

MUSKOKA SENIORS MAGAZINE

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

Spring 2026

**Winner of the
Moments of Joy
Photo Challenge**

**Spring and the
Psychology of Renewal**

**MSM Connect:
Connecting the
Muskoka Community**

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FROM THE PUBLISHER



Cheryl Patterson,
Publisher

MUSKOKA SENIORS MAGAZINE

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

As the world continues to move in different directions and the seasons in Canada continue to change – now into yet another spring – MUSKOKA SENIORS MAGAZINE continues to stay committed to you – our community – in more ways than ever.

While staying grounded in continuing to provide you with meaningful information, stories, resources, and insights – we're growing too.

In the last edition, we announced the natural evolution of our new MSM Connect community hub – our way of taking our message of “Not just a read... It's a connection” and expanding it in more ways than ever. Because meaning and connection are at the heart of everything we aspire to do.

Over a decade of our interactions with individuals, community groups, organizations, businesses, and the broader community, reinforced that connections are everything – on a personal level, including through heartfelt moments, or

mutual interests and activities, or shared learning and experiences – it's such a significant part of our lives.

So, we've worked hard to expand opportunities for you to connect with other community members in Muskoka and in a variety of ways – through learning, attending or participating in interesting or fun MSM Connect events (i.e. *Summer Evening of Live Readings, Care-giving Insights, and Real Life. Real Insights*), or upcoming activities, access to important community and broader resources, joining fun family-related challenges, watching the new exclusive monthly *Your Questions Answered: Everyday Topics That Matter* interview series that connects your questions directly to industry leaders, and through supporting our local businesses, and of course through access to this MSM publication.

Speaking of this magazine, we're also giving you the opportunity for access to a special limited-edition

holiday print version starting this year (see page 20 or the [website](#)).

So, while we strive to give you what you look forward to here each season, we also expand that to give you even more opportunities for ongoing connections in Muskoka. We believe that's what community is about – creating meaningful connections.

To add to that, this edition of MSM also provides lots of great ways to explore areas that are meaningful to you in other ways, whether it's your health, family, grief, faith, the environment, or other areas that speak to you. We've got you covered.

As always, we hope you enjoy this edition as much as we enjoy putting it together for you.

The best to you during this hugely anticipated spring season (after all that snow!).

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Cheryl Patterson', written in a cursive style.

MSM Connect

A community hub created by
MUSKOKA SENIORS MAGAZINE
connecting people across Muskoka.

What you'll find?

- Your Questions Answered monthly interview series
- Shop Local, and Discounts & Perks initiatives
- Events (*Upcoming in-person events - tickets now available*)
- Community and broader resources
- Learning opportunities
- Moments of Joy challenges (like the Kids & Family Photo Challenge)
- Caregiver Insights (including resources and learning)
- Opportunities to be part of something special

To learn more - or join - visit:

msmconnect.ca

If you enjoy staying connected, here are a couple extra places to find us:
Stay up to date about what's happening on our new Facebook page: [msmconnect](https://www.facebook.com/msmconnect).
Instagram: [@msmconnect.ca](https://www.instagram.com/msmconnect.ca)



Fireside Chat Series

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May 12

Medical Assistance in Dying

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HUNTSVILLE

Active Living Centre

7-8pm

April 7th

Navigating a Life Changing Diagnosis

April 14th

Myths and Facts about Anesthesia

April 21st

Stroke Care

April 28th

Preventing Falls

To register:

call 705-789-2202, ext 2720

MUSKOKA SENIORS MAGAZINE

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

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.

MUSKOKA SENIORS MAGAZINE

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To be a part of our new *MSM Connect* online community hub for discounts, perks, events, resources, regular updates, and to watch our new Your Questions Answered interview series, visit: msmconnect.ca.

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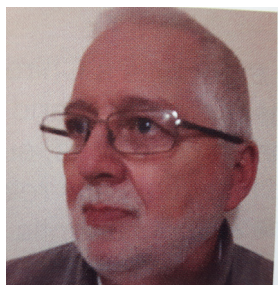
Grace Donaldson, holds an Honours Bachelor of Social Work and a Bachelor of Arts in Social Science, specializing in psychology and thanatology. She joined Hospice Muskoka in 2025, providing end-of-life and grief support.



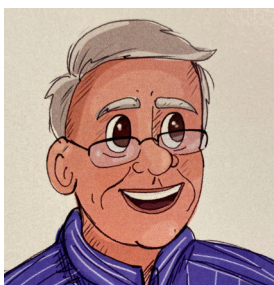
Sean Patchett, Master Gardeners of Muskoka. Our goal is to share, inform and advise avid and amateur gardeners with tips for indoor, outdoor and balcony gardening.



Sean Peace, RN District Stroke Nurse, with a critical care background on stroke care, passionate about empowering patients through education and tools that support sustainable lifestyle, improving health, and recovery.



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 Lenton, grew up in Thunder Bay. He obtained his teaching qualifications from the University of Ottawa. His Children's book is called, "A Much Happier You." You may contact Bruce at b.lenton@shaw.ca.



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



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 also 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.



Geraldine O'Meara, spent 21 years in England, working for a spirituality/environmental centre before residency in Huntsville, and now in Guelph to move closer to her family.



Spring Hydration: Why It Matters More Than You Think

NUTRITION CONT'D...

“Paying attention to hydration can make a noticeable difference in how we feel.”

As winter fades and spring arrives, many of us naturally begin spending more time outdoors. Warmer days invite us to garden, take longer walks, or simply enjoy fresh air after months indoors. But while we may adjust our activities with the changing season, one important habit often gets overlooked: hydration.

During the colder months, people tend to drink warm beverages like tea, coffee, or soups throughout the day. As spring approaches, those routines sometimes change, yet we may not increase our water intake to compensate. At the same time, our bodies may need more fluids as temperatures rise and activity levels increase. Even mild dehydration can affect how we feel, making hydration an important part of maintaining overall wellbeing.

Hydration plays a key role in many basic functions of the body. Water helps regulate body temperature, supports circulation, and assists with digestion. It also helps transport nutrients throughout the body and keeps joints lubricated. When we don't drink enough fluids, the body can't perform these functions as efficiently.

One of the first signs of dehydration is often fatigue. Many people assume they are simply tired or need more caffeine, when in reality their body may just need fluids. Even mild dehydration can lead to low energy, headaches, difficulty concentrating, or dry skin. Staying hydrated throughout the day can help support steady energy levels and mental clarity.

Fortunately, hydration doesn't

come only from drinking plain water. Many foods naturally contain high amounts of water and can contribute to daily fluid intake. Spring offers a variety of fresh produce that helps support hydration while also providing important nutrients.

Cucumbers, for example, are made up of more than 90 percent water and add a refreshing crunch to salads or sandwiches. Citrus fruits like oranges and grapefruit provide both hydration and vitamin C. Strawberries, which begin appearing in many markets during spring, are another delicious option with high water content.

Leafy greens such as lettuce and spinach also contain significant amounts of water. Tomatoes, yogurt, and broth-based soups are additional foods that contribute to hydration while adding flavor and variety to meals.

