



I have set my rainbow in the clouds,
and it shall be a sign of the covenant
between me and the earth.

Genesis 9:13

Nov. Dec., 2019 VOLUME 6 EDITION 5

Life With Us

At Niagara United Mennonite Church

We Are A Rainbow

We're the light of all the world

We are a city on a hill

We're a candle on a stand proclaiming light

We will not hide our lamp
beneath a bushel any more

We will shine a ray of hope
that's burning bright

Chorus:

We are a rainbow

Sign of covenant and peace

For the flood of tears will finally cease to be

Come shine your rainbow

Splash your hues across the sky

Paint the world in colors

Proud and bold and free

We're a coat of many colors

Sewn from many different threads

Covering all in warmth in welcome and in grace

God said Let there be light

Created every varied shade

In the rainbow each of us can find a place.

Chorus

We are hope to still believe

In tomorrow's better day

We are peace in a world that's torn apart

We are joy that will last

In all the struggles that we face

We are love that blooms and grows

In every heart

Chorus

When we face the storms of life

We will never be alone

For our God will be with us on the way

Hand in hand side by side

We won't be frightened any more

As the mourning night of tears

Breaks into day

We are a rainbow

Sign of covenant and peace

For the flood of tears will finally cease to be

Come shine your rainbow

Splash your hues across the sky

Paint the world in colors

proud and bold and free

David Kai

CCLI Song # 7100027

We Are a Rainbow - an affirming hymn

Words & music by David Kai 2017 Tune: Slocan

The following scriptures are the inspiration behind this hymn written particularly for affirming ministries. The hymn draws on rainbows & rainbow-coloured imagery in the Bible, and the imagery of light which is composed of rainbow colours.

Gen. 1:3 And God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light.

Gen. 9:13 "I have set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth".

Gen. 37:3 Now Jacob loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age: and he made him a coat of many colours.

Ps. 30:5b Weeping may linger for the night, but joy comes with the morning.

Matt. 5:14, 15 "You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house."

~ David Kai

This song is found in the **Collection of Songs for the Holy Other** assembled by a working group of The Hymn Society. This Collection was introduced in the Canadian Mennonite in September, 2019 by Cedar Klassen from Kitchener, Ont. To find more information and further hymns contained in this collection, check online or ask Kathy Rempel.

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Check out the wonderful variety of Christmas gifts & decorations at Ten Thousand Villages!

'It's the most wonderful time of the year' !

Everything begins to sparkle by about mid November. Christmas Markets and outdoor skating rinks have been set and hot chocolate is being sold throughout the whole of downtown Belgrade, meaning that anywhere and everywhere you go smells, feels like and looks a lot like Christmas. All we have to do next is hope for *White Christmas*.

It's the time of the year when my home would smell like a cookie factory and my mom would create lists of dishes she would like to make for a big feast! I simply loved it!

Every Christmas Eve, Dec 24th, my whooooole family would get together at one of my aunties for supper, and on Christmas Day, Dec 25th, we would be at home and often have our close friends over! There would be piles of food upon food everywhere you would turn. In one corner there would be roasted pork (not turkey, only and always pork), in another a thousand and one salads; everything ranging from beet salad, roasted red peppers, "Russian" Salad (eggs, peas, pickles, carrots, potato, ham, all neatly cubed no bigger than the size of the peas and mixed together enough mayo to cause a heart-attack), cabbage salad, pasta salad, Sopska Salata (fresh tomatoes, cucumber, onion, peppers, and feta), dried red peppers stuffed with wheat, sarma (soured cabbage cabbage rolls, and the most important Prebranac (a baked bean dish). In another corner sweets: Baklava, Reforma (chocolate cake), Bule (cinnamon roles), and cookies.

And if you are still feeling peckish, there are bowls of walnuts, dried apricots, plums and figs scattered through the house.

In the Protestant church I grew up in, we would hold two Christmas services every year, one the Sunday closest to the Dec 25th and another on the Sunday closest to Jan 7. 85% of Serbs belong to the Serbian Orthodox Church, which follows the Julian Calendar, where Christmas falls on Jan 6-7. Since many people in our church had family and friends that belonged to the Orthodox Church, or had grown up in the Orthodox faith and tradition, we would celebrate both because civic holidays, school holidays and many extended family and friend gatherings occurred around Jan 6-7. So I got to celebrate Christmas twice!

*Last time we were visiting my family in Serbia, Elijah and Leopold, were visited by the Serbian Santa.

~ submitted by Ana Janzen



Life with My Children By Chris Hutton

If you were at church for our Labour Day service this past September, you likely heard me share about my family and our journey with autism.

