



# Seniors Today

Volume 32  
Summer 2013

## Summer at Giant Summer at Giant



### Inside this issue:

Word Search .... 2

YK First Lady .... 3

Did You Know .. 4  
Warfarin & Food

Mmm Stew.....5

Memoirs of  
Grenada.....6

Surviving an  
Ice Storm..... 8

Out & About.....10

Airport Security 11  
The Tates

Colonoscopy.....12

Bloomin Flowers14

### Contributors:

Bob Carr  
Walt Humphries  
Dave McCann  
Karan Spoelder  
Bill Reid  
Esther Braden

Cover by  
Bob Carr  
Picture  
Ken Hall

## Word Search

**Nunavut Place Names**

J U C L Q E E P Z I G L O Y D N  
 A B B U V N D N S V H G F Y I I  
 N K O T K A M G N I M U I J W K  
 J Y A K E R U E T A O P J I H O  
 L T I M T I U L A Q I R C S Y I  
 R M K U G A A R U K I L H G M I  
 E T F Y V F B S W B I Q U A O Z  
 S T O G D G C A P E D O R S E T  
 O P A N G N I R T U N G X T I I  
 L X N X Q U L U K H A K T O K G  
 U K U T K U L G U K S Y J R W L  
 T W H A L E C O V E V C V I Q O  
 E K N G Q Q T U R I M M I K P O  
 F N Z P C Q F L Y R Q E Q K Q L  
 H L L X A L E R T Y B Q H K Q I  
 Y E K C B M T A I V R A B U B K

Alert

Kugaaruk

Arviat

Kugluktuk

Cape Dorset

Pangnirtung

Eureka

Resolute

Igloolik

Ulukhaktok

Iqaluit

Umingmaktok

Kimmirut

Whale Cove

## Yellowknife's First Lady Prospector

Yellowknife 1938. The mail plane arrives. It also has a passenger, direct from the bush. She jumps out of the plane wearing black riding breeches, riding boots, and a vermilion jacket. Victoria/ Vicky (Victorine) Lapine is the first and only female prospector in the Northwest Territories. Everyone around greets her. When she smiles, the woman is transformed. Her visible wrinkles seem to disappear, her looks grow kind and charming. She is the best man in the bush, the best friend and chum. Where there is heavy work she is the hardest- working. If she wants entertainment she is willing to pay for it. She drinks with the boys, plays poker with them but also pays up when she loses. She lives in a big, luxuriously kept tent, with a scrubbed wooden floor, close by the shore at the entrance of Yellowknife Bay.

At fourteen years old, she washed dishes in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan, then odd jobs for Barnum and Bailey Circus. This was followed by working in mining camps all over Canada. She took a free course in geology and mineralogy in Winnipeg before hearing of the great gold strike in Yellowknife. At that point she decided to be a prospector. In late summer of 1937, she and her dog made their way to Yellowknife in a loaded twenty foot scow. One of many jobs that winter was washing dishes at the Wild Cat Café and she set up a laundry service. By spring she had enough money to be flown out prospecting and stake claims that she was able to sell for \$3500. The summer of 1938 was hot and dry and the bush was full of mosquitoes, black flies and bull flies. She prospected near the Francois River, but didn't find anything of value, although she did some staking in the area. After arriving back in Yellowknife she received a letter in the mail box. A mining company offered to buy her claims blind. "It's better to sell them today as tomorrow they might change their mind", she said.

She found a lover in the north, a Mountie in Fort Smith. Constables were not allowed to marry. To get married, they had to sneak off one night to Fort Fitzgerald, return to Smith and report to his Inspector, and ask for a discharge. Once approved by headquarters in Regina, he paid the sixty dollar fine, was discharged and Victoria brought him to Yellowknife where she took him into the bush on an assignment for Negus Gold Mines.

Vicky Lapine (now McKail) was the darling of the boom camp, the inspiring hard worker who wasn't afraid to take on any job. Proudly she was one of the first white women to settle in Yellowknife.

- From "North Again for Gold", Edgar Laytha 1939. Laytha was a first-impressionist, gullible writer, who wrote everything he was told and often very twisted info. But Victorine was one of the 1<sup>st</sup> women in Yellowknife.