Of course, beverages still play an important role. While plain water is always a great choice, it doesn't have to be the only option. Some people find it easier to drink more fluids when they add variety.

Herbal teas, for example, can be enjoyed warm or chilled and come in many flavors such as peppermint, chamomile, or ginger. Fruit-infused water is another simple way to add interest. A few slices of lemon, cucumber, or berries can create a refreshing drink that feels a little more special than plain water.

Sparkling water is another option many people enjoy, especially as the weather becomes warmer. For those who enjoy cooking, broth-based soups remain a nourishing and hydrating meal choice even into the

spring months.

Building small habits can also help make hydration more consistent. Keeping a glass or water bottle nearby during the day can serve as a helpful reminder to drink regularly. Having water before heading outside for gardening or walking can also help prevent dehydration before it starts.

As spring brings longer days and renewed activity, paying attention to hydration can make a noticeable difference in how we feel. With a combination of fluids, fresh foods, and simple daily habits, staying hydrated can be an easy and refreshing way to support health throughout the season. **MSM**



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When You Know Better....

By Brenda J. Wood

“I’ll do my part while they are here, but when they go home, it’s all up to you!” said my sister-in-law. She wasn’t kidding.

My Dad called them from a Canadian hospital, after driving straight through from Florida with my Alzheimer’s mother in the passenger seat.

He didn’t dare stop anywhere because that would leave Mom wandering unattended.

I foolishly took my sister-in-law’s words as Gospel truth.

It was a setup, mostly in my own head. Past experiences taught me these things.

1. I was the oldest child.
2. I lived closest to my parents.
3. Did I deserve any help?
4. I will do it better than my siblings
5. I will work harder to keep my parents alive.
6. My parents expected it.

I was a writer, speaker, Host of my own TV show, homemaker, wife and mother.

I should have spoken up.

Yet my dad said, “You can do this, Brenda. After all, you’re just hanging around. The other kids all have jobs.”

I should have asked for hands on help or at least some financial compensation. But I didn’t.

That decision left me in mental and emotional turmoil, with some heart issues of my own.

I learned the hard way.

Maybe my experiences will help you make better choices.

1. You cannot do everything yourself, nor should you.
2. You are not superhuman.
3. You have rights, too.
4. Caregiving does not mean you, 24 hours per day.
5. Don’t be afraid to ask for help.
6. There are multiple government sources available.
7. If family can’t help physically, they can help financially.
8. Your goal must be to first care for yourself.
9. People will have opinions and disagreements with the care you give.
10. It is difficult but necessary to take a break from care.
11. You might need to do damage control after your rest.
12. Still, you will be refreshed and able to carry on a while longer.
13. Be satisfied, knowing you are doing what is right and good for you,
14. And what is right and good for your parent/ spouse.

Have a family story to share?

- *A funny tale?*
- *A challenge?*
- *A heartwarming experience?*

We want to hear about it!

**Email it to:
editorial@
muskoseniormagazine.ca**

MOMENTS OF JOY



**The winner of the
MSM Connect
Moments of Joy
Kids & Family Photo Challenge
for the winter season is
Susan Keast, of Gravenhurst.**

Susan's photo captured a special moment of connection and joy, making it a wonderful reflection of what the Moments of Joy Kids & Family Photo challenge is all about. She wins a \$25 gift certificate from Windmill Bakery & Bistro, in Huntsville.

Thank you to everyone who participated and shared their meaningful moments. We look forward to seeing more smiles, memories, and connections in the season ahead.

Each season, kids and families are invited to submit a fun or heartwarming photo with a grandparent or special senior in their life to help spread a little joy to the Muskoka community. Submissions are reviewed each season, and one photo is selected to receive a \$25 gift certificate from a local business sponsor.

To learn more or submit a photo, visit msmconnect.ca

Upcoming MSM Connect Events

(a division of MUSKOKA SENIORS MAGAZINE)

Join us for engaging in-person experiences designed to inform, connect, and inspire the Muskoka community.

Caregiving Insights

September 16 – Canada Summit Centre, 6:30pm-8:30pm

Real Life. Real Insights.

September 23 – Canada Summit Centre, 6:30pm-8:30pm

Summer Evening of Live Readings

Coming this summer
(details to be announced soon)

Reserve your spot
or learn more:

msmconnect.ca/events



Where connections become community



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.

What Are Cannabis Topicals?

While the mindset around cannabis is evolving beyond smoking or edibles, many people are surprised to learn it's also making waves in skincare. For wellness-minded women and men looking to elevate their self-care routines, or deal with pain / inflammation cannabis-infused topicals may become a new favourite.

What are cannabis topicals?

Cannabis topicals are skincare or wellness products applied directly to the skin. They typically contain cannabinoids such as CBD, CBG and THC, combined with natural ingredients like plant oils and butters. Unlike inhaled or ingested cannabis, topicals work locally and don't produce a "high."

Cannabis lotions, balms, salves, and oils are created by infusing cannabinoids like CBD, CBG and THC into nourishing base ingredients. When applied to the skin, they offer moisturizing and soothing benefits without intoxicating effects. When applying the topical to your skin it is not breaching or entering the blood stream so you will not get high in any way.

Instead, cannabinoids interact with receptors in the skin's endocannabinoid system (ECS), which helps regulate inflammation, discomfort, and overall skin balance. Because they stay localized, topicals are ideal for targeted care—whether you're addressing dry patches, tension, or sensitivity.

One of the standout benefits of cannabis topicals is their ability to deeply hydrate. Many formulas include ingredients like hemp seed oil, coconut oil, and shea butter, which are known for their rich moisturizing properties. As well as various terpenes which will aid in different areas depending on the terpenes added.

CBD may also help regulate oil production and reduce moisture loss, allowing the skin to retain hydration more effectively. When paired with nourishing carrier oils, cannabinoids can help create a protective barrier that leaves skin feeling soft, smooth, and replenished. In practice, this means dry or flaky areas feel more comfortable almost immediately, while consistent use can support long-term skin hydration and resilience.

Cannabinoids are also known for their calming properties. When applied topically, they may help reduce the appearance of redness, irritation, and discomfort associated with inflammation.

For example, a cannabis-infused balm applied after shaving or sun exposure can provide a soothing effect and help calm the skin. Many users report that CBD topicals offer a gentle, comforting sensation that helps settle irritated areas.

Because these products are often formulated with natural, plant-based ingredients, they tend to be well-tolerated—even by those with

sensitive skin. Some research also suggests cannabinoids may help protect the skin from environmental stressors like pollution and UV exposure.

Beyond skincare, cannabis topicals are widely used for everyday physical comfort. Whether it's tension in the neck, sore muscles, or general stiffness, applying a CBD- or THC-infused product can provide localized relief.

Many formulations also include ingredients like menthol, arnica, or lavender, adding cooling or warming sensations that enhance the experience. The result is a usually relaxing, and or warming depending on the additives.

Cannabinoids like CBD also act as antioxidants, helping to neutralize free radicals caused by stress, pollution, and UV exposure. This may support overall skin health and contribute to a more youthful, resilient appearance over time.

