

MUSKOKA SENIORS MAGAZINE

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

Winter 2025

**Winter
Festivals
in Muskoka**

**Road Salt is
Damaging our Environment**

**Cannabis for
Pain Management**

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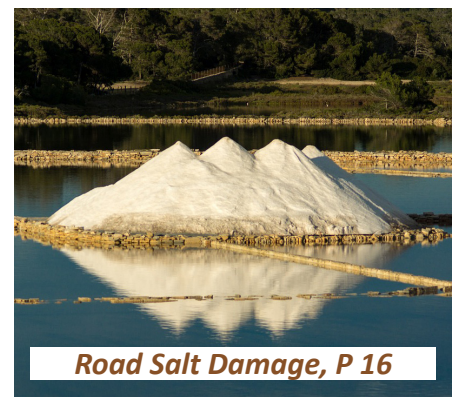
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MUSKOKA SENIORS MAGAZINE

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Cheryl Patterson,
Publisher

MUSKOKA SENIORS MAGAZINE

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

This past year seems to have been in a league of its own with inflation levels, the affordable housing and cost of living crises, just to name a few areas of concern. There's so much impact to one's life from so many areas it can be hard to know what to do. Rest assured we've got you covered in the most important area to start with – you.

When we take care in core areas of our lives, we build a solid foundation that helps us to maneuver our way through it. This includes things such as managing stress levels, paying attention to your mind health, maintaining close connections, nurturing the environment that nurtures you, getting outside for some fresh air and exercise, or considering a lifestyle change that will encourage this more.

The list is endless with ways you

can create a buffer for your health, and the rewards are vast.

In this edition, we share tips for boosting your immune system during cold and flu season, highlight the link between cognitive functioning and gut health, and discuss how pets can support good health too.

Heather Huff-Bogart provides insight into how cannabis can help you manage pain.

Friends of the Muskoka Watershed give it to us straight about the impact of road salt to our precious aquatic life in Muskoka.

For something new, we share *TODAY* show anchor's views about faith and what it means to them and the role it plays in their lives, in the *Faithfully Speaking* section.

Peter Cassidy reminisces in a heartwarming story about taking his son to the last hockey game at the

Montreal Forum some years ago.

Nancy Goodman shares about how invaluable it can be to be surrounded by support, even if it's online, when you're going through a lifetime with something that not many people may relate to, such as Congenital Heart Defects (CHD).

Kenn Page reflects on how things change as time progresses, from morning routines to the unexpected...

As usual, there are some chuckles and other tidbits for you along the way as well.

And as always, we hope you enjoy your read as much as we enjoy putting it together for you.

All the best to you in 2025!

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

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!

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ON, Canada

Cheryl A. Patterson

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St. Catharines,
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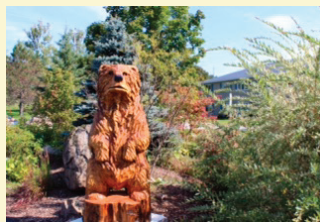


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MUSKOKA SENIORS MAGAZINE

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**Our Mission:
Inform, inspire, support and include 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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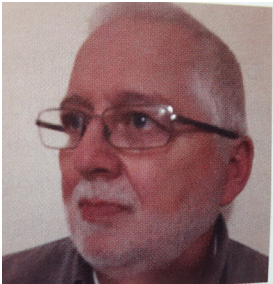
Friends of the Muskoka Watershed (FOTMW) is a charity with the objective of protecting Muskoka watersheds forever. Some of our present projects include SALTYMuskoka, ASHMuskoka. Visit fotmw.org.



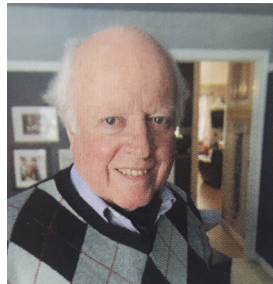
Sandra Hartill, Master Gardeners of Muskoka and Parry Sound. Our goal is to share, inform and advise avid and amateur gardeners with tips for indoor, outdoor and balcony gardening.



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.



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.



Peter Sanguinetti, and his wife, Valerie, are now semi-retired and live in Emsdale. He is a director of the Canadian Alliance of British Pensioners and actively supports the Alliance.



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!



Brenda J. Wood has been an author and motivational speaker for too many years to count. Enjoy her common sense wisdom and quirky humour at <http://heartfeltdevotionals.com> and hopestreamradio.com.



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.



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



Tips for Taking Care During Cold and Flu Season

Our health is vital to everything we do, and being sick is something most of us dread. So, here are a few tips to help.

- **Stay hydrated.** This is a must considering our body is approximately 70% water. However, many people are dehydrated and don't know it. So, don't wait until you're thirsty. Create a habit of drinking water on a regular basis through the day, such as when you get up to do something, like getting snacks or going to another room.

If you're not a fan of water squeeze a bit of lemon, orange, or other fruit juice into it from fresh fruits (not sugar laden high glycemic fruit juices with so much sugar it will suppress your immune system!).

Another option for hydrating is to increase soups and stews in your recipe repertoire. Every bit helps!