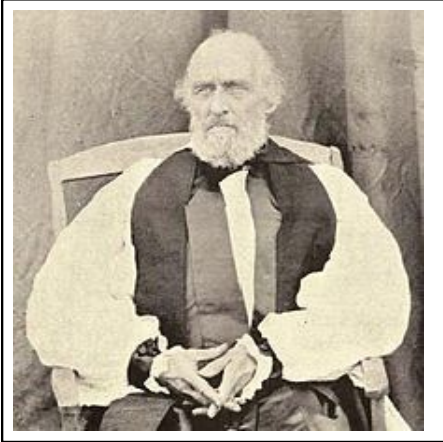
A note in Ancestry.ca, mentions that Victorine LePine married R. McKale 23 July 1938 .



## Did You Know

**A cold wave, beginning the middle of January, 1948, covered Yukon Territory for four weeks. The all-time North American minimum temperature was recorded at Snag, Yukon with an official reading of 84 degrees below zero (F) or only -64 C. Game, especially rabbits and muskrat, suffered greatly, and predatory animals holed up throughout the cold wave. Entire dog teams succumbed to the cold and trappers were confined to their cabins.**

\* \* \*



**In 1874 William Bompas was made Anglican Bishop of Athabasca. He chose to reside in Fort Simpson, where a church and mission house had already been built. By 1875, there were Anglican missions at Fort McPherson, Fort Norman, Fort Simpson, Fort Rae, and Hay River Fort. A Diocese of the Mackenzie River was created by the Church of England in 1884, and Right Reverend William Bompas was the first bishop. He directed the missions from his residence in Fort Simpson.**

## Warfarin vs food - Vitamin K

Those taking Warfarin must be aware that vegetables containing vitamin K can interfere with the blood-thinning effects of this drug. Many green leaf veggies contain vitamin K. Here are a few...

- Kale (very high in K)
- Collards (very high)
- Parsley (very high)
- Seaweed (very high)
- Spinach (very high)
- Swiss Chard (very high)
- Green Tea (very high)
- Broccoli (raw) (high)
- Brussel Sprouts (5, high)
- Chick Peas (cooked, high)
- Chinese Cabbage (cooked, high)
- Endive (raw, high)
- Lentils (cooked, high)
- Soybeans (cooked, high)
- Asparagus (cooked, medium)
- Cabbage (cooked, medium)
- Lettuce (1 cup, medium)

This is **not** a list of foods to avoid. The list provides information on the vitamin K content of some foods. Some of these are high in the vitamin, so it is helpful in maintaining a consistent amount of vitamin K in your diet.



## Sumptuous Shepherd's Stew

The dish was served at a Late 2012 “Lunch with a Bunch” Potluck.

*Serves 6*

### **Ingredients:**

1 large sweet onion, diced  
4 cloves garlic, minced  
2 tablespoons vegetable broth  
2 cups peeled chopped carrots  
2 cups chopped potatoes  
1-1/2 cups chopped celery  
2 cups sliced cremini mushrooms  
1/2 cup chopped fresh parsley  
1/3 cup flour  
1-1/2 teaspoons Herbes de Provence - (spice mixture typically containing savory, fennel, basil, thyme, and perhaps lavender)  
3 tablespoons low-sodium tamari  
3 cups vegetable broth, plus more as needed  
1 14-oz package of extra-firm tofu, drained, rinsed, and pressed  
1 tablespoon vegetable oil  
2-1/2 teaspoons apple cider vinegar  
1/4 teaspoon smoked paprika

### **Directions:**

1. In a large pot over higher heat, add onion, garlic, and vegetable broth and sauté for about 5 minutes. Add carrots, potatoes, celery, and mushrooms. Sauté for about 15 additional minutes, adding more broth in small increments as necessary. Not too much at one time please!
2. Stir in parsley, flour, Herbes de Provence, and tamari until vegetables are coated in flour. Stir in broth and bring stew to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer on low-medium heat for another 10 to 15 minutes or until vegetables are tender.
3. While stew cooks, preheat a skillet over medium-high heat. Slice tofu into 1/4-inch cubes. Add the oil to skillet. Sauté tofu for about 5 minutes on each side, or until crispy. Once done, stir tofu into stew. Add apple cider vinegar and smoked paprika. Serve hot.