To get the most out of cannabis topicals, apply to clean, dry skin for better absorption, massage generously into the desired area, allow time (15–30 minutes) for effects to develop, use consistently for best results, patch test if you have sensitive skin.

Choose a product that suits your needs—whether that's a CBD-only formula for skin support or a CBD:THC or CBG:CBD:THC blend for added comfort benefits.

Your skin will thank you.



Nature as Stress Relief: Why Time Outdoors?

As winter fades and spring arrives, many people feel a natural pull to spend more time outside. After months of colder weather and shorter days, the return of sunlight, fresh air, and budding trees can feel refreshing and energizing. What many people don't realize is that this seasonal shift isn't just pleasant — it can also play a meaningful role in reducing stress and improving overall wellbeing.

Research has increasingly shown that spending time in nature can have measurable benefits for both mental and physical health. Even small amounts of time outdoors can help calm the nervous system and reduce levels of cortisol, the hormone associated with stress. While life's pressures may not disappear, stepping outside can create a sense of mental space that helps people feel more balanced and relaxed.

One of the simplest reasons nature can be so beneficial is sunlight. Natural light helps regulate the body's internal clock, which influences sleep patterns, energy levels, and mood. During the darker winter months, many people experience fatigue or lower motivation. As spring brings longer days and brighter mornings, exposure to natural light

can help restore a healthier rhythm, making it easier to feel alert during the day and sleep well at night.

Nature also provides a break from the constant stimulation of daily life. Phones, screens, and busy schedules keep our minds active, often leaving little room for quiet reflection. Outdoor environments tend to offer a different kind of experience. The gentle movement of leaves, the sound of birds, or the simple act of feeling fresh air can help shift the mind away from worry and toward the present moment.

Another reason time outdoors can ease stress is that it encourages gentle movement. Activities such as walking, gardening, or tending plants naturally combine physical activity with exposure to nature. These activities do not have to be strenuous to be beneficial. Even a slow stroll through a park or a few minutes spent watering plants can help release tension and improve mood.

Gardening, in particular, has become widely recognized as a calming activity. Planting flowers, growing herbs, or caring for a small vegetable garden allows people to focus on simple, hands-on tasks. Watching something grow and

thrive can also provide a sense of accomplishment and connection with the natural world.

Importantly, enjoying the benefits of nature doesn't require long hikes or remote wilderness. Everyday outdoor spaces can offer the same restorative effects. Sitting on a porch or balcony, enjoying a cup of tea outside, or taking a short walk around the neighborhood can provide a welcome mental reset.

Spring offers many opportunities to reconnect with nature in small ways. Opening a window to let in fresh air, spending a few minutes outside in the morning sunlight, or choosing to walk rather than drive when possible can all help create moments of calm during the day.

In a season that often symbolizes renewal, spending time outdoors can be one of the simplest ways to care for our mental wellbeing. The sights, sounds, and rhythms of nature have a remarkable ability to slow us down and bring a sense of perspective. As the world outside begins to bloom again, it may also offer the perfect reminder to pause, breathe deeply, and allow the stress of daily life to soften — even if only for a few minutes at a time.

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Spring and the Psychology of Renewal

Each year, the arrival of spring seems to bring a subtle shift in mood and outlook. After months of shorter days and colder weather, the return of sunlight, fresh air, and new growth often inspires people to open the windows, tidy their homes, or begin new projects. Many describe feeling more motivated or optimistic during this time of year. While it may seem like a simple reaction to warmer weather, there is actually a psychological explanation behind this sense of renewal.

One of the main reasons spring can influence our mindset is the increase in natural daylight. During winter, shorter days can affect the body's internal clock, known as the circadian rhythm. This internal system helps regulate sleep, energy levels, and mood. When daylight is limited, some people experience fatigue, lower motivation, or a general sense of sluggishness. As spring brings longer days and brighter mornings, increased exposure to sunlight helps the body reset this rhythm. The result can be improved energy, better sleep patterns, and a more positive outlook.

Sunlight also plays a role in the

production of certain brain chemicals that influence mood. Exposure to natural light encourages the release of serotonin, a neurotransmitter associated with feelings of wellbeing and emotional balance. Higher serotonin levels are linked to improved mood and a greater sense of calm. This is one reason why many people naturally feel more cheerful and energized once the days begin to lengthen.

Beyond biology, spring also carries powerful psychological symbolism. Across cultures and throughout history, spring has represented growth, renewal, and fresh beginnings. After the dormancy of winter, seeing trees bud, flowers bloom, and wildlife reappear can subtly reinforce the idea that change and renewal are possible. Psychologists often note that environmental cues can influence how people think and behave, and seasonal changes are a powerful example of this effect. Because of this connection between season and mindset, spring often becomes a time when people feel inspired to reset routines or try something new. This might mean organizing a space that has become

cluttered, starting a new hobby, or spending more time outdoors. These changes do not need to be dramatic to have a positive impact. Even small adjustments can create a sense of momentum and motivation.

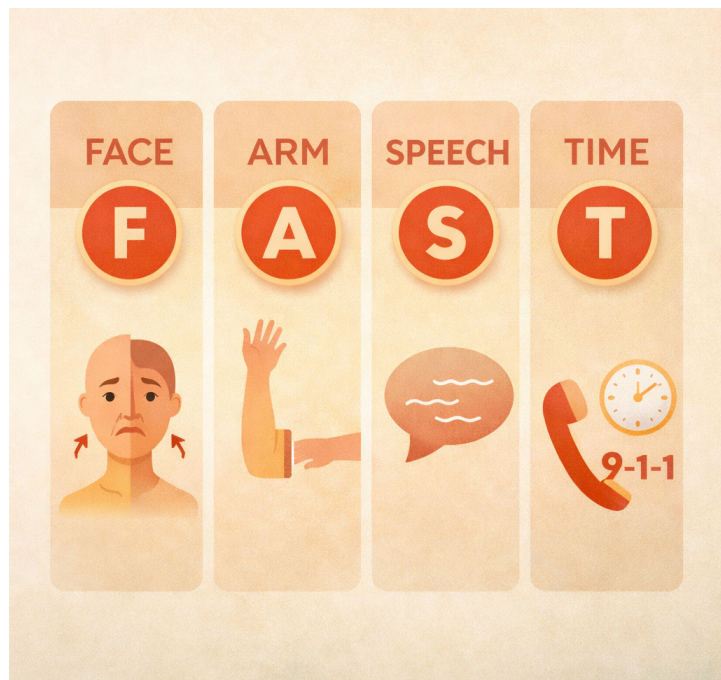
However, it is also important to approach this sense of renewal gently. While the season may encourage fresh starts, there can sometimes be pressure to overhaul routines or set ambitious goals. Psychologists suggest that meaningful change is often more sustainable when it begins with small, manageable steps. Rather than attempting to transform everything at once, choosing one or two simple intentions can be a more realistic and satisfying approach.