- **Make fresh fruits and vegetables a staple.** If you're concerned about fresh going bad, get frozen, or preserves, or use those that are on the verge in baking and casseroles.
- **Get adventurous with cooking.** There are so many flavours and options available. Have you tried millet as a grain, or agave instead of sugar, or almond milk instead of dairy? These are just a few more easily digested and

healthier options for your immune system. What about spices, like fresh ginger or turmeric root? Talk about a boost to your system!

- **Go light.** Give your body a break from the heavy stuff and try a couple of fish nights each week. The rich Omega 3 fatty acids support your nervous system and reduce the risk of inflammation and heart disease.
- **Eat foods that support your resilience to stress.** Try options that contain vitamin B, magnesium, zinc, and potassium, like nuts, fruits, and vegetables. The latter also contain vitamin C and E, powerful antioxidants that boost the immune system.
- **Make your snacks work for you.** For instance, nuts are a great alternative to junk food like chips, and are rich in antioxidants and magnesium.
- **Go herbal.** Herbal teas can be an invaluable asset to include in your health regime. There is a vast array to choose from, like nettle, echinacea, chaga mushroom, chamomile – a de-stressor which allows your immune system to do its work. The list is endless. You can also have fun mixing and matching flavours to your taste!
- **Supplement your food.** Even if it's just for the winter where you're more at risk for getting

sick. You can get most supplements reasonably priced. Pick a few with a punch, like vitamin C, D, E, and probiotics.

The bottom line is healthy choices will support your immune system, vitality, and reduce your risk of illness and disease. Unhealthy choices won't. **MSM**

Have a
healthy spin
on a recipe
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Pets Are Family Too

By Rose Ross

As I write this I'm reminiscing about my beloved dog, Riley, that recently passed.

Some people see dogs and cats as just that – animals and no more. Maybe if you're looking at it technically, however, those of you that have or had pets know differently. They are family.

A lot like children, they depend on us - to feed them, provide shelter, comfort and love, care for their health, and do what we can to make sure they are happy.

The return is also often like children, especially young ones, where you are their world, and they so openly express their unconditional love for you.

You can wake up with bed head, one sock missing, bad breath, have an off day or a messy home (God forbid according to many humans!) and you're still loved, wanted, and appreciated.

The affection is endless, as is the companionship while you have them.. They always want to be with you.

So, I say this with a heavy heart when I share that I lost my beloved Riley just before Christmas. I was torn about the decision for some time because in some ways he looked great, however, was struggling in others. I did everything I could to help him, however, there were too many issues, and I didn't want him to suffer, as much as he tried to be brave.

It was hard to wrap my mind and heart around the fact that I had to say goodbye to my once strong and vibrant buddy who suddenly wasn't fully functional anymore. Heart wrenching doesn't cut it. Heartbroken maybe. It was one of the most painful days ever.

He was my best friend, constant companion through good and tough times, and gave me so much joy, exercise, love, laughter, affection, and the list is endless. We went on many adventures together, and everybody loved him, as he did them. It seemed like 12 years went by like weeks and suddenly we were here.

I believe pets are like angels, and I will always treasure the precious time I had with mine. Words can't even express...

What I learned from his loss is that we may not always have people around when we need them, however, we can have pets, a connection that can be just as meaningful and invaluable (sometimes more so).

So, it is with sadness that I say, "Goodbye my beautiful boy. You were tremendously cherished, appreciated and loved."

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...*

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Cheryl A. Patterson

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

Cannabis for Pain Management: What you Need to Know

We are asked all the time at the store how can cannabis help with pain, which is a really tough question for us to properly answer. Why is that? Well Health Canada has restricted Budtenders from sharing any medical advice that goes along with cannabis as we are not medical professionals. However, we are allowed to discuss what researchers have found, so let's dive in.

How Cannabis Can Works for Pain Relief

Cannabis contains active compounds called cannabinoids, including THC (tetrahydrocannabinol) and CBD (cannabidiol). These compounds interact with the body's endocannabinoid system, which helps regulate various functions like pain, mood, and inflammation.

- **THC:** The psychoactive component of cannabis, THC binds to receptors in the brain and nervous system, which can alter pain perception and provide relief. However, it's also responsible for the "high" associated with cannabis. It has also been found that THC is one of the best fighters against pain.
- **CBD:** Unlike THC, CBD is non-psychoactive and can work by reducing inflammation by interacting with ECS receptors to alleviate pain and inflammation without producing a the same high as THC.

- **CBG:** Is another cannabinoid that in non-psychoactive and found to be like CBD, however, has a few different properties that sets it apart. CBG has been found to be mood uplifting and can aid in the dealing with chronic pain, inflammation, plus so much more.

These cannabinoids can be used alone or together in various ratios, depending on the type and severity of pain being treated.

Types of Pain Cannabis May Help With

Research suggests that cannabis can be effective for certain types of pain, such as:

- **Chronic Pain,** like arthritis, back pain, fibromyalgia, all have been found to respond well to cannabis and can provide an option to traditional therapies.
- **Neuropathic pain,** which can be caused by nerve damage or dysfunction, may be aided by using cannabis.
- **Acute Pain or Post-Surgical.** Various studies have suggested that cannabis could help reduce one's reliance on opioids for managing pain.