In the past couple of years, our son, Xander, and our daughter, Elora, were diagnosed as on the autism spectrum. During my sermon, I shared that this was not a moment of sadness or despair for our family, but it was a moment of celebration that now we could get even better tools with which to parent, coach, and care for our children's development. My wife, Michele, fought long and hard for this kind of care for our children, and so it was a great day when we were finally able to develop some understanding around what is so unique about our children.

If you're familiar with autism, it often manifests as particular responses to sensory stimuli. This means that things like colours and noise can get "turned up to 11" so to speak. Our children will often experience sensory stimuli at a much more sensitive level than many other people. Now, imagine trying to learn things like art, mathematics, and social interactions when everything is just much brighter and louder than normal.

Autism also refers to how a person's brain will have different ways of learning and processing information. Sometimes, a person with autism will not pick up on certain social cues; not out of ignorance or malice, but because their brain just literally does not use the same neural pathways as other people might.

God knit Elora and Xander together in their mother's womb. He created them through and through, and He loves everything about them. This is the biblical message that Jesus constantly calls us back to: "You are my beloved child with whom I am well pleased." Our children are not aberrations or mistakes. God made them completely in his image; just as he made me with my childhood asthma and my apparent inability to become a superstar athlete!

As such, God has things to teach us through our children.

When my daughter becomes overwhelmed by the news about something and needs to step away from all people and stimuli because her reaction of sadness is so strong; I remember how when I often experience grief, it's like I cease to function. I become incapable of being 100% alert and attentive to something.

When my son begins to break down and manifest aggressive behaviours because he has been too long around certain stimuli, it reminds me of how angry I get when I hurt my head. When the pain is blinding and that whining noise in my ear is so loud, I can make rash decisions and say harsh things.

I need grace. I need to be loved. Otherwise, life can just become too difficult to handle; and so I realize that when I love my children through their experience of life, I am yearning to be loved through my own experience of life.

Elora is such an amazing artist. If you see her sketching on a Sunday morning, this is a practice that helps her to process information around her; and her drawings give our family a beautiful window into the world around us.



Xander is a creative builder and has an incredible mind for how things go together and work. He also amazes me with his gentleness. When other children suffer around him or experience anger, he has an almost eternal well of patience around them.

I have much to learn from life with my children, and I hope that you, as our church family, may do the same.

May we at NUMChurch welcome Elora and Xander as the beautiful children that they are, and provide for them the safe and loving environment they need and deserve as they move in our circles. Thank-you Chris for sharing your personal family story with us. May God continue to bless you and Michele in the raising of your family and ministry of our church.

(Editors' comments)



Unleashing your Potential ~ by Lauryn Friesen

This summer I was incredibly lucky to have had the opportunity to cycle across Canada through an organization called Unleash Your Potential. Unleash Your Potential is a student run initiative through Canadian Memorial Chiropractic College, where four students cycle coast to coast; from British Columbia to Newfoundland. The goal of the journey was to stop at elementary schools, Boys and Girls Clubs, and summer camps along the way to speak to students about healthy active living, bike safety, and spending more time outdoors. We spent almost two years planning for this adventure and officially took off from Tofino on May 28th!

We started our journey by driving from Toronto, through the United States, and to our starting location in Tofino, British Columbia. We made it there in six days. We saw some incredible sights along the way, and began our cycling journey the day after arriving there. We spent the next two and a half months cycling from Tofino, British Columbia to St. Johns, Newfoundland. We were so lucky to have a support van where we could keep our tent and camping supplies, as well as food. During the journey, two of us cycled at a time while the other two would drive the support van. On average we cycled about 80 kilometers per day each; but of course this varied depending on the terrain, elevation gain, and weather. It was a lot easier cycling through the flat Prairies than it was through the Canadian Rocky Mountains. As for accommodations, we spent about half the nights camping and the other half we were hosted. The most wonderful surprise this summer was the incredible generosity of people who welcomed us into their homes. It was amazing to see how openly everyone invited these four sweaty, tired strangers into their homes and offered us tours of their towns, along with food, showers, and beds to sleep in.

In total, it took us 75 days to complete our trip. Over this time I learned that there is no better way to take in scenery than on a bicycle. There were days that were tougher than others, like spending three hours cycling up a steep incline, or cycling in a hailstorm; but it was truly a once in a lifetime opportunity filled with incredible memories that I will cherish forever. Throughout this whole journey I had the support of my amazing family. My family met up with us a couple times throughout the summer and they even made the trip out to St. Johns, Newfoundland to watch us finish the journey. The absolute best way to end this summer was to see my family standing at the top of Cape Spear (the finish line) cheering us on. I am so blessed to have family that is supportive of everything that I do and I couldn't have done this without their constant encouragement and love.

