steps and back. The fact that I was throwing out toast crust for some Ravens may explain why. They definitely were not Raven tracks, so I guess I was having the same visitor my neighbour was having.

As winter progressed into spring and there were patches of lawn showing, I saw for the first time who the prints belonged to. Then when almost all my lawn was bare, I was sitting near my front window reading when out of the corner of my eye I suddenly spotted movement in my front yard. Snapping my head around, there was the fox walking straight toward me with a mouth full of something. When it got close to the front wall of the house, it turned and headed west and out of sight. Checking my backyard, it wasn't there. So, it could have headed due west in a straight line in the direction of my neighbour's hen house.

That pattern was repeated six or seven times the same day. By close observation I discovered that what it had in its mouth each time coming from the road was old pine needles. Then it would follow the exact same

CONT'D FROM PAGE 24

route back out to the road and disappear to the east and return with more pine needles. I don't know if that seems strange to you, but it sure seemed weird to me. It wasn't long after that episode that I started to notice a total absence of red squirrels in my yard. Where there had been three squirrels running around my yard all winter and into spring, now there were none. In fact, one of those squirrels practically lived the whole time in my bird feeder. Then the chipmunk up and vanished without a forwarding address.

One warm, sunny day I was standing outside a bit away from the end of my garage beside a parked trailer when I noticed the fox trotting up my driveway. I didn't move and watched as it passed my vehicle headed straight for the open garage door. Just as its nose was about to cross the threshold, I said, "That's a no, no!" It stopped dead in its tracks and stood staring at me. After a short pause I yelled at it and it turned as if I'd done nothing more than ask it to please leave, and walked back past my vehicle and hung a left behind it and out of sight. I decided to follow and as I suspected, it hadn't gone far.

There was Red perched atop a rock near the front of my house surveying my front yard as if expecting to see something of interest. That something I suspect was lunch. I gave it a serious warning, but it took never mind. Several serious warnings later it left and went back out to the road. I'm not against wildlife but I didn't want to keep bumping into it on a regular basis, especially meeting up with it in my garage and cornering it by accident. On a later sunny day, out on my front porch getting a breath of fresh air, there was Red again walking up my driveway. Surely it must have seen me. Maybe that was the problem. It wandered right to me.

My driveway is not straight. It took some navigating to get from the road to the base of my front steps, but there it was like it had done it hundreds of times before. It just sat there looking up at me with big friendly eyes as if it was a lost pet wanting food. I got the distinct impression it wouldn't take much encouragement to get it to come up the steps to me. This was starting to freak me out a little. Patting a pet, I will often do, but putting my hand out to a wild fox was not on my bucket list. I went in the house but ten minutes later when I went out again it was still walking around near the bottom of the steps. Talking to it didn't scare it one bit. What would have been scary was if I had got an answer.

Several days later, from inside the house, I caught sight of Red crossing my lawn again coming towards me. Once again, its mouth was full, only this time there were four small legs dangling out either side of its mouth that just happened to be the same colour as the fox. The open garage door episode already mentioned was only one of the two. It happened again almost exactly the same way, only when I talked it out of entering the garage this time, it left in a different direction, once again heading west in the direction of, you guessed it, my neighbour's henhouse.

It became clear that Red was a mommy fox. About mid to late August my neighbour reported that somebody had reported to him that mommy fox plus five little foxes had been spotted in the area. A few weeks before that report, I was out the front of my yard by the road when Mrs. Fox crossed the road, not far from me, onto my lawn with a pup keeping in close step with her. I must admit that a fox is a beautiful looking animal, but something was going on that I'd never seen before.

Why Mrs. Fox wanted to enter my garage, and perhaps she had done it many times when I was not aware, is beyond me. I don't keep anything that could be considered food in my garage. That is except for one small thing, mouse traps with peanut butter on them.