For example, some people may decide to take a short walk each morning, begin tending a small garden, or spend a few minutes each day reflecting on what they would like to focus on in the months ahead. These modest habits can help reinforce the feeling of moving forward while keeping expectations balanced.

Spring also invites a renewed awareness of the environment around us. Opening windows, spending time outside, or simply noticing the gradual return of green spaces can create moments of calm and reflection. These small experiences often remind us that change happens gradually, and that growth rarely occurs overnight.

The psychology of renewal reminds us that seasonal transitions can influence not only our surroundings but also our mindset. As the days grow longer and the world outside begins to bloom, spring offers a natural opportunity to pause, reflect, and gently move toward new beginnings — one small step at a time.

MSM



Stroke: Know the Signs

By Sean Pearce

As spring arrives, we all have so much to do, but let's take a moment to have a candid chat about health as we age, and specifically how stroke can impact us all. Being informed about our health is one of the most empowering things we can do. The best way to improve stroke outcomes is to know the signs of stroke and seek care fast! Join us as we explore this topic together.

A stroke can be thought of as a 'brain attack'. Blood flow to a part of your brain is suddenly stopped which prevents brain cells from getting oxygen they need which can cause damage. There is good news though! Our brains can be quite resilient and modern treatments work best when we act fast. The even better news? Many strokes are preventable with lifestyle adjustments.

What are the signs of stroke? Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada uses the word FAST as a simple way to remember the signs of stroke.

F stands for **FACE**. Is one side of your face drooping?

A stands for **ARMS**. Are you able to lift both?

S stands for **SPEECH**. Is it slurred or jumbled?

T stands for **TIME** to call 911. If any of the above symptoms arise, call 911 immediately. Even one of the symptoms is enough to call 911!

Here's the key: stroke symptoms appear suddenly. You might feel perfectly fine one moment, then experience a dramatic change the next. Don't wait to see if they'll pass, and don't try to drive yourself to the hospital. It is important to always call 911 because different hospitals can provide different stroke services, and paramedics are trained to assess and take you to the right one.

Almost 80% of premature strokes and heart disease are preventable. Small lifestyle changes can lower your risk of having a stroke. You don't have to do it all, but even one change or several smaller changes can make a difference.

High blood pressure is the number one risk factor for stroke. Make sure to see your healthcare team regularly for checkups, especially since high blood pressure often has no symptoms. Several other health conditions that increase the risk of stroke like diabetes and high cholesterol can also be caught and treated early with regular health screening.

Stay active! Research shows that even small amounts of aerobic exercise can help reduce your risk of stroke. This can be in small sessions of 10 minutes at a time or longer with a goal of 150 minutes over 4-7 days. Try and make it social and enjoyable which can help you stay consistent.

Eat thoughtfully: The Mediterranean-style diet is recommended for reducing stroke risk. Think bright colours, whole grains, olive oil and whole foods like vegetables, fish and beans. Try some berries, leafy greens, low fat dairy and a handful of nuts. It's not about deprivation; it's about adding delicious, nourishing foods.

Lifestyle tweaks: If you smoke, consider reaching out for support to help quit. Quitting can take several attempts, so don't be discouraged if this isn't your first try. If you drink alcohol, limit the amount and consider non-alcoholic alternatives.

Living our best lives as we age includes being both optimistic and prepared. Stroke may sound scary, but focusing on recognition and prevention puts you in the driver's seat. Share the FAST signs of stroke with friends and family. Remember, calling 911 at the first sign of stroke isn't just about survival; it's about giving yourself the best chance for the best recovery and getting back to the activities you love.

Sam Pearce, RN District Stroke Nurse, with a critical care background on stroke care, passionate about empowering patients through education and tools that support sustainable lifestyle, improving health, and recovery.



Grace Donaldson, holds an Honours Bachelor of Social Work and a Bachelor of Arts in Social Science, specializing in psychology and thanatology. She joined Hospice Muskoka in 2025, providing end-of-life and grief support.

Intuitive Versus Instrumental Grievers: There is More Than One “Right” Way to Grieve

One of the most common things I hear from grieving people is some version of: “I feel like I am doing this wrong.” They aren’t crying enough, or they are crying too much. They want to talk about their grief constantly, or they don’t want to talk about it at all. Somewhere along the way many people absorb the idea that there is a “right” way to grieve, and that if their experience doesn’t match it, they must be failing.

The truth is, grief doesn’t come in one shape or form. Two people can experience the same loss and grieve in very different ways. Neither is wrong.

Grief researchers Terry Martin, Ph.D., an Associate Professor of Psychology and Thanatology at Hood College, and Kenneth Doka, Ph.D., a Professor Emeritus in the Graduate School of The College of New Rochelle, describe two broad grief styles: intuitive grieving and instrumental grieving. These styles aren’t about how much someone loved the person who died; they are about how grief is processed and expressed.

Intuitive Grievers: Feeling It Fully

Intuitive grievers tend to experience grief emotionally and outwardly. Feelings come quickly and often intensely. Crying, talking, sharing memories, and expressing pain openly may feel natural and necessary. For intuitive grievers, being able to name emotions and feel understood by others can be an important part of healing.

This style of grieving often matches what society expects grief to look like. Because of that, intuitive grievers are usually recognized and supported more easily. Their grief is visible. At the same time, the intensity of emotion can feel exhausting, and intuitive grievers may feel pressure (from others or themselves) to “get back to normal” before they’re ready.

Instrumental Grievers: Doing and Thinking Through Loss

Instrumental grievers often process grief through action rather than emotion. They may stay busy, focus on

tasks, or channel their energy into problem-solving or projects. This might look like organizing paperwork, building something in memory of the person, returning to routines quickly, or taking care of others.

Emotions are still there, but they may be experienced internally, expressed privately, or understood more through thinking than feeling. Instrumental grievers are frequently misunderstood. Since they may cry less or talk less about their grief, others may assume they are “handling it well” or not grieving at all.

In reality, instrumental grieving is not avoidance; it is a different way of making sense of loss.

Most People are Somewhere in Between

While these styles are described separately, many people are blended grievers, moving between intuitive and instrumental ways of coping. Grief can look different depending on the day, the stage of loss, or what feels possible in the moment.

Difficulties arise when people expect others to grieve the way they do. Differences in grief styles can create misunderstanding, not because anyone is grieving incorrectly, but because they are grieving differently.

Why Understanding Grief Styles Matters

Recognizing grief styles can be deeply validating. It helps people let go of self-judgement and reassures them that their grief makes sense. It can also increase compassion within families, workplaces, and communities.

Supporting someone in grief isn’t about changing how they grieve. It is about responding in ways that fit them. Some people need space to talk and feel, while others need support through action, routine, or presence. One style is not healthier or more meaningful than another.

Grief reflects who we are and how we survive loss. Making room for different grief styles allows more people to feel seen and reminds us that grief doesn’t have to look a certain way to feel real.



A New Perspective: Surrender and Hope

By Mary George

Today, my elderly client learned her husband was being moved from the hospital to a nursing home about an hour's drive away. She had expected he would stay in the hospital until there was a room in a local nursing home. Questions filled with concern and loneliness moved with a heaviness from her lips.