Although the goal of this summer was to inspire the younger generation, it ended up being a massive learning opportunity for myself as well. When you spend over two and a half months living out of a minivan with the same 3 people, sleeping in a tent or strangers' houses, and being forced to eat peanut butter and jelly sandwiches for three days in a row because you're too tired to cook at the end of a long day, you have the opportunity to learn a lot about yourself, about human nature, and about the world we live in. This summer was one of the most phenomenal experiences of my entire life. Canada is such a beautiful country and I am so lucky to have gotten to explore it on two wheels while meeting so many kind people along the way.

*(Lauryn is the daughter of Karl & Linda Friesen
& granddaughter of Franz Friesen)*



MCC Relief Sale in Kansas ~ submitted by Will Friesen

The Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) has played a key role in shaping Niagara United Mennonite Church into the faith community it is today through its involvement in assisting in relief efforts worldwide, facilitating emigration of refugees, and through numerous service opportunities, including the annual MCC Relief Sale. As a native of Kansas transplanted into the NUMC community for a few years, the church's involvement with MCC was especially interesting to me since I grew up in the area where the organization that became MCC first came to be.

In 1919, General Conference Mennonites and Mennonite Brethren primarily in Reedley, California (where my grandmother was raised), and Hillsboro, Kansas, who had emigrated from Russia less than 50 years prior, had growing concern for relatives living in ever-worsening conditions in Russia. They successfully delivered \$40,000 of relief supplies to Mennonites in Siberia, which had not yet fallen under Soviet Rule. Out of this effort, the Emergency Relief Committee of Mennonites in North America was formed in Hillsboro, Kansas. Before long, however, the door to Siberia was closed. After reorganizing with other Anabaptist groups (such as 'Old' Mennonites, Krimmer Mennonite Brethren, and Beachy Amish), the Mennonite Central Committee was born in Chicago, Illinois. This new group was able to provide some relief to those suffering in the Russian famine.

The first auction that would later become the Mennonite Relief Sale was organized in Hillsboro, Kansas, in 1969. The auction featured goods such as farm machinery and furniture as well as the now-iconic Relief Sale quilts. Within a few years, the Kansas sale swelled to be among the largest of this now-popular event across the United States and Canada. With the increase in size, the small 3,000-person town of Hillsboro could no longer handle the masses of people flocking to the event, which have at times been estimated at over 30,000. Eventually, the sale moved to the Kansas State Fairgrounds in Hutchinson, which allows MCC to rent for free in exchange for Mennonites providing shuttle services at the State Fair in September.

The "MCC Sale" as it is called, has become a family reunion type of event, where many people enjoy meeting up with family and friends who they seldom see. One especially popular event to meet up with friends is "The Feeding of the Multitude," a buffet meal including varanike, farmer sausage, zwieback, komst borscht, cherry or pluma moos, bohne berrogi (a Swiss-Volhynian Mennonite treat), and pie. Last year, an estimated 10,000 people ate at this meal between Friday supper and Saturday noon meal.



Sausages of many varieties.



Pies, breads, noodles, New Year's cookies





Other events that draw people are the quilt, general, and silent auctions, as well as booths selling everything from quilting supplies to Russian decorated eggs

A group of around 40 volunteers convert 2,000 pounds of dry cottage cheese, 1,200 pounds of flour, 450 dozen eggs, and 40 gallons of milk into about 20,000 varanike over a few days each year. Other groups prepare the komst borscht, which is

cooked in the “Borscht Buggy”, a trailer sporting several large *miagrope* (large 30-gallon kettles). Approximately 35,000 New Years Cookies (*portzelkje* or *niejoash koakje*) are enjoyed before they run out.



. As there are three Mennonite colleges in the area, a sort of competition exists as to which school will have the greatest representation of alumni wearing a school T-shirt. The final event of the MCC Sale weekend is the final performance of the Kansas Mennonite Men’s Chorus, which I had the joy of singing in for the first time this year.



In the days and months leading up to the sale, there is much that goes on in the background from preparing donations to ordering supplies for the event. Also, volunteers gather in the weeks before the sale to prepare the Bohne Beroggi, warm pastries with a sweet paste inside and a thin drizzle outside, and Verenike, cottage cheese dumplings with ham gravy on top .

As far as social events go around here, the MCC Sale is a highlight for many each year. It’s a weekend to over indulge in fattening foods that we don’t often enjoy and meet up with family and friends we don’t often see. In the end, we get to partake in an event that raises a large sum of money each year for those in need, this year in excess of \$600,000. If you ever find yourself in Central Kansas on the second weekend of April, be sure to come experience it. Just bring along your winter coat, umbrella, or summer sandals because you never know what weather Kansas will throw at you!