**Yummy ! From: Dave McCann**

# Memoirs of Grenada

By Karan Spoelder

**My Project Overseas experiences were enlightening and very gratifying to say the least! The dynamics between the members of our six person Project Overseas team were amazing! We all clicked instantly and my Mom would be amazed to hear that my team nicknamed me GPS when we were in Ottawa. I had gotten my bearings between Canada Day and July 4th for within a 12 block radius of Ottawa U where we were staying in residence. So when the bus did not show up to take ALL the people to the CTF 50<sup>th</sup> Reunion of Project Overseas dinner, and they started talking about walking. I told them to follow me as I knew the way and our team and many others walked to the Chateau Laurier. I highly recommend to all Canadians to attend at least one Canada Day in Ottawa as Canada's capital really knows how to do it up well and the crowds were mind blowing for me.**

**I did my final fundraising for Grenada on the flight between Yellowknife and Calgary when I went on the intercom and asked for Canadians to give to Grenadians and raised \$250. I ended up raising \$3,808.64 Canadian which translated to \$9700EC dollars with which I bought over 500 books. In one store I bought out almost every copy of one type of book! In another store I bought many types of paintbrushes and got some paint. Some stores in Grenada have very scant supplies and the quality of many of the supplies was questionable, even at premium prices. Some of the fundraising will go to support the purchase some small laminators for every other school in Grenada and a large quantity of lamination film. Teachers can then make small whiteboards and millions of other supplies with their kids and actually get the kids to make the resources in the upper grades.**

**I can't begin to say how strongly I recommend applying for Project Overseas. I had the most incredible time from the moment I started training in Ottawa to the final goodbyes to family on the way home two weeks after the official project was over. I think that the short work days and the great food of Grenada is not typical of most Project Overseas experiences, according to the two from my team who have been to other countries, but the need for assistance is most certainly there. To become a teacher in Grenada you just have to have graduated high school. Once you have secured a full time position you can apply for a grant so you can go to school a bit at a time. Glen, one of the taxi drivers for us, has been a teacher for 23 years and he will finally graduate in October with his teaching degree! One of my students said that none of the teachers would be in the room if they had to have a degree when they started teaching. Some students arrived at least an hour late for every class but I heard from another member of my team that there are no such things as substitute teachers either and that if a teacher is late the kids just have to sit and wait. They also still use corporal punishment in the schools, which caused my poor team leader a lot of stress with the Principals in her Team Leadership group she was facilitating. She was a fantastic group leader and I would go to any country with her if I get the chance again.**







I most certainly will NEVER say again that I do not have enough resources in my classroom, as I now have seen classrooms with nothing and they were classrooms at the one college located in Grenada. Picture your room with one old chalk board or if you are really lucky an ancient, old, whiteboard, two fans one on either side of the classroom which has a mismatch mostly of desks and chair in one, most of which have a useless sized desk area for

writing and forget about setting something on it if its round. AND that is pretty much it. No bookshelves, posters, overhead projectors, computers unless you go to the lab. Temperature control in classrooms in Grenada is opening the windows.

Every morning before classes started we had a time for devotionals and most of the teachers sing beautifully and know many worship songs by heart. One of the students during devotionals almost made me cry as he went on and on about how thankful he was for all six of us as we were so graciously giving of our time to help them out, and especially for me as they had been told how much money I had raised to buy supplies for them. I made a point of saying that they did not just need to thank me, but many Canadians, mostly Yellowknifers, as they were the ones who donated most of the money and supplies I had for them.

We were given a tour of the nutmeg factory and an ancient rum factory and I will never use nutmeg again without thinking about how labour intensive it is. There were rows and rows of wooden bins full of nutmeg still in the shells, but there were also rows and rows of empty bins because Hurricane Ivan wiped out between 70 and 80 percent of the trees in 2004 and then they were hit again later by another smaller hurricane and the trees have yet to recover. Which, of course, is another reason why they need our help. One school was destroyed by the first hurricane and started to be rebuilt and then burned and they are still eight years later, in the ``temporary`` buildings which is all open concept with many classrooms in basically a long tin trailer type building with windows for temperature control.

I could go on forever and still forget to tell you some of the great experiences in Grenada and the entire Project Overseas time so I will end it there. Suffice it to say that if you have the teaching experience needed, I definitely recommend that you apply for Project Overseas through the NWTTA PD office. It is so gratifying to go where your help is needed and the experiences are life changing. I definitely will apply again in the future and will consider myself blessed if I get chosen again for Project Overseas.



## Seniors' Surviving an Ice Storm

### Grandparents Scam

This computer scam has been around awhile, but is still prevalent.

A call, text, or email is received from a purported family member or friend who has been mugged, arrested or hurt while traveling and needs money right away.

It is getting easier for scammers to tell a plausible story because the social media can provide them with real facts about the victim's life.

Eg: info we put on Facebook and other media.