Forms of Cannabis for Pain Relief

With there being a plethora of cannabis products to choose from

that are readily available at your local licensed cannabis retailer, talk to your Budtender about what the best options would be for you. Your options range from smoking, vaping, topicals, tinctures, oil, as well as a variety of edibles and beverages, plus so much more.

Benefits of Cannabis for Pain

- **Versatility.** With so many different products to choose from, including various cannabinoid ratios, cannabis can be tailored to everyone, just ask your Budtender if you have any questions.
- **Fewer Side Effects:** Comparing cannabis to pharmaceuticals, cannabis has been found to have fewer and milder side effects. Some side effects that cannabis can cause are dry mouth and drowsiness.
- **Reduced Reliance on Opioids:** Studies have shown that cannabis can help people lower or eliminate their use or prescription opioids.

The future of Cannabis and Pain Management

As research in cannabis expands, the potential to mainstream the treatment for pain continues to grow. With its ability to work with our ECS it is unlike many products on the market and makes it unique.

SUPPORT FOR STRESS



How Pets Reduce Stress

Most of us have heard about common ways of reducing stress, such as a balanced diet, exercise, leisurely activities, and a good support system. However, pets come highly recommended too.

Therapeutic benefits of pet companionship can be monumental and are well documented.

In 1975, when a patient at a mental health facility brought in an injured sparrow, the nurturing of the bird created improvements in the depressed individual that were so impactful it led to the facility that became the Oakwood Forensic Center running an animal-assisted therapy program.

This therapy was so profound that clients on this ward only required half the medications of clients on other wards. It helped with shyness, memory, empathy, communication, depression and moods, socializing, general well-being, and sparked interest in other facilities following suit.

According to the Douglas Mental Health University, animals also

provide benefits to people with Alzheimer's Disease because of the emotional stimulation and presence of the animals, which captures the patient's attention and helps them

maintain contact with reality, be in a calmer state, and remember past experiences often associated with animals.

Studies have also found a relationship between owning a pet and lower blood pressure, increased physical activity, feeling comforted, along with a sense of joy, interest in life, and greater social interaction.

For seniors where the cost of owning a pet may be challenging, the Humane Society has a program called Silver Paws that can provide assistance with grants, volunteer help, and supportive networks for routine and veterinary care.

There's no denying the profound treasures of having a pet - whether it's for companionship, emotional comfort, or having a few pounds to work on - the benefits of being around animals are as limitless as the love they provide. **MSM**

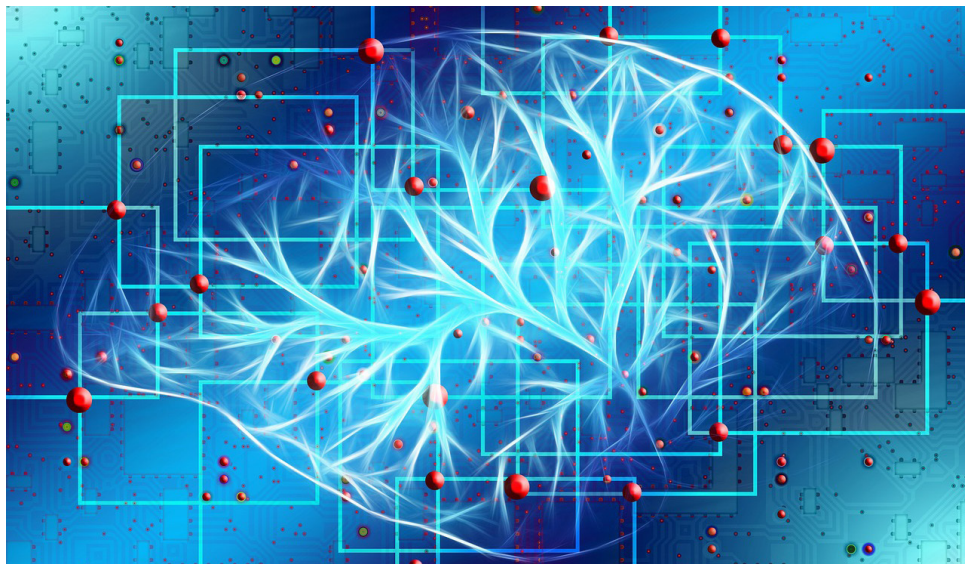
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Cognitive Health: What do Probiotics Have to do with it?

Think that your brain is your brain, and your gut is your gut? Think again!

Most people think “gut” when they hear about probiotics. However, although that’s where the process begins the effects don’t end there. Research is linking the effects of probiotics to cognitive functioning.

A study by Elmira Akbari et al, published in *Frontiers in Aging Neuroscience* journal (“Effect of Probiotics on Cognitive Function and Metabolic Status in Alzheimer’s Disease: A Randomized, Double-Blind and Controlled Trial,” 2016), monitored the impact of probiotic supplements on 60 patients with Alzheimer’s Disease.

In the study, half of the participants were given cow’s milk and the other half were given probiotic milk for 12 weeks. The tests were repeated after 12 weeks. The results revealed, “Overall, the current study demonstrated that probiotic consumption for 12 weeks positively affects cognitive function.”