Auction Sale



1942 Studebaker Coupe with 101,000 miles & original paint & interior!

1939 Model C Case & 1951 Farmall Model C



Barbecued Chicken

**But NO Pork
on the Bun!**

“How Volunteering Changes Me”

By Randy Klaassen (*husband to Renate Dau Klassen*)

Since childhood, I’ve always enjoyed various outdoor activities – hiking, camping, fishing, canoeing, and such. As a young adult, I spent a summer working as a backpacking guide among the coastal mountains of British Columbia. With studies, and then call to pastoral ministry, time outdoors diminished. Though I missed exploring new trails and dealing with elements of the weather, life called me to new ventures of sharing in people’s lives, both with family and the church.

Over ten years ago, our children became increasingly independent; another stage of life which afforded opportunity to again explore new ventures. I saw a small column in the local newspaper inviting volunteers to join “Civil Air Rescue Emergency Service” (CARES) Niagara, at Niagara District Airport. It took two weeks of prayerful consideration before I could even make an inquiry call. Childhood dreams of aviation interest motivated me. When I attended a training session, I learned there were members who, like myself, had joined with limited aviation experience. The instructors were looking for individuals with a desire to learn, and I must have offered them something to work with.

CARES has three main areas of involvement: Ground; Air; and Administrative. Members are trained to be skilled and knowledgeable in all aspects, as the same talents for searching from the air, are also the talents required on the ground. Every aspect of operation has its own administrative paperwork to be maintained. If paperwork is not done properly, everything else doesn’t work. It took me over a year to learn and certify in the basics of ground homing and spotting from an aircraft. Since then, I’ve certified in a number of other areas of operations that contribute to safe, efficient and effective search and rescue (SAR) taskings.

When I began training for SAR, I recall thinking, “*How hard can this be?*” Two realities became apparent: First, crashed aircraft never look like an aircraft. Second, Canada is a significantly vast country, with varied landscape and terrain. I’ve also learned that radio signals (including emergency transmitters) are affected by all kinds of elements, and people we look for don’t always obey basic rules. For example, pilots don’t always file a flight plan, and boaters don’t always wear personal floatation devices. Many tragic situations we respond to involve these elements.

Each season of my involvement with CARES has been challenging, and offered me amazing experiences. This past year, I was asked to be a simulated casualty for a military training exercise. In the Jordan area, I lay on an open field, with some debris around me. After a while, a CC-130H Hercules SAR aircraft flew over, followed shortly by a CH-146 Griffon helicopter. The helicopter hovered a 100 feet above me, while two SAR Technicians (SAR Techs) were lowered down by a winch. As medical responders, the SAR Techs assessed my simulated injuries, then hoisted me up to the hovering helicopter. After a low pass over the St. Catharines Hospital, we later flew a training simulation over Niagara Falls.



In the past two years, I’ve served CARES as Training Officer, overseeing training sessions, ensuring the certification and currency of members. In this role, I was invited to participate with the military in a mission to train CASARA members in the arctic.

During the early arctic spring weather of late May, we flew with a Hercules to Kuujuaq, Quebec, then to Pond Inlet, Nunavut. At each stop, we met with local CASARA members for ground and flight training. Other communities were part of the mission, however, weather in the north determines everything. I grew in appreciation that people of the north deserve respect of southerners when it comes to land and resource use.

CARES Niagara was a founding member of the national organization, Civil Air Search And Rescue Association (CASARA). All members are volunteers, who are trained to professional standards established together with the Royal Canadian Air Force. Early in my involvement, I learned of the close association CASARA has with Canadian military. This gave me pause for concern, from the perspective of my faith call, to be a peace-maker in the name of Christ. Also of concern was, at the time I became a member, the CARES uniforms looked very military like. As an example, on one occasion I represented CARES at a military event, and as I entered a building I was given a salute, which made me feel uncomfortable. (The uniform has since changed to an emergency responder type appearance.) As I wrestled with the connection to things military, two aspects caused me to change my understanding. First, was the experience of how much the motto of SAR is engrained in every part of operations: *"That others may live."* Seemed to me, a very Christian thing to be part of. Second, was the experience of working together with military SAR personnel. Their dedication to saving lives, with care and diligence, has been an environment I have been grateful to be part of.



As a SAR volunteer, call outs occur at various times, and for varying periods of length. When scheduling permits, a call out might involve a few hours, or a few days. I'm thankful to Renate and family, as well as to the St. Catharines United Mennonite Church, for their flexibility and support of my participation. I'm also grateful to be part of a team, of skilled and dedicated individuals who are passionately focused on helping others.

While military monuments are abundant across the country, it was emotional for me, a few years ago, to stand before a monument at the Winnipeg Airport, in dedication to CASARA volunteers who have lost their lives while serving. I've learned that in the realms of my spiritual ministry, and my community volunteer involvement, both involve taking risks. Both keep me on a constant learning curve; both keep me prayerfully listening to what God is doing in the lives of others, while transforming mine.

Mohamad and Maya

It was on February 5th. 2018, that Mohamad first met Maya, when her family came to Canada on Route to Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. This meeting quickly turned into Love at first sight!!