I observed her son intentionally be matter-of-fact in answering her questions and worry. It was his way to keep it all together for himself, his mom and the family. Her son went out a while, leaving me to answer her questions.

Like she already lost, with deep surrender and tears in her eyes, she said, "I guess, what will be, will be."

My response, a gift to me and her and those now reading this in the moment. "What will be, is what we make it."

That's it! That's the gift!

I recognize now, "for better or for worse" is perspective! Sowing seeds of hope, dilutes the thickness of worry and doubt, gifting refreshed perspectives and strength in each other.

What ever happens is what we make it!

As a Christian, I was taught and encouraged to pray and praise God. To keep the channel open and celebrate all He does during our highs and lows and everything in between. Thankfully, with praise and celebration, He elevates our spirit to a higher perspective.

My client and her husband have been married over 60 years. They have had a lifetime of ups and downs and everything in between. For better or worse, my hope is that they continue to make the most of hope, best served with love, compassion, prayer and gratitude. And, that their spirits are raised to that all important visiting place: A little bit of Heaven on Earth.



The Dream

By Geraldine O'Meara

I wrote this poem while on a five day eco-spirituality retreat/workshop in the summer of 2015. [It] is a profound reminder, for me as a great grandmother, of the responsibility we as humans have for our earth, and gratefulness for all the beauty that surrounds us. I allowed my imagination to soar, and heard the voice of a great granddaughter, five generations on, writing and sending this poem to me...

*For the beauty of ochre fields,
And the aqua blue of summer skies,
Willow trees that tremble in the gentle breeze,
Take care of them, or part of the Dream will die.*

*For fluttering butterflies and wiggly worms,
For a grasshopper teetering on a blade of grass
Tipped too far and landed on its ass,
These are the things at which I too want to laugh.*

*Lakes and seas, and mountains reaching high,
Orange sun that lowers at the end of the day,
Glorious fields of spelt and dancing hay,
Will they be there for me to know?*

*I watched you dip your fingers in the pond of water,
Feel the tender shoots of grass beneath your feet,
Raise your hand to touch a yellow flower,
Sniffed and closed your eyes because it was so sweet.*

*The bumble bee that buzzed around your head,
And yes, the pesky mosquito you shooed away,
Thousands of creatures below your feet you may not see,
But they too are so important in their own way.*

The birds, their harmonious singing in the sky,

*Your quirky tree you named Sophia,
A caterpillar munching on its leafy greens,
These are signs of God's creation.*

*Rich, black top soil squishing in your hand,
Producing food so that you can eat,
Will you be able to exist if it's not there?
This is the question you need to ask and share.*

*You humans are such brilliant 'beings',
But sometimes see yourselves as 'doing' machines,
Thoughtless, mechanical actions that extinct and destroy,
Will this beauty not be there for me to enjoy?*

*I wonder if I will ever have a chance to be,
Unless caring humans wake up and see,
That destroying the earth is destroying the Dream,
Not only for you, but for others like me.*

*I thank you Great Grandmother for your love and concern,
That you and your generation are showing today,
Use imagination and skills as best you know how,
It's a pivotal time, so please respond now.*

*I'll pray for you, as you pray for me,
Your great granddaughter, five generations on, you won't see,
But let's work together to save the Dream,
If we don't then the beautiful Dream will cease to be!!*

Geraldine O'Meara, spent 21 years in England, working for a spirituality/environmental centre before residency in Huntsville, and now in Guelph to move closer to her family.



Transplant Shock

By Sean Patchett

Are you growing seedlings this year? Perhaps you have a few plants that you are overwintering indoors, but you're planning on bringing them outside this spring? If so, there is something that you should consider before you take your houseplants outside for their summer vacation. Transplant Shock.

Do you know that feeling when you walk out of a movie theatre after a matinee, and the sun is incredibly bright? Have you ever noticed how 0°Celsius feels bone-chilling in the fall, but mild and sometimes even pleasant in the spring? These are examples of how the human body adapts to environmental conditions. Your eyes adjusted to the darkness of the theatre, and your body became acclimatized to colder temperatures.

Plants adapt to their surroundings too, but it's important to remember that they can't control their environmental conditions like you can. Sunlight, moisture, humidity, fertilizer, potting medium, pests, container size and material, these are all environmental conditions that plants can feel that dictate how they should grow, in order to thrive in whatever environment they happen to be growing in. So as you take your delicate seedlings or your houseplants from your comfortable living room to the balcony, you may accidentally be traumatizing your plants. The sudden change in conditions may be too much for them.

There are a few things you can do for your plants to help prepare them for their new location. While your plants are still growing inside during the winter, you can direct a fan to blow on them. The stress from the wind will stunt their growth a little, but it will also stimulate thicker, sturdier growth. Your seedlings will be tougher and healthier because of it.

You can also do something called "Hardening Off". This is when you expose your plants to a new environment for periods of time, to help acclimatize them to their new conditions. You simply take your plants outside during the day (hopefully somewhere with indirect sunlight, to avoid a sun burn) and back inside for the night. This gradual exposure will mitigate any trauma caused by drastic changes to their environmental conditions.

Imagine all the conditions listed earlier, and how they might be different for your plants when you move them. Once you have an idea of how things will change, then you can take steps to make that transition a little less shocking.

Sean Patchett, is a member of Master Gardeners of Muskoka. Their goal is to share, inform and advise avid and amateur gardeners with tips for indoor, outdoor and balcony gardening.

SPORTS CORNER



By Peter Cassidy

Life in the Maritimes

Well, it seems it has taken 79 years and a year in the Maritimes to finally grow up.

What I mean is I may have jumped the gun a bit moving out here.

The lack of my kind of sports has been a bit disappointing.

I will admit that the past winter has been mild compared to the weather I hear Muskoka had.

On another note... I have been diagnosed with throat cancer. This was quite a shock and the last thing I expected. I woke up the next morning after my diagnosis and was very silent. I did not want to talk to anyone. My daughter was quite angry with me this morning, saying not to feel sorry for myself.

This made me stop and reflect on my past life as it was. I enjoyed sports more than anything. After retiring from participating and coaching, I think I can truly say I had a good life.

The first thing I thought this morning was to thank Jesus for giving me a brand new day to serve Him. I have not had any termination time from my doctor, so who knows what lays ahead of me.

I know I am so thankful for the many, many good people who have crossed my path over my life. The little boys building sandcastles on the baseball bags during a game. The boys who skated the wrong way with the puck. Plus, my own personal experiences with sports.

God blessed me with the ability to excel a little during my participation, allowing me to enjoy sports a bit better.

I have now placed whatever is left of my life in the hands of Jesus and the Holy Spirit. I thank Cheryl Patterson for the opportunity of sharing my stories. God Bless you all.

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.

MUSKOKA SENIORS MAGAZINE would like to thank Peter Cassidy in return for being such a meaningful part of this publication, and for his real, heartfelt, and sometimes funny accounts of his sports related experiences and feature stories. We appreciate you and hold you in our hearts as you go through this challenging journey.
- Sincerely, Cheryl Patterson



Guess what's coming?