The placebo group showed a 45%

increase in a highly sensitive c-reactive protein called hs-CRP the indicator of inflammation, which is a characteristic of Alzheimer’s

Disease, whereas the probiotic group declined by 18%.

Over the 12 weeks the placebo group continued to mentally decline, however, the probiotics group showed a substantial improvement in cognitive function.

So, in addition to preventing a decline in cognitive function the probiotics helped participants regain it.

The study indicated, “From these considerations it can be concluded that at least through contributing in neurotransmitter synthesis or receptor expression, probiotics might adjust the brain activity.”

It adds, “Accordingly, it is suggested that dysfunction of the neuroendocrine system, behaviour, and cognition are correlated with gut microbiota dysbiosis (Liang et al, 2015).”

Good news indeed! **MSM**

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TODAY Show Anchors Share Their Views on Faith

The concept of faith has different meanings to everyone. The anchors of the *TODAY* show got together to share their heartfelt perspectives (February 21, 2024).

When asked what she thinks about faith, Hoda Kodb expressed its role in her path to evolving in her life.

She said that every day she writes in her journal, “Dear God, Thank you for this precious day.”

She added, “I feel him all the time,” which wasn’t always the case.

In the past Kodb said she used to be “mad” at God, especially during hardships such as the loss of her dad. She said, “And then all of a sudden in due time, here I sit with two kids, and I think to myself ‘God’s been present sitting here.’ I asked him, begged him on bended knee for Hailey and Hope and they came.”

Other anchors expressed faith as inherited from their parents and continued to evolve. They said they reflect on words uttered by their parents too, such as asking their higher power for faith during challenging times, and they also see it as a foundation that can be passed on to other generations.

Savannah Guthrie said, “I see faith everywhere.” She added that faith is also “how we hold hands with whoever is in the next life,” with God as the connection.

The anchors also discussed people as “God’s gifts” during challenging times, and the comfort of feeling “rooted in something.”

Hoda added that she’s inspired to seek hope and make conscious choices daily.

Guthrie expressed a belief in a connection between faith and love, with love being at the core, as “feeling God’s love.” She added, “It would be contagious, and we want to share that love everywhere.”

The group also chatted about letting faith lead you in your journey, and the importance of having conversations with others about it.

So, we ask you, what does faith mean to you? When was the last time you had a conversation about your evolution with faith? What role, if any, does it play in your day-to-day life? If you have a story to share about the impact of faith in your life, we would love to hear about it. **MSM**



Road Salt is Damaging our Environment. You can Make a Difference

By Friends of the Muskoka Watershed

How much road salt are you using in your driveway or on your sidewalk?

Most individuals use too much road salt. At *Friends of the Muskoka Watershed (FOTMW)*, we want to help people reduce their excessive road salt usage. A 350 ml (12 ounce) cup will do an average driveway (enough for 10 square metres) or 10 sidewalk squares.

Road salt is toxic to sensitive aquatic life in Muskoka - and a lot of road salt is used in Muskoka. The soft water of our lakes and rivers is particularly vulnerable to the chloride ion that is a component of road salt.

“The most recent data from the District of Muskoka Lake Monitoring Program shows that, although chloride levels have increased, they are still within levels we consider safe,” says Dr. Neil Hutchinson, Director of *Friends of the Muskoka Watershed (FOTMW)*. “We should continue to monitor and reduce road salt use because the trend is upward.”

Hutchinson, through *FOTMW* and with the help of Citizen Scientists, has been studying the road salt levels, sources and impacts.

Hutchinson explains levels of 10 to 20mg/L are dangerous to the reproduction of sensitive aquatic zooplankton, which are important components of the aquatic food chain that help keep the water clear by eat-

ing algae.

Much of the salt in the lakes comes from the roads. “The District has changed methods of road salt application and has reduced the amount used,” says Hutchinson. “They continue to look for more ways to reduce road salt usage, but residents can also play their part by reducing the amount of salt they apply to driveways and sidewalks.”

Salt enters our waterways from runoff. Sources include streets, sidewalks, highways, driveways, drainage and parking lots. Once salt is in the lakes, it can only be removed by natural flushing. This can take years, depending on the lake’s flow. Salt impacts more than our lakes. It is hard on concrete structures, cars and other metal, leather boots, pet’s feet and more.

FOTMW is planning a SALTYMuskoka program, starting this winter that includes more citizen volunteer opportunities and working with schools, lake associations and businesses to help reduce road salt use and make the community more aware of the toxic impacts of road salt.

There are things community members can do to help:

- Use sand when possible.
- Shovel first and more often.
- Only use salt if the temperature is over -12 C. Any colder and salt is not effective.
- Store salt in a water-resistant closed container.
- Clean up spilled and excess applied salt to save for another time.
- Wear boots with good traction.
- Redirect downspouts away from walkways.
- Check that the melt path of your snow does not create icy, slipping hazards.
- Use winter tires and reduce driving speed. Stay home if it’s icy.
- Gather up the sand from snow piles left to melt. This sand has toxic road salt that will continue moving into our waterways.
- Share this information with others.
- Join *Friends of the Muskoka Watershed* as a member or donor, or sign up for our newsletter. Visit fotmw.org to learn more, or email friends@fotmw.org.