After this, they actively communicated via the electronic systems, and then arranged their first visit for April the same year. During this visit Wedding plans were made, with a promise of Mohamad to move to Saskatchewan. The Wedding took place on January 18th., the day between each of their Birthdays. Because Mohamad found the Winter of Saskatchewan so absolutely intolerable, the promises he had made were soon broken and he moved back to Ontario with Maya. Initially it was difficult for Maya, but after some time she was able to make friends and they have been able to settle in.

In Mohamad's words "with the generous support of the Church Community and friends", they are setting up a home and looking forward to the arrival of their first Baby, a boy!

We wish them God's Blessings.

Submitted by Kathe Wiens.



Sharing my Story with our Prime Minister

~ Lori Dyck

In 1948, when I was 15 years old, my mother and my two brothers arrived in Quebec City. We were so thankful to be welcomed into Canada. Having survived the hardships of war and famine, we were thrilled and thankful to live in a place where we could buy bread any time we were hungry and where we could worship God openly with no fear of harm. Once we

became citizens, we even had the right to vote and have our voices heard in the governance of the nation. Canada was and is a wondrous place of freedom and safety. I thank God every day for the privilege of living in this country. This summer, I had the chance to tell our Prime Minister about my immigration journey and how grateful I am to live here. It was a very special day!



Russians Have Built Up Big Niagara Fruit Colony

~ Harold's History Herald

Something else I found in my Dad's papers... a photocopy of a newspaper article from the Saturday, April 8, 1944 edition of the Toronto Daily Star. Page 2 of the paper is headed "Fruit Belt Brings Prosperity To Russian Settlers". Four pictures grace the article: a proud Jake Friesen brandishing what looks like a hand held hose/nozzle from an old Rittenhouse sprayer. The caption reads "When Jake Friesen arrived in Niagara-On-The-Lake, he had \$500 and shared a crude shed with livestock. Now he owns a farm which is valued at \$12,000." A second picture shows 8 year old Lillian Willms "accounting" with an abacus in the co-operative main office.

The one brief article reads "Russians Have Built Up Big Niagara Fruit Colony". "A co-operative venture," it reads, "started by Russians less than seven years ago and now embracing more than 100 farmers and a \$416,000 business turnover in 1943, has changed an unproducing grain district into a prosperous fruit area. Beginning with six persons, the first year's turnover was only \$5000.

Russian born Canadians, some from the west and some from cities, have settled in this area extending to Virgil, and beyond St. Catharines to Vineland. The two main places are the Niagara Township Fruit Growers Cooperative, founded by A. Willms, Manager, and the Niagara Canning Company headed by Peter Wall, a former Russian millionaire. Wall, whose father built the only railroad in southern Russia, founded the settlement which has 300 families. He bought large grain farms on unproductive and exhausted soil. He subdivided this land and resold it in 10 to 12 acre lots to Russian Mennonites, Poles and Czechs, many of whom were day laborers. Some were on relief.

About five years ago, as the fruit trees became began to bear, three young Russian born farmers conceived the idea of a co-operative to handle their own produce. They persuaded six other farmers to join them. The original provincial charter allowed 100 shares, but now the co-operative has applied for a charter for 200 members.

Mr. Wall then organized a company to build the canning factory (the present day Strewn Winery at Creek and Lakeshore Roads). During the busy season, much of the fruit ripens too quickly and cannot be shipped through the cooperative. The canning factory takes care of this.

Most of the cooperative members are shareholders in the canning factory. During the first year only 20,000 cases of fruit were packed. In 1943, the output was boosted more than 20,000 cases from that and 300 persons were employed.

By intensive cultivation, hard work and frugal living they have turned failure to success."

~ submitted by Harold Neufeld



The staff and employees of the Niagara Canning Company Limited, 1945. Courtesy of the [Niagara Historical Society & Museum](#)

Vacation and Scripture

Many of us have put summer vacations behind us and have spent our last weekend at the cottage for the season. Others are planning winter getaways, so I chose the topic of "My favourite vacation" at a recent Seniors' tea.

That led me to do some research on what the Bible says about vacations, or if the Bible actually references vacations. What I found was the following:

Vacation is actually a profoundly biblical concept. When you think about it, it is clear from Scripture that God **assumes** we will work. But God has to **command** us to rest.

In Leviticus 23 God commands his people to observe a handful of festivals throughout the year, with each festival lasting about a week. And for each festival, God essentially tells his people to take time off, travel across the country, bring some food and drink, and have a party. And then there's the sabbath year—a whole year of rest, every seventh year. I think we would all appreciate a whole year off from work.

I found further passages that, although they do not refer to vacation, they certainly refer to rest and taking time off.