A few years back I had a real problem with chipmunks stealing the peanut butter. They would trip the traps and then lick them absolutely clean. I saw it happen with my own eyes. The chipmunk in question worked at getting the goodies until the trap went off and hit it on the head. It took off like a shot but only went a few feet. Then it would sit and rub its sore head awhile and then go back and complete the job. It was hilarious to watch, but I finally put the traps out of reach.

The fox episode that really surprised me was when I noticed three people walking on the road and the fox was following close behind. The one person on rear guard was trying to shoo it away but the fox wasn't having it. Then the last time I saw Mrs. Fox, I came around the back corner of my house and there she was standing about ten feet from the deer fence surrounding my garden staring at my vegetables. I didn't think foxes ate vegetables, but everybody needs a little fiber in their diet.

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.



Little Pigs and Big Carrots

By Bessie Grimes

(Based on a tale told around 1900 in Allensville, Ontario. Names changed.)

Now Tommy Jackson owned a farm
A mile outside of town.
And soon among his neighbours there
This story went around.

He bought a pig. It was a sow.
She had a litter – five
Quite energetic little things’
And, oh, how they did thrive.

Tom kept his garden trim and neat.
His carrots – they were grand!
They were the best of all around.
He had no helping hand.

He brought his harvest safely in
One fine and sunny day
And let the sow and piglets in
So they could romp and play.

Now after dark that autumn night
He heard a sudden sound.
The sow was standing at the door.
Her young ones weren’t around.

He went to search and heard a squeal
Within the garden gate;
And quickly found the poor wee ones.
He’d made a bad mistake.

For there they were – ‘twas plain to see –
Stuck fast within the holes
From whence had come the carrots fine
To fill the serving bowls.

He told the world and from that night
The neighbours all agreed
That Tommy Jackson’s vegetables
Were very large indeed.

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*.

BAD IDEAS

Why do you insist on eating raw onion when you know it blows you up with gas?



By Linda Smith

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!*

AGING WITH A GUSTO: WHAT KEEPS YOUR MOJO GOING?



*Shirley Marks,
Gravenhurst, Ontario.*

My pets keep me going. I have a cat and a dog, and couldn't imagine life without them.

Their unconditional love and companionship mean the world to me. When noone else is around, they're there, ready to go whenever I am.

No matter what I look like on a given day... They don't care. They love me for who I am, which is more than I can say for how a lot of people can be with each other (I think the world would be a better place if we were more accepting, caring, and loving of each other). We can learn from these amazing creatures!

They also keep me fit!

My dog keeps me moving from our walks together. He also keeps me breathing fresh air from our walks too!

My cat is very affectionate (so is my dog, as he's very huggable), so, there's no shortage of hugs.

They get me up in the morning and give me a sense of purpose, knowing I gotta get out of bed and care for them, which is my pleasure because of the joy they bring to my life.

I can't say enough about them and the joy they bring. If they understood thank you, I'd thank them, but they don't. So, they'll have to settle for lots of hugs instead!.

***How do you do it?
How do you stay inspired,
motivated, energized,
happy, or healthy?***

**We'd love to hear about it!
Email us at:**

editorial@muskokaseniorsmagazine.ca

CREATIVE CORNER



It Would Be Nice!

By Bruce Liddle

*It would be nice to be liked by all.
It would be nice if you were here.
It would be nice if family call.
It would be nice to have some cheer.*

*If only we say something nice,
When speaking of or to our wife.
The world would have a lot less strife,
Thus make ourselves a better life.*

*May we help someone today?
Can we make their life much better?
A kind word that we might say,
Can make their load much lighter.*

*There is a purpose why we're here,
If we would realize why;
We may give a little cheer,
It would be nice to try.*

*By helping others in this way
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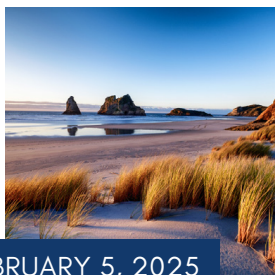
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