Friends of the Muskoka Watershed (FOTMW) is a charity with the objective of protecting Muskoka watersheds forever. Some of our present projects include SALTYMuskoka, ASHMuskoka. Visit fotmw.org.



A New Year to Remember

By Shirley Cambray

A few years ago, my husband and I decided it would be a treat to bring in the New Year in a warm climate, so we were attracted to the ad that said, “Come and spend two weeks with us and enjoy a New Year’s celebration in sunny Arizona...”

CONT'D FROM PAGE 17...

Tickets were duly purchased, and we arrived in Scottsdale on December 27th to enjoy two weeks in the sun. Our accommodation at the resort was very good – better than adequate – and after getting freshened up we made our way to the local ‘park’ for a view of the foliage, or lack of it.

At first it seemed too desolate to be named a park, but after a walk around it began to take on a unique form of beauty.

Then we spotted a small man-made lake with beautiful swans, and I moved very close to them thinking they would be friendly. Have you ever been chased by a screeching swan with gigantic wings flapping? I was amazed at how fast I could run in flip-flops!

Back at the resort we sat by the pool and made the acquaintance of a lively couple who had already been there for one week. They told us not to miss the happy half-hour on the patio of the courtyard, to be there at five-thirty and wear casual clothes. They would like to share a table with us.

I was all for meeting on the patio but as far as clothes went, I had a different idea. I hadn't come all that way to dress down. I was going to wear my latest fashion pants, silver sling-back sandals, and a hand-knit cotton sweater. My husband said casual clothes were just the ticket for him and I couldn't talk him out of it. He looked great anyway.

As we entered the courtyard, we saw the afternoon pool couple signaling for us to join them at their table. It was dusk and twinkle lights were the absolutely only illumination. We made our way carefully over to the gayly decorated bar and picked up our drinks, all the while getting acquainted with several other vacationers. Waving my hand to the couple to let them know we were on our way to their table I didn't realize that in my path was an open inground hot tub.

You guessed it, I stepped forward, sank into the hot tub on my derriere with water up to my arm pits. Strangely, I was still holding the drink, perhaps trying not to water it down.

My first thought was disbelief – surely it was a dream. My husband grabbed my drink, two young fellows lifted me out of the tub and the attendant arrived with a large beach towel to wrap around me. The whole patio was deathly silent as everyone looked on. To cover my embarrassment, I tried a little levity. “Next show will be in one hour,” I told the onlookers. That seemed to break the ice, and everyone relaxed, expressing con-

-cern for my well-being.

My husband helped me back to our room as I walked in squishy shoes, with pants sticking to me like glue, and a sweater which now had stretched down to my knees. I changed into dry, definitely casual clothes, emptied the contents of my soggy purse, and put my wet clothes on towels to dry. I said to my husband it was important for me to return to the patio that evening because we were going to be with this group for two weeks, so I might as well face them and get it over with.

On our re-entry into the courtyard, we were greeted with a standing ovation, and thereafter, I was affectionately referred to as the “hot tub lady.” We spent the rest of the wonderful holiday with no other mishap.

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

***Have a funny story
to share?***

- *A challenge?*
- *A funny tale?*
- *A heartwarming 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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muskaseniorsmagazine.ca**



Bridport Dorset UK and Canadian Long Line Fishing: A History Bite

By Peter Sanguinetti

When I wrote the article “40 Years a Canadian” which was published in the summer edition of the MUSKOKA SENIORS MAGAZINE I said I came over to Canada on business, but I never said what that business was and why it was necessary to cross the Pond several times a year.

Bridport in Dorset is a small town on the English Channel and has for over 800 years been the centre for the manufacture of ropes, nets, lines, and twines, made originally from flax, but now of course from synthetic materials. It is not clear who planted the first flax seeds in the hills and valleys around Bridport. It may have been the Romans, but the seeds did well in the warm moist climate, and over the years became the raw material for a cottage industry making cordage, lines, twines, and nets.

In 1213 King John exhorted the people of Bridport to make “night and day as many ropes for ships both large and small, and as many cables as you can.” The net and rope makers worked as family groups though that would change as demand for the products increased.

For centuries the Grand Banks off Newfoundland had seen the fishing boats of the great nations - Britain, France, Portugal and Spain - fishing in one of the world’s richest fishing grounds for cod, a deep-sea fish that can lie up to a hundred fathoms deep. The English fishermen preferred to catch the cod by line from

the parent ships. In the bows of each dory would be a small anchor and some seventy fathoms of line with heavy leads and snoods every 2 feet with hooks. The strength of the line was critical because mature cod can be heavy.

In the 17th century, the Hounsell family is recorded as being involved in the cordage, twine, and net making centered on Bridport, so, there is a strong connection between Bridport and Newfoundland through the long line and fishing industry. Some members of the Hounsell family emigrated to North America, perhaps to be cordage agents promoting the Bridport products.

In 1832 the Mary Hounsell was a brig built in Bridport designed to carry Bridport cordage products out to the cod fishing fleets on the Grand Banks, and on her return, voyage bringing back a cargo of dried salted cod. Unfortunately, after not many trips she was lost at sea, and it wasn’t until 1842 that a second Mary Hounsell was built by Michael Kearney of St John’s, Newfoundland, and registered in Bridport in August 1843. She was used to carry out lines, twines and nets to Newfoundland, returning to Bridport with salt cod and cod liver oil.