Deuteronomy 4:5

"When a man takes a new wife, he shall not go out with the army nor be charged with any duty; he shall be free at home one year and shall give happiness to his wife whom he has taken." Imagine if we were able to do this today.

Mark 6:30-32

The apostles then rendezvoused with Jesus and reported on all that they had done and taught. Jesus said, "Come off by yourselves; let's take a break and get a little rest." For there was constant coming and going. They didn't even have time to eat.

So they got in the boat and went off to a remote place by themselves.

I realized that God is serious about making sure his people take time off to rest, play, and connect with him. And if God is serious about this, we should make sure we're doing it.

Matt Meyer blogs on life and ministry and offered the following tips on learning how to be intentional about how we vacation which I thought were of value.

1. Think about vacation as a way to draw you more deeply into worship. For example, if you love the outdoors. Hiking, camping, backpacking—there's something about spending an extended period of time in nature that restores our soul and helps us appreciate how beautiful and amazing God is.
2. Use your vacation as an opportunity to love your neighbor. Traveling overseas can be a great way to learn about and grow to appreciate diverse cultures and peoples. And if travelling abroad isn't possible for you, remember that you can still encounter plenty of diversity in people, cultures, and ways of life if you stay in the Canada. Do a little digging into city and Province cultures, be creative, and explore a new part of your own country.
3. Vacation responsibly. Tourism can and does do damage to cultures, people, and the environment. So when you're planning a vacation, do your research. How do the companies you'll be giving your money to treat their workers and the environment? What has the impact of tourism been in the area you're thinking about visiting?

It can take a bit more work, but vacationing with these things in mind just might create a more memorable experience in a lot of ways. If you are travelling this winter, I encourage you to apply some of these tips and share the results with us upon your return. Happy travels.



"Come with me. We will go to a quiet place to be alone. There we will get some rest."
- Mark 6:30-32 -



~ Submitted by Rita Epp

Memorable Moments ~ by Margie Enns

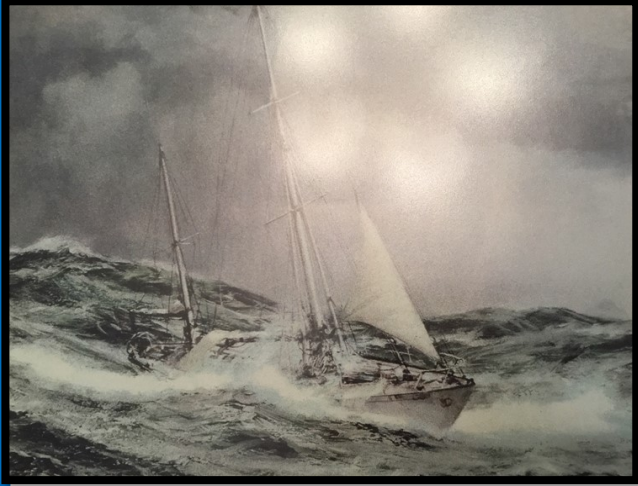
When Rita asked me to speak about my most memorable trip at the Seniors' Tea, my sister's comments echoed in my ear. "Who wants to listen to details about your trip?" After pondering her statement, I decided to change things and just mention a few memorable happenings over the years. After my talk, Lani suggested I put pen to paper and here is what follows.

On one of our yearly cruises to Toronto with other members of the NOL Sailing Club, we left Niagara on a picture perfect day; warm and sunny with a light breeze. Together with my sister and brother-in-law, we embarked on the seven hour journey in our 25 foot sailboat. Things were going rather smoothly when we noticed that clouds were forming in the north. No rain had been

forecast and yet it was obvious that we were sailing directly into a storm.

The sails were taken down, life jackets put on and tensions began to rise.

The peaceful lake was turned into a wild sea and we were tossed to and fro as we were at the mercy of the lake. The thunder roared and the lighting flashed and you can imagine our anxious feelings. When we finally reached our destination many hours later, our fellow sailors could not believe that we had ridden out the storm. Needless to say, Louise and I refused to sail home and caught the train the following day.



On another occasion, we checked in at a resort and were enjoying the sunshine while relaxing at the beach. My niece, all excited explained to me that Margaret Trudeau was sitting on the blanket next to me. I casually walked over, introduced myself as a fellow Canadian and proceeded to have a nice little chat. With that, the Security Guards came right over, called the children from the beach area and whisked them all away. That's when I realized that the boys our children were playing with were none other than Justin Trudeau, our present Prime Minister, and his two brothers.

Years ago while travelling to Florida, we would often drive through the night. On this particular evening, there was next to no traffic on the highway and we noticed that a certain car seemed to be following us. Then the car would come along side of us and the guys in the car were yelling. Thinking there was something wrong with our car, Corney opened his window only to notice that a gun was pointed in our direction and we were ordered to PULL OVER! Corney stepped on the gas but they were in hot pursuit. This went on for quite a while until we escaped by taking the first exit we saw. We did inform the authorities but the incident left us quite shaken.