We're happy to announce the return of MUSKOKA SENIORS MAGAZINE print edition for the holiday season.

This special edition will be a limited number of print copies, created as something meaningful to enjoy, keep, and share.

As part of MSM Connect, members will have access to this special holiday edition, along with everything else the community hub has to offer.

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The Last of the Veenstra's from Friesland

By Allan Denne

WWII had devastated Europe. Cities, towns, villages and farmlands were obliterated by the relentless rumble of war. The Netherlands was invaded by Nazi Germany on May 10, 1940, resulting in a five-year Nazi occupation. For years the Netherlands suffered under Nazi rule. Fear, suffering and food shortages were the way of life. Dutch families lived in constant fear and hunger.

The Germans had cut the dikes to let seawater flood the low-lying fields, thus farmlands were completely destroyed. The country was liberated in phases from September 1944 to April 1945 and the occupation officially ended on May 5, 1945.

The Netherlands then experienced severe over population and high unemployment. The country's agricultural land was destroyed. There was a surplus of unworkable land, and unemployment. During the 1950s, many Dutch farmers were encouraged to immigrate to Canada. Canadian officials had signed a postwar bilateral immigration agreement with the Dutch government to bring immigrating Dutch agricultural families to Canada. Canadian officials urged this influx of immigrants to settle in Ontario, Alberta or Saskatchewan. The Canadian government relied heavily on religious organizations to help integrate arriving immigrants into their adopted country. These organizations chose areas they believed would bring both economic opportunity

and familiar landscape to Dutch newcomers.

Friesland is a Province in the Netherlands. Friesland is the home of the Netherlands's ethnic Frisian people. The official languages of Friesland are West Frisian and Dutch.

This is the story of Henke Veenstra, a Dutch immigrant from Friesland.

She's Henny Veenstra. The Veenstra's from Friesland in the Netherlands embarked on a major lifestyle change and migrated from their home in Friesland to Canada in 1952.

Our hero, Henke was 14 years old. Her birth language was West Frisian.

The Veenstra family departed from the port of Amsterdam in The Netherlands on the The Southern Cross, (Zuidern Cross). In 1951 this ship was converted into an emigrant ship, on-board accommodations for 841 passengers. All eight of the Veenstra family boarded ship in the late spring of 1952 on a 7-day crossing of the Atlantic Ocean headed for their new home in Canada.

The crossing was not easy for the Veenstra family. Henke remembers her older sister Hiltje was so sick the family worried they would lose her. Each day medical staff would bring Hiltje on deck on her hospital bed for fresh air. Hiltje would survive and go on to live a short, but fruitful life in Canada. . CONT'D >>>

CONT'D FROM PAGE 21

The docking in Canada was at Halifax Harbour: From Halifax travel was by train to Ontario, to the lush farmlands bordering the north shore of Lake Ontario, to Trenton, Ontario. Upon arrival in Trenton and introduction to the Canadian family lifestyle the children were urged to take new names that would reflect a North American (Canadian) appeal of the family. Thus, identity changes took place.

Anne - - - - Mother
Johansis - - - - Father
Grace - - - - - Grace
Janie - - - - - Jane
Hiltje -- - - - - Hilda
Boiukje- - - - - Betty
Henke- - - - - Henny
Peter -- - - - - Peter

Henke became Henny and at 14 years of age. Henny and her younger sibling Peter, started school in a one room schoolhouse just outside Trenton, Ontario. In spite of the fact that she was 14 years old at that time, Henny was placed in Grade 1 due to her lack of the English language.

Henny and her brother were immediately tagged as “Stupid Dutchies.” This was a source of insult to Henny and drove her to make the decision not to return to school. While her mother objected, Henny persisted so her mother ruled that, “if she wasn’t going to school she could darn well go to work!” So, in 1954 Henny went to work for a physician, Dr. Dow in Trenton looking after the family and children. That physician got Henny a position at a care-facility for seniors in Toronto. It was the first stepping stone in her career as a “Medical and\ Home-Care- Provider.” Henny went on to work at several medical facilities and earned her R.N.A. diploma from Bowmanville Hospital in 1956. It was here in Bowmanville Henny met and married her first husband, a Dutch compatriot, John Deraaf in 1958 in a ceremony in Trenton, Ontario.

Henny practiced her skill and love as a homecare and medical care provider around the Bowmanville area for several years. In 1956 Henny had the opportunity to be a Facility Health Care Manager at Lakeshore Home, a Retirement Home in Toronto.

Henny and John’s marriage resulted in two lovely daughters, but ended in 1981. Following this separation Henny volunteered for many opportunities to assist in

sure all who entered were, in fact, single. It was there her community. She volunteered at a “Singles Club” in Oshawa, volunteered to be at the entry door to make sure all who entered were, in fact, single. It was there Henny met Henry Labreque. Henny and Henry were married in 1991 and, for a few years, made their home in North Bay where Henny resumed her career with the Red Cross in the home\health care field. Soon Henny and Henry moved south from North Bay to Gravenhurst, Ontario, where Henny immediately immersed herself again in her passion, her career in the health\ home care field working with Red Cross and other health and home-care providers.

Using her own vehicle, Henny would drive all over the area providing home care to patients for the Red Cross, as well as meal preparation for several providers of that service.

In their later years Henny and Henry accomplished a goal that not everyone in our Country can claim to have enjoyed. They travelled the width of Canada from one ocean on the east side to the other on the west side. That travelling passion continued, camping in a camper all over Ontario and the eastern provinces. Two lovely daughters and their respective families reminisce fondly over the loving home, care, attention and cooking Henny provided for them.

Today, Henny Labreque resides at The Manor at Gravenhurst, a small, beautiful retirement residence located in the heart of Gravenhurst. Some of her old former clientele actually reside there with her, and they, along with her other fellow residents are honoured to share her memories and stories of her travels and her services in her ‘second homeland’ and right here in this small community.

Henny is a wonderful lady of charm, grace, dignity and precious humor, and her character and strength to have survived - not only survived but to have carved out a wonderful and fulfilling life here in Canada - is remarkable and inspirational.

She may have come here as a Dutch immigrant!

She may have been tagged as a “Dumb Dutchie”.

But, to her fellow residents at The Manor and to the hundreds of those in communities where her services were needed, and who received her compassionate care and attention in an hour of need, she will always be – Henny!

- - - The Last of The Original Veenstras from Friesland.



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A Rat in My Hat

Kenn R. E. Page

On the 2nd last day of May the sky was a pale smokey blue, almost white, and it was sunny, not too hot and not too cool. On days like this I have a real struggle with being stuck indoors, bugs or no bugs. It's been a long time since I used a chemical bug repellent of any kind to ward off the pests. I had to find

a suitable alternative because my garden and I are strictly organic.