In the later part of the 19th Century and the 20th century the Bridport cordage industry consolidated into a number of small and medium firms specializing in different products of the cordage industry, Edwards Sports Nets, The Dolphin Cuttyhunk Fishing Line, to name just two.

In 1947 all but one of the companies merged to become Bridport Industries, which in 1961 I joined as a management trainee. In 1976 when I became the General Manager of the spinning and line making plant, I was also responsible for the Sales Department which included our cordage and line sales to Eastern Canada, which represented a large part of our business. I am firmly of the opinion that one must know one’s customers and what is happening in the marketplace, so, that is why for six years I made the trips over to Canada.

As I wrote in “40 years a Canadian,” a door opened that I never expected and my family and I moved to Canada. But as far as I know the connection between Bridport in Dorset and St John’s Newfoundland is still as strong subject of course to the constraints of the fishing moratorium.

Peter Sanguinetti, and his wife, Valerie, are now retired and live in Emsdale. He is a director of the Canadian Alliance of British Pensioners and actively supports the Alliance.



My First Professional Hockey Game

By Peter Cassidy

I was, if memory serves, around 7 years old. My entire family are Scottish. My mother and father told me there was hockey in Scotland and throughout the UK. Most of the players were Canadians stationed there during the war.

I was in grade 2 and had limited knowledge of hockey. My father, my uncles, and my grampa were very enthusiastic fans. Not only were they great boxing fans, but they were also fans of Canadian football. They talked about the players and boxers who became legends in my mind.

They were also fans of the local teams, the Montreal Canadiens, and the Montreal Alouettes. Boxers like Sugar Ray Robinson and others became household names. It was a bit humorous if a Leaf fan entered the house. He was relentlessly persecuted. I get a laugh when I think back.

Their humour was contagious. Scottish people with a bit of scotch in them can be very funny to me.

One day, my grampa came home with tickets to a Montreal hockey game and proudly showed them off. He had enough tickets for my uncles, my father, and me. I could hardly contain myself with excitement. Up until then, hockey and most sports were on the radio. It was not until we moved to Ontario that we got a television.

It was through my family that I was a Montreal fan. It was someone who played that night that firmly entrenched me as a rabid fan. My grampa put his huge farmers hand on my shoulder and said, "Keep an eye on number 9 for Montreal, Maurice Richard."

This man scored three goals that night and was involved in a skirmish with a player on the other team. To put it in a nutshell, he knocked this player to the ice with a punch and was given a penalty, as was the other one.

I have had many exciting moments over the years where sports is concerned. As well as many exciting

events in my life.

That night at the old Montreal Forum will always be a highlight.

I fulfilled a promise to my son that he still talks about today. I said to him that he and I would go to a game at the Forum before it closed. We went on the very weekend it closed. What a night for him. Montreal has a way of doing things in a spectacular way.

We went to all the games. The first one was on Saturday which was a regular scheduled game. The Sunday game was an alumni game with retired players. My idol who was now 75 was there. When they introduced him, the standing ovation lasted 10 minutes, which is a record.

I looked at my son who was right beside me. I was so proud and all I saw on his face was outright awe. He was amazed at the outpouring of love in that building that night.

After the game I sat and thought back to my very first time there. I realized a couple of things. To be here with my son was an unimaginable feeling. It is something you cannot put into words.

As I sat there long after the game was over, I looked at my son who was lost in thoughts. Reality set in when the usher (an older man) came and said in French, "You will have to leave." I put my hand up to give me a couple of more minutes. He smiled and said, "I understand."

It was then that I looked around and saw several other fans crying their hearts out. My son turned to me and said, "Dad now I know the emotions that this place has for you. Thanks for this." WOW!!

I think these memories should last him a lifetime.

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.



Looking Back

By Kenn R. E. Page

Having been self-employed for many years, I didn't suddenly stop working when I hit sixty-five. That would have been too much of a sudden shock to my system. Although I did toy with the idea of building another house for myself, I let that idea go. I used to say I was not retired, just tired. Now ten years after finally quitting I thought I'd be well rested up by now, but I'm still tired.

These days my mornings start with a routine which includes yesterday's dishes and a few other things. That way when I wake up in the morning, I don't sit on the edge of the bed wondering what on earth am I going to do today or should I grab more shut-eye. A morning routine gives me a definite list of things to do with few surprises. Still, a few surprises sneak their way in.

One morning, totally to my surprise, my routine went right off the rails. While I was busy doing something on my routine list a line for a story suddenly popped into my head. I knew I had to write it down or it would be forever gone. Two hours later I was still writing. One a.m. all I had was a story title come to me again. Two hours later I was still writing. Once I got going on it, I couldn't stop. As long as I get whatever is coming into my head down on paper, I can rewrite it later and

smooth it out. Sometime a story has gone through ten rewrites before I'm comfortable with it. No surprise there.