Our North Sea adventure is one I will never forget! If someone had told me that it is one of the roughest bodies of water, I never would have taken the ship from Belgium to the U.K. The boat had just left the docks and I remember thinking that this was going to be a smooth ride. The next thing I remember is the boat heaving to and fro and for the next eight hours everyone on board except Corney was feeding the fish. There wasn't a spot on that ship that wasn't covered in "puke". The sea sickness I experienced that day was enough to prevent me from crossing the Atlantic on another occasion. I now understand why my mother never got into a boat after experiencing sea sickness on her voyage to Canada in 1926.

It was ski season and together with two other couples, we travelled to Montreal and stayed in a large chalet near the ski hills. The two couples slept upstairs and Corney and I slept in the downstairs bedroom next to the kitchen. In the morning when I pulled on my ski boots, I found they were filled with sunflower seeds. We had left opened packages of seeds on the table the night before, and apparently all night, the mice were busy creeping past our bedroom and depositing the seeds in my boots. Only later did I discover that the chalet was crawling with mice, so needless to say, this was my first and last time at this place.

It was our first trip to Europe and our bus was entering the city of Rome. Our guide suggested that a walk from a certain point would be very picturesque and that our hotel was just down the road a few blocks. Our friends and I decided against it but Corney and a few others exited the bus and chose to walk the mile. The rest of us went to our hotel. After a while, Corney realized he had taken a wrong turn and did not know the way to the hotel. To make matters worse, I had all the information with me, so he had no idea the name of the hotel. As it was getting dark, he knew he had to do something so he walked to the Canadian Embassy hoping to call my sister back home, who knew our itinerary each day. Unfortunately, the Embassy was closed and poor Corney was lost in Rome with no idea where the group was staying. Aimlessly he walked, which seemed like hours, when in the distance he saw two girls that were part of our tour. Running up to them he told them they were the best looking girls he had ever seen so relieved was he! It was a great reunion back at the hotel!

Since my topic was to be my most memorable trip, I definitely have to say it was the Holy Land Tour. How amazing it was to walk in the footsteps of Jesus as we visited Galilee, Cana, Nazareth, Bethlehem, The Garden of Gethsemane and many other sites. Each day the Bible was transformed into vivid reality! I will not elaborate on this trip as many of you have already been there or are planning to go. Besides, I hear my sister's comments "keep it short!"



Floating in the Dead Sea



Temple Mount in Jerusalem



Sea of Galilee

These are just a few of my many adventures but I can honestly say I have always felt God's hand of protection in all of life's journey.

Debbie's Book Corner

The Accidental Guardian

High Sierra Sweethearts – One
Mary Connealy

"When Trace Riley finds the smoldering ruins of a small wagon train, he recognizes an attack by the same group who left him as sole survivor years ago. Living off the wilderness since then, he's finally carved out a home & started a herd – while serving as a self-appointed guardian of the trail. He'd hoped the days of driving off dangerous men were over, but the latest attack shows otherwise.

Deborah Harkness saved her younger sister & two toddlers during the attack, and now finds herself at the mercy of the rescuer. Trace becomes an accidental guardian when he offers the only shelter for miles around & agrees to take them in until they can safely continue their journey. His simple bachelor existence never anticipated kids & women in the picture & their arrival is unsettling – yet enticing.

Trace & Deborah find themselves drawing ever closer as they work together to bring justice to the trail & help the group survive the winter – but every day closer to spring means a day closer to leaving the mountain forever."

Remembering Christmas

Dan Walsh

"Rick Denton lives his life on his terms. He works hard, plays hard & answers to no one. So when his mother calls begging him to come home after his stepfather has an aneurysm, Rick is more than a little reluctant. What was supposed to be just a couple of days helping out at the family bookstore turns into weeks of cashing out old ladies & dealing with the homeless guy who keeps hanging around the store. The one bright spot is the lovely & intriguing young woman who works at his side each day.

As Christmas nears, Rick's old life beckons, the hurts from the past loom large & the decisions he makes will determine more than just where he spends Christmas Eve."

A Refuge Assured

Jocelyn Green

"Lacemaker Vivienne Rivard never imagined her craft could threaten her life. Yet in revolutionary France, it is a death sentence when the nobility, & those associated with them, are forced to the guillotine. Vivienne flees to Philadelphia, but danger lurks in the French Quarter, as revolutionary sympathizers begin to suspect a young boy left in her care might be the Dauphin. Can the French settlement Asylum offer permanent refuge?"