In January 1998, eastern Ontario and south-western Quebec were hit with a powerful ice storm. Busloads of seniors confused and frightened were moved from the comfort and security of their homes and beds to strange places filled with strangers. Thousands of stately trees were felled like matchsticks. Miles of telephone and hydro poles were clipped in half, leaving a tangled mess of wires across roads and yards. Homes were abandoned and everything outdoors was encased in ice. Dairy farmers were forced to dump millions of litres of milk, because processing plants were shut down. Poultry farmers were powerless to act as their birds froze. 1.4 million people were without hydro power. Montreal is shutdown. Armed Forces were sent into Montreal and given orders to arrest anyone seen looting. After 31 days, hydro is restored in Quebec and Ontario. Here are entries from a diary kept by one couple in their 80's who decided to remain in their home and tough it out.

**January 5:** We had rain which turned into freezing rain through the night and next day. The trees are coated an inch thick with ice, and branches are falling on ice coated power lines. Some areas are losing power, as the lines snap from the weight the thick ice coating and of falling trees and branches.

**Day 2, Jan. 7:** No improvement, trees are becoming heavier with ice. A power outage overnight for four hours.

**Day 3: At 3 PM, the town & large areas of the province lost hydro.** Night was very dark, with branches from the 130 year old maples falling on the roof. Bang, bang, down they came. Then a big branch hit the roof with a crashing sound.. Ka-pow. We quickly moved downstairs into the living room for the rest of the night.

**Day 4: No water for 2 days.** We located an old wood stove and pipes that were stored out back in the shed. Set it up in the basement\* and connected it to our chimney. We dug out candles and flashlights, and an oil lamp (which we used sparingly as lamp oil was all sold out in town). We brought down two lawn chairs and cooked small meals and heated water on the wood stove. During the day the sun heated the living room, but we also used a Kerosun (kerosene) heater to add to the warmth (+10 C) so we could sleep there at night.

*\*The basement is typical of older homes. Not finished, low ceiling, small windows, not designed for much light, musty cement floor, not an area you would live in. But it had an access hole in the chimney where an old coal furnace used to be connected.*

**January 10, Day 5:** What a mess outside (-4 C). Streets and yards were covered in broken branches, thickly covered in ice. Too dangerous to go out due to falling braches and ice coated everything, making walking or driving impossible.

**Day 6:** No church. Neighbour borrowed a generator and provided power to our furnace for a few hours. We heated up the house and slept comfortably. Now the generator is gone to another house.

**Day 7:** No sign of hydro returning. Phone working and the only other communication is CBC radio out of Montreal, but they are not able get reporters out of the city, so it's hard to know what is happening.





Day 8: Had some rain then snow. Ice began falling off the trees, which sounded like rocks falling on the roof. The Armed Forces arrived and are starting a cleanup of debris.

Day 9: Colder and sunny. Cleaned up branches in the yard and it was picked up by the town workers. Drove around to see the damage. What a mess. Tree trunks are split in half everywhere. Will they recover? Some say they will lose their entire maple groves. Steel hydro towers lay crumpled in farm fields.

Day 10: **Still no power.** Cold (-17C) Acquired full use of a generator. It was used to heat the house only. To celebrate, we drove to a pizza restaurant to enjoy something other than canned goods. They had a propane cook stove. Ate a good hot meal but left soon after as the restaurant had no heat. Bought a BBQ chicken at a grocery store in a nearby town, returned home to eat chicken, bread and raisin pie. Police were knocking at doors to see if help was needed. A long-time friend, in her 90's, living by herself across town, was forced to vacate her home as she could no longer cope with the situation. She had no heat, little food and once the weather turned colder, she was confined to her bed, wearing her winter coat, boots, hat, and all the blankets she could find. She was taken to the Seniors' Home that had generator power, lights and 3 meals a day. (Alas, the poor living conditions due to the storm, weakened her and was never able to return home. She died in a few months later)

Day 11 Jan. 16: Cold (-10C). A man came and took away the generator to send to Quebec City. Great while it lasted! Back to wood stove and the basement. Took some spare groceries to Knights of Columbus, so they could help out others. Drove to a farm to get more wood. Heard power will be restored Jan 25. What to do? We could stay with friends at a seniors home. Would need to drain all the water pipes.

**Oh Boy!** Got phone call that a small generator is available in a town 20 miles away. We drove there to get it. Now we can keep furnace going and a light bulb or two.