Unexpected surprises like that is why I make all my appointments and other trips to town in the afternoon. It's not just the mornings that I do rewrites. At times I can't sleep, and it drives me crazy just lying there awake for hours. So, to make myself sleepy again I'll pull out a rough copy and sit there writing away for as long as it takes. Morning surprises are not limited to story ideas that just pop up out of nowhere. One morning I sat down to write out a grocery list and without thinking, I stuck my pen crosswise in my mouth. A sudden powerful sneeze sent the pen flying across the room. That was the morning I saw the writing on the wall.

Some morning surprises come delayed a bit. I was watching TV and the split second the program ended there was a total blackout. Since it was 10 p.m. and dark outside, it left me tripping over and bumping into things looking for one of my flashlights. That was fun! It may have been July but by next morning the house was darn chilly. It was as calm as can be outside, so it had to be some sort of planned shutdown. Whoever planned it, aliens or otherwise, sure planned it precisely!

I felt sorry for campers in tents pitched at electrically supplied campsites. By 6 a.m. the temperature outside was down to 14 degrees Celsius. I was really glad when the power came back on. By 6 a.m. the next morning the temperature outside was down to only 8 degrees Celsius. People don't always realize that having a refrigerator warms the kitchen so in the house was warmer, but tents don't have refrigerators. The campers I didn't feel sorry for were the ones sharing the same sleeping bag.

That same August I started expecting another surprise in the form of another power out. It was 34 degrees Celsius, plus humidity, and 81F plus in my house. I was waiting for the moment people started arriving home from work and fired up the TV for the weather forecast, the fans, and the air conditioners. The grid can only take so much sudden draw, or so I understood. I was more surprised when it didn't go out than if it had.

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.



Heartfelt

By Nancy Goodman

“A child who grows up much too soon. Life becomes a battlefield where it’s a warrior’s fight, with bandages on the scars, and try to heal before the next battle. It’s the fight of a warrior, who never gives up and we don’t take no for an answer.”

I belong to an amazing group, called the Zipper Sisters. Three million strong, worldwide. It’s an online forum where we learn to be educated and informed on our illnesses - Congenital Heart Defects (CHD).

One out of one hundred babies are affected by CHD, as well as other diseases included because of the defects.

We submit our diagnosis, and we are welcomed into the group, sight unseen. No membership fees.

We are expected to speak freely, kindly and honestly. The variations of this disease are endless. It’s like a fingerprint or snowflake. No two are alike.

You can choose to participate or just be an observer. Some things will pertain to you and others will not. Some of our struggles are time related and others are off the charts, and some need immediate care.

It’s a call for help and sharing when no one else is there or can relate to what we are going through.

No one without CHD can really understand the trauma and turmoil we can go through on a daily basis. There are many Zipper Sisters who stand in and shine a light on the situation.

There is always optimism and those that persevere and speak up freely, so we all understand that we are all in this together.

There are days when inquiring minds want to know, and days of refraining from the discussion because you just don’t think you can handle it.

The topics are real, traumatic, and personal. Many are questions that take us back to the hospital bed, that operating room, that ICU, that ward of similar sick children.

My fight started at birth, and it was long before the Ronald McDonald house was available. A time when the survival percentages weren’t so great. There were no famous visitors from hockey, baseball or basketball celebrities. A time when visits from parents and family were few and far between. A time when hospital staff

wanted parents to stay home because visiting would only upset the child and make them difficult to handle, especially on the ward.

We all have horror stories, some more than others. Some that are so vivid in our minds it’s like they happened yesterday.

People have no idea what we’ve been through, how hard we fight, the lengths we go to face another day, knowing in the back of our minds that we may not be able to see the sun come up tomorrow.

We are warriors who bear the scars, feel the pain and silence, the complaints, because we know our fight is unending.

There is no such thing as giving in or giving up. We stand united as CHD kids who are never cured, and only a new day to look forward to.

I saw many wounded, even those who never lived to see tomorrow.

One day they are there, the next they are gone. Try to explain that to a child. Try to explain why a child lies next to you in ICU in a coma, never to regain consciousness and dies; why a baby you played with in her crib would not make it out of surgery; why the doors were shut trapping us in the room when a patient didn’t make it...

You have no idea the trauma that remains in the mind and the life of being broken.

A child who grows up much too soon. Life becomes a battlefield where it’s a warrior’s fight, with bandages on the scars, and try to heal before the next battle. It’s the fight of a warrior, who never gives up and we don’t take no for an answer.

There is no such thing as saying no!

***Nancy Goodman.** I am an expressionist and a senior who lives in Ottawa with my husband. I spend a lot of time with my books, and looking for new adventures..*



Winter Festivals in Muskoka

Bracebridge Fire and Ice - January 25, Downtown Bracebridge. For more information, contact: fireandicebracebridge.com

Port Carling Winterfest - January 31 to February 2, Call: 705-762-5663

Dorset Snowball Winter Carnival - February 14-15, Contact: info@algonquinhighlands.ca

Coldest Night of the Year, Huntsville - Charity fundraising walk. Contact cnoy.org/location/huntsville

Dwight Winter Carnival - February 23 to 24. Contact huntsvillelakeofbays.on.ca

Huntsville Snowfest - River Mill Park, Events run from January 24 to March 2, Contact 705-380-2886 or info@explorehuntsville.ca

Baysville Winterfest - February 17, Contact 705-635-2272

Gravenhurst Winter Carnival - February 14-17. Contact 705-687-3412, ext 2122

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CREATIVE CORNER



The Seasons

By Murray Payne

Canada's native aboriginal people celebrate life and the seasons through the Circle.