Days for Girls Is a non profit organization that began in 2008 when founder and CEO Celeste Mergens was working with a family foundation in Kenya when she began assisting an orphanage in the outskirts of Nairobi, Kenya. It was here that she realized that the young girls were having to stay in their rooms during their monthly cycle. These girls would sit on cardboard for days often going without food unless someone remembered them.

Celeste started her quest, giving out disposable pads. But Celeste and her team soon found out that there was no place to dispose of them. This was not a sustainable or viable solution. That is when these sustainable feminine hygiene kits were started. With 28 iterations because of extensive feedback and designed to meet unique cultural and environmental conditions in communities throughout the world, these kits have made a huge difference in assisting women and girls to break the cycle of poverty and live lives of dignity.

How DFG does it, is through Volunteers, Teams, like our Niagara on the Lake DFG Team, Chapters and Social Enterprises.

Today, Days For Girls has reached more than one million women and girls in over 120 countries with DFG Kits and menstrual health education. There are over 50,000 volunteers which consist of Solo Sewists, Chapters and Teams around the globe. DFG goal is to ensure that women and girls can meet their own hygiene needs, even in remote areas. To facilitate this, DFG is building tiered country programs, each with a Centre, Enterprises and Ambassadors. Today there are Social Enterprises in over 10 countries.

Because of DFG and how they have developed global partnerships, cultivated social enterprises mobilizing volunteers and innovating sustainable solutions, it has shattered stigmas and limitations for women and girls. DFG has created a world with dignity, health and opportunity for all.

Our DFG Niagara on the Lake team has sent DFG kits to Malawi, Guatemala, Dominican and Peru, through school trips and church Mission trips. Most of these projects are on going. Our DFG team consists of women working just out of their home and women who come to our monthly meetings that are now held at Niagara United Mennonite Church the last Tuesday of the month.

We are so fortunate, living in Canada and having everything at our disposal. We sometimes take it for granted just how easy it is to run to the corner store just to pick up whatever we need. Not everyone in other countries are so fortunate. In some areas, like our Dominican project, women of the communities, where the trips have gone, have to travel 4 hours every day to get their water. These mission trips to Dominican are concentrating on helping these communities put in pipelines from the spring, where they get their water, to the communities in that area. Providing these women with these DFG Kits, helps them and their families so that they are now able to travel this road every day. Now they do not have to send their young girls out there. Also, because of these DFG Kits, these women do not have to be isolated during their periods, they are able to continue going about their day.

Because of your generosity in letting us use the auditorium, we have a place where we can continue making these DFG Kits and providing these women in less privileged countries with clean and sustainable feminine hygiene.

The organization is constantly responding to any feedback they get from the women and countries they are trying to help. We used to put 2 zip lock bags into each kit, but due to environmental issues, raised by the African countries, they are looking for alternatives to this.

The group of ladies that are part of the Niagara-on-the-Lake chapter come from the community and other area churches, we also give support and guidance to a group of Brock University students that get together in St. Catharines and are helping to make the DFG kits as well.

Please feel free to come see what we are doing or even come help trace, cut, attach snaps, iron or sew on the last Tuesday of every month. (We may be meeting on different Tuesday's in Dec. and January, watch the bulletin)

~ submitted by Linda Pankratz

DAYS FOR GIRLS



The Beauty of Aging

Do you realize that the only time in our lives when we like to get old is when we're children? If you're less than ten years old, you're so excited about aging that you think in fractions: "How old are you?" I am four and a half. You're never thirty-six and a half. You're four and a half going on five. That's the key.

You get into your teens, now they can't hold you back. You jump to the next number, or even a few ahead: "How old are you?" I'm gonna be 16.. You could be 13, but hey, you're gonna be 16.

And then the greatest day of your life: You become 21. Even the words sound like a ceremony. YOU BECOME 21! YESSS!

But then you turn 30. Ooh, what happened here? Makes you sound like bad milk. He TURNED, we had to throw him out. There's no fun now, you are just a sour dumpling.

What's wrong? What's changed? You BECOME 21, you TURNED 30, then you're PUSHING 40.
Woah! Put on the brakes. It's all slipping away.

Before you know it you REACH 50 and your dreams are gone. But you MAKE it to 60. You didn't think you would.

So you BECOME 21, TURN 30, PUSH 40, REACH 50, and MAKE it to 60. You didn't think you would
You've built up so much speed that you HIT 70. After that it's a day by day thing: you HIT Wednesday.

You get into your 80's, and every day is a complete cycle: you HIT lunch, you REACH bedtime.

And it doesn't end there. Into you're 90's you start going backwards: "I was just 92".

Then a strange thing happens. If you make it over 100, you become a little child again: "I am a hundred and a half".

May we all make it to 100 and a half (healthily)!

Submitted by Mary Pries

LIFE WITH US NEWSLETTER

If you would like to submit any photos or articles for the newsletter, please contact either one of the Newsletter Team of Editors:

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