What I have for working outdoors in the bugs is a 100% screen mesh bug jacket I purchased in town years ago. I've never seen another one like it since, although you may own one yourself. My veggie patch needed a lot of attention in the

spring in question, and so Susan and I divided up the work. She would do all the seed planting and I would cultivate the beds, weed the paths, and replace the old woodchips on the paths with new woodchips. The last task being a lot more bending and kneeling work than has proved good for me.

CONT'D...

Susan had less to do because she still works and I don't. On the 5th last day in May we hit the garden running. To make it easier for Susan to kneel on the woodchip paths I headed to the garden shed to get the kneeling cushion for her. The garden kneeling cushion is an older patio chair cushion that folds in half. When I picked it up I discovered the two inner fabric surfaces of the folded cushion were badly chewed up. It had not been that way a short time before. There was no mouse nest, just quite a bit of shredded cushion fabric. The two outer sides were still good. Whoever did this was working undercover.

I know this is not where the expression, "You dirty rat, you dirty rat!" comes from, but it fit the situation perfectly. Besides rats and mice, which I had not seen any evidence of other than this, the only other critters I had seen in my yard that spring were birds and bees of assorted varieties, the odd small toad, and three deer - a mommy and two young ones. None of which qualified as likely cushion eating candidates.

Several years ago or so, I had a plump gopher take up residence in an old stump pile about four metres from the garden fence. Since the fence was made up of 7ft. steel posts and strands of poly binder twine, which I might add worked wonders keeping the deer out of my garden, it did nothing towards keeping various rodents including gophers and racoons out. After raiding my garden until it was full, the gopher stretched out flat on a big log to sun itself. That is until I had a stern talk with it. Chowing down in my garden was a no no! I didn't eat it's food, why should it eat mine.

I doubted very much that a plump-gopher would make it under my shed door. Perhaps a skinny one could squeeze through to zero in on my kneeling cushion and chew it half to bits. The most likely culprit I had not seen one of all spring. Even during the years I had chipmunks and squirrels coming out my ears, the kneeling cushion remained safe stored in the shed year round. So, as you may wonder, what on earth is going on.

Back to the 2nd last day that May, trying to disguise myself as a bush, I donned my camouflage colour hunter's baseball cap — a sort of contradiction in terms — climbed into my green bug jacket, tucked my jeans into my socks and ventured out. It took seconds to be attacked left, right and center. On approaching the garden shed to get my kneeling cushion. I was somewhat startled to see it on the ground half in the shed and half out under the shed door. I was sure that was not where Susan left it the last time she used it.

Someone was playing footsie with my kneeling cushion. When I opened the folded cushion up, much to my disgust, the fabric on the two inner sides, for all intents and purposes was non-existent. Even some of the foam padding was gone. It was my sincere hope that the critter responsible had choked good and proper on the foam padding. All I could do was stuff the remains into a green garbage bag so I could still use what was left.

While I was still in the shed, I thought to pull down off the big shelf at the back, a bunched up fabric cover for an old patio umbrella that I used at times as a cover for things outside. The key word here is that it was fabric. When nothing jumped out at me, I didn't investi-

-gate further. Later I discovered I should have.

Next day, in the shed again, I unfolded the fabric cover, I found it to be full of various size holes and low and behold a nest. A big fuzzy ball of a nest constructed of chewed up fabric matching the colour of my kneeling pad. I seemed to be closing in on the cushion eating varmint. Finding the nest didn't much surprise me. What I found in the nest didn't much surprise me either. There in the disturbed nest was a three inch or so, curled up, hairless and lifeless baby red squirrel. The nest had been disturbed the day before and at night it had only been seven degrees Celsius, pretty cold for a recent newborn. During the past several days the mother must have been trying to add extra insulation to the nest by molesting my kneeling cushion.

I don't know about you, but over the years I've seen a lot of damage done by red squirrels. The mystery was now solved, as I suspected all along. Up until now, I still have seen neither head nor tail of the mother, probably suffering indigestion. As far as the rat in my hat goes, the dirty rat was finally revealed. However, as we have seen, my hat only played a minor roll through all this, although I was wearing it every day out in the garden.

Let me ask you this: If the title had been "A Rat in My Garden Kneeling Cushion" would you be reading this now?

***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.*



The Bridge

By Bessie Grimes

He stood on the bridge, both hands on the rail, breathing deeply. His eyes were closed. He had seen what was below him; turbulent water, rocks and danger. He didn't know how to swim. If he did this, there was no hope that he would survive. As he stood, he counted his heartbeats. How many did he have left? Not many, he estimated. Drowning was not an easy way to die, but it was certain. Death would come within ten minutes, he was sure.

As she walked along the road, the 18-year-old wondered why she hadn't seen any traffic. This was a dead-end road, but, still, there were a few houses on it.

Then she saw him. His whole stance told her what he intended to do. So did his outfit. He wore only the briefest of swim trunks and a shirt that was completely unbuttoned.

He was going to jump!

She ran to him and touched his arm. He almost didn't notice her; then he shook her off.

"I'm preparing to do something. It's important."

"Please, please don't do it," she cried. She reached up and kissed him on the cheek.

He looked at her. She was gorgeous and she seemed to care. Many people would have walked past him.

He wasn't surprised when she kissed his cheek again.

She was asking for it. He pulled her into his arms and kissed her soundly. Before many minutes had passed, they were down on the floor of the bridge making love.

She was completely responsive to his touch. She

was wonderful; well worth living for. Somehow he was going to get to meet her again. There would be an opportunity.

When they were on their feet again, he stepped back from her. He gripped her by the shoulders. "Walk away and don't look back!"

She was stunned. He had seemed to want her. She looked up at him questioningly.

He gave her a slight shake.

"I need to prepare for something. Walk away and don't look back. It's important that you don't see anything."

She hesitated.

"Walk away and don't look back!"

She realized that he meant it. He didn't desire her enough to stay alive for her.

She turned and walked away.

She did not look back.

He gripped the rail again. Below him the water still churned. The bridge covered a small waterfall.

After a few minutes, he turned away from the railing.

Two men emerged from behind some nearby bushes.

"Well, are you going to jump or not?"

"No," he said. "The stunt man will have to do it."

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.



Grandparent Delete

By Brenda J. Wood

Who wants the old? The feeble, the done?
Surely someone will take them till their time is done?
Query the young, see where they stand
Someone take Granny??? Oh, won't that be grand?
Arthritis has moved in and joint pain persists
Somebody quick! Put senior homes on a list.
Oh, Granny was fun when she fixed, baked and cleaned
But now? When she walks with that funny tipped lean?
Who thought she'd wear out or that she'd be done?
Who thought she'd go blind and complain of the sun?
And still telling and telling the same old routine?
Surely, we've had enough of that boring old scene!
Quick! Find her a home. Oh, please no! Not mine!
It should be the oldest. A definite sign.
She doesn't need much, just a corner to sit.
Yet no one can find a place where she fits.

Words for the Spiritually Disenchanted | 35
She's no longer useful ----AND now she needs care.
Well, it's not going to be me. Don't you even dare!
Thank God, she might die and leave

us alone
Then we'll all cry and sob and loudly bemoan
That we have lost grandma, Oh what a pity
We'll shed buckets of tears and drown out the city
Nobody wants grandma? That's not true, not true at all
Because God is waiting to comfort instead
He will lay her faithful body on a heavenly bed.
So do not despair. Granny is fine.
Protected from family who rudely declined.