SPRING

After the winter's sleep, the gentle warmth of the sun welcomes this season of new growth. Ice melts, rivers flow. Grasses which are the life blood of the animals which feed upon them begins to sprout and grow. The rivers and lakes provide other sustenance equally beneficial for survival to all. Children are born. Life perpetuates.

SUMMER

The summer sun's vigorous energy stimulates and encourages the existing spring growth bringing new renewed energy vital to the survival of all nature. Children grow. Life is good, food is plentiful, the living is easy.

FALL

The sun is not so hot! The season of fulfillment and change are at hand. The sun is pleasantly warm and comforting as life should be. The crops are all in, seeds cease to germinate, leaves change colour. Children mature and are ready to pick a mate. Nature readies itself for the big sleep.

WINTER

The winter sun, if it does show itself, is weak and cold. It has been decreed that all things must rest. Hopefully, peacefully. For all things on this earth rely on other things to survive. The mantle of snow will blanket all. Makeen Mother Earth and Waziata the Winter Wind will return to earth that which belongs to her.



In the spring life will begin again. The circle of life is complete.

Murray Payne, friendly, easy to talk to, and involved in all manners of art – water colours, pen and ink, totem poles, stone and concrete work – also enjoys the challenge of creating humorous short stories.

CREATIVE CORNER



Wild Beastie

By Linda Smith

I have some lovely trendy boots
All warm and fuzzy – really cute
I put one on - shoved in my toe
But something's there. It would not go
Well what's in there? A little rock?
A tissue or a smelly sock?

I gave up pushing in my toe
Down in the boot – it would not go
I turned my boot right upside down
Funny chips fell to the ground

Then out the squirming beastie fell
I screamed and jumped – Al heard me yell
He rushed back in cos I was cryin
Sure there was a vicious lion

Snow wiper raised and clunked to floor
Then wild wee beastie was no more
I wanted no repeat performance
My sense of dread was quite enormous
I rigged an anti-beast device
To spurn away the dreaded mice!

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!*

GARDENING: DID YOU KNOW...?



Container Gardening With Vegetables

By Sandra Harthill

How exciting, soon we will be into spring, so now is a good time to start planning what you are going to do for your vegetable garden or balcony plants.

Vegetables do not require a lot of space. It is so easy to grow them in a pot or hanging basket.

Choose what you want to grow (i.e., cherry tomatoes, small cucumbers, lettuce, onions or herbs). It is amazing how quickly they will grow with the proper care.

Always ensure your container is clean, and fill it with lightweight organic potting soil with fertilizer.

You can also add nutrients to the soil with organic materials, such as coffee grounds, banana peel, wood ash, eggshells and epsom salts.

Vegetables require at least 6 hours of full sun daily, so growing them in containers allows you to move them into sunny spots in your garden.

Keeping the soil moist is very important for healthy growth of your vegetable plants. And remember that containers dry out more quickly than ground soil so remember to keep them well watered.

Happy planting!

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.



Free Lance Writing at its Best

By Benda J. Wood

Freddy jumped in but couldn't save Johnny. Johnny didn't care. Freddy cried. Heaven was near, but only for Johnny.

Freddy walked to find another friend and a new phone. Freddy was happy now, but his feet hurt.

His mother yelled, "You forgot the water."

Freddy answered, "It's contaminated because Johnny drowned in his dirty clothes."

"Good job it wasn't his church shirt." She replied "I haven't ironed it yet. I guess we can't cremate. Any shirt will do, but not until mother sings out, "Call your father! He knows best. After all, didn't he shoot the dog? Call him in for supper. Freddy, you must be starved."

"I tried a new recipe, but it didn't turn out. I put it in the blender. Your dad will have to borrow grandma's teeth. We'll eat peanut butter and jam instead. We can pour the blended stuff on top. We will call it Spam."

Freddy said, "I am not hungry. I will fish Johnny out of the water"

Johnny's head was floating but the rest of him was

stuck under the ice. Johnny was breathing, but freezing

Freddy said, "Come for dinner. We are having Spam."

"Thanks, but I've had fish already." Freddy is getting angry! "Do you want out or not? I can leave you here."

"Get the blow torch to melt the ice," says Johnny. "And don't rush. I called the police."

"You idiot." replies Freddy.

Just then a beautiful girl steps out of the ambulance. She's the one who saved the dog!

She asks, "Do you have a towel? We have to dry off Johnny. No towel? We will use your blow torch."

Freddy is also getting cold feet. The dog is licking them. Freddy had a crush on the attendant. He decided to go home with her. She was having steak. The dog went too. Before they could leave, mother came to the rescue with hot toddies and Spam for everyone!

Brenda J. Wood has been an author and motivational speaker for too many years to count. Enjoy her common sense wisdom and quirky humour at <http://heartfelt-devotionals.com> and <http://hopestreamradio.com>.

MUSKOKA SENIORS MAGAZINE

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