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 also hopestreamradio.com.

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This is Where I Want to Be

By Bruce Lenton

*How I wish I could know,
Where the wild waters flow,
To see them spill triumphantly,
Over rocky cliffs so high,
Where the soaring eagle flies,
In the land of tranquility.*

*The roaring raging fall,
Wandering mists easing all,
The glory of sweet serenity,
Under clouds that billow high,
In a perfect dappled sky,
This is where I want to be.*

*And I wish I could go,
To where the tall pines meet the snow,
By a rippled sunset sky,
Aurora flowing bright,
Where the North winds bite,
The thrill of the lonely wolf's cry.*

*This is my home, my heart,
From which I cannot part,*

*The sacred land that calls to me,
The mountains of the North,
The land of my birth,
This is where I want to be.*

*And I wish I could see,
Stars out to infinity,
Lost in the rhythm of the flow,
Where the dark makes heaven bright,
And the glory of the night,
Is the only thing I could ever know.*

*This is my home, my heart,
From which I cannot part,
The sacred land that calls to me,
The mountains of the North,
The land of my birth,
This is where I want to be.*

Bruce Lenton, grew up in Thunder Bay. He obtained his teaching qualifications from the University of Ottawa. His Children's book is called, "A Much Happier You." You may contact Bruce at b.lenton@shaw.ca.

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MUSKOKA SENIORS MAGAZINE

Community Page

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The winner of the winter *Moments of Joy: Kids & Family Photo Challenge* is Susan Keast, of Gravenhurst, with her lovely picture of her and her granddaughter. Congratulations Susan! For more information about our challenges, visit our [Moments of Joy page](#).

MSM Connect community hub created for the Muskoka region. Featuring *Events*, *Your Questions Answered: Everyday Topics That Matter* interview series, resources, *Shop Local /Discounts & Perks*, *Moments of Joy* challenges, *Caregiver Insights*, and more. Visit msmconnect.ca to learn more.

In case you missed it, MUSKOKA SENIORS MAGAZINE is bringing back special limited-edition print copies for the holidays! To subscribe, visit our [Magazine page](#) on the MSM Connect community hub website.

BUSINESSES

HAMMOND TOURS - Day and multi-day trips, international destinations... Your #1 choice for a once-in-a-lifetime group travel experience! www.hammondtraveltours.ca, 1800-562-1885. Check out our new Feature Trip package on [p. 2](#)

HUNTERS BAY RADIO - Community Radio, Super Jackpot Bingo, local podcasts, news and more. Download the app at muskokaradio.com

MUSKOKA CREMATION & BURIAL SERVICES LTD - Professional, cost effective cremation and burial services, including memorial merchandise such as urns, keepsakes and memorial jewellery. For further information or inquiry call 705-789-0086, or visit: <https://www.muskokacremation.ca>. [p. 27](#)

MUSKOKA HILLS RETIREMENT VILLA - Where happiness lives. Join us for a tour and complimentary lunch. Nature trails, patio, gardening, snooker, and more. Spacious suites, wi-fi, and great views. Short-term stays and temporary respite available. 705-645-6364 www.muskokahillsretirement.com, [p. 30](#)

THE GREEN BOUQUET CANNABIS - Our team is Canssell Certified and here to talk to you about your cannabis questions. We have free educational information in-store for seniors. In-store or curbside pick up. Open 7 days a week. 705-385-9333, <https://www.thegreenbouquetcannabis.com>, [p. 12](#), [23](#)

SERVICE GROUPS

ALZHEIMER'S SOCIETY OF MUSKOKA - WALK FOR ALZHEIMER'S, MAY 30 BRACEBRIDGE, MAY 31 HUNTSVILLE: Walk With Us. So No One Living With Alzheimer's Walks Alone! Details, Donations, Registration: 705-645-5621 or https://support.alzheimer.ca/site/SPageServer?pagename=wfa_home

BRACEBRIDGE CENTRE FOR ACTIVE LIVING - A community hub for Seniors to stay active, enjoy programs, events, and build friendships. 54 Dominion Street Bracebridge 705-645-9111, www.bracebridgeseniorscentre.ca

MUSKOKA 100 PEOPLE WHO CARE - unites community members who meet twice a year, each contributing \$100 to create a meaningful impact for local charities. <https://www.muskoka100peoplewhocare.ca>

PROBUS CENTRAL MUSKOKA BRACEBRIDGE - We are a Social Club who meets to enjoy numerous activities, share similar interests, learn and stay engaged. www.centralmuskokaprobussoc.ca

Shop Local. Save More.

***Discover local businesses
and enjoy added value through MSM Connect.***

MSM Connect makes it easier to support local by connecting you with businesses across Muskoka—while offering exclusive discounts and perks along the way. From everyday services to unique local finds, you'll discover businesses that add value to your daily life.

Through our Discounts and Perks page, members can access special offers from participating businesses, making it even more rewarding to shop local and stay connected.

**To explore participating local businesses and access exclusive offers, visit our Discounts & Perks page at:
msmconnect.ca.**

If you enjoy staying connected, here are a couple extra places to find us:
Stay up to date about what's happening on our new Facebook page: [msmconnect](https://www.facebook.com/msmconnect).
Instagram: [@msmconnect.ca](https://www.instagram.com/msmconnect.ca)



Where connections become community

msmconnect.ca



HAPPINESS LIVES HERE



QUALITY BRACEBRIDGE INDEPENDENT LIVING.

Nestled in the heart of the beautiful Muskoka Lakes region, Muskoka Hills Retirement Villa is located just outside of Bracebridge, Ontario, close to restaurants, ship excursions, shopping, many churches, the local library and parks.



WE BELIEVE
*there is a time to relax,
retire and enjoy stress-free living*

Stroll the walking trails and relax in the gazebo by the pond. Deer, moose and many varieties of wild birds are just a few of the pleasures to enjoy while relaxing in the Grand Lounge, with the stone Muskoka Fireplace. Meet our Chaplain and wonderful staff. Our nurses care about your needs and we have 24 Hour Care.

Muskoka Hills Retirement Villa offers round the clock wellness services to enhance your retirement and assisted living needs. Enjoy great meals, room service laundry facilities, and trips into town in the Villa van. Stay active and take part in daily Programmed Events, Game Clubs, Exercise Room, or trim the plants in our Garden Room. Take it easy next to one of the fireplaces with a good book from our library. Listen to the monthly music concerts or watch hockey on the big screen TV.

Yes, Happiness lives here. Just talk to our long time residents and staff.



Respite Assistance in Muskoka

- Nurse 24/7
- Respite now available
- Friendly & Caring Staff

Come for a tour and free lunch

MUSKOKA HILLS RETIREMENT VILLA

690 Highway 118W Bracebridge ON P1L 1W8 (Just West of Bracebridge) Tel: 705-645-6364

www.muskokahillsretirement.com