Day 12: Our upstairs remains closed off so we can concentrate on heating the downstairs only. We have a chesterfield and couch to sleep on in the living room. We drove 20 miles to get some kerosene as we are running low.

1:30 PM, **Hallelujah!!** Our street got power back. Later we had hot water again so we washed our hair and enjoyed a nice warm bath. We cleaned out the freezer and opened up the bedroom area. Our modern day luxuries were back to normal.

**February 3:** Still no power to some farm areas, although it is slowly being restored. I guess we were lucky to have the old wood stove, lots of canned goods, the hard working hydro crews, and the help of neighbours and friends.

Experts say the broken trees would never survive and have to be cut down. Not true, they survived and grew new branches.

Bob Carr



## Our Members Out and About

### Science/ Heritage fairs

To be asked to judge the work of Yellowknife Students on science and heritage themes is an exhilarating privilege. Judges from all walks of life are allowed to review the results of experiments or investigations by around 80 or 90 students.

The displays and reports are set up in the gymnasium and numbered. Judges can choose either English or French projects to evaluate. The projects are evaluated by point out of 100 or 50 depending on whether they are science or heritage.

The determination and professional approach by students is evident literally, wall to wall. Selection of a project to judge is left to the judge who meets and interviews the student and discovers the worlds or interest and discover explored for the project.

Gold medal winners this year included a beautiful study of the work of Darcy Moses; another heritage project on Canada's parliament building; and thirdly a science topic "what the brain process first shape colours or words" as I happened to judge all three of these I can testify to the wonderful talent of these students because, in good conscience, I was unable to penalize anyone of them in any category of the evaluation rubric.

I gave each of them full marks ie: 100%.

Phone Monique Marinier at William McDonald School and volunteer for next year's fair –  
***you will be delighted***

**By Bill Reid**



**Judges at the Regional Heritage Fair in Yellowknife. Dominic Perrino, Barb Barnet,**

### **Airport Security Tips for Seniors (from Edmonton Seniors):**

- All prescription medications are allowed in carry-on baggage. Make sure they are clearly labelled with your name.
- Essential non-prescription medication (cough syrup, eye drops, contact lens solution, etc) can be carried in containers larger than 100 ml in carry-on baggage. They must be given to the screening officer separately.
- Diabetes medications and equipment, including syringes, are permitted. Diabetic travellers are also allowed to bring juice or carbohydrate gel packs.
- Wheelchairs, walkers, prosthetic devices and any other disability related equipment are permitted through the security checkpoint. Bring a note from your doctor if your new hip has metal parts and will set off the metal detector.
- Medical defibrillators and small oxygen or air cylinders for emergency use may be packed in carry-on or checked baggage with the air carrier's approval.
- If you have any concerns about the screening process, check with your doctor before flying to determine if it is safe for you to go through the metal detector or be hand-wanded. You could then request a physical search.
- You can use the Family/Special Needs security line. Screening officers who take your call are trained to offer additional assistance.
- Finally, do not hesitate to ask screening officers for assistance with mobility aids and carry-on items as you proceed through security.
- Additional tips are available online at [www.catsa.gc.ca](http://www.catsa.gc.ca), or on the mobile site [m.catsa.gc.ca](http://m.catsa.gc.ca) and [Twitter@catsa\\_gc](https://twitter.com/catsa_gc).

VIA Rail 1-888-842-7245 , [www.viarail.ca](http://www.viarail.ca)

Greyhound Canada 1-800-661-8747 , [www.greyhound.ca](http://www.greyhound.ca)

### **The Tates**

Do you know how many members of the **TATE** family belong to our organization?

There is old man **DICK TATE** who wants to run everything, while Uncle **RO TATE** tries to change everything.

Their sister, **AGI TATE**, stirs up plenty of trouble with help from her husband, **IRRI TATE**.

Whenever new projects are suggested, **HESI TATE** and his wife, **VEGI TATE**, want to wait until next year.

Brother **FACILI TATE** is quite helpful in group matters.

And a happy member is Ms. **FELICI TATE**.

Cousins **COGI TATE** and **MEDI TATE** always think things over and lend a helpful steady hand.

And, of course, there is the bad seed in the family, **AMPU TATE**, who has cut himself off completely from the rest of the organization.



## Colonoscopy Journal:

I called my friend Andy Sable, a gastroenterologist, to make an appointment for a colonoscopy.

A few days later, in his office, Andy showed me a color diagram of the colon, a lengthy organ that appears to go all over the place, at one point passing briefly through Minneapolis.

Then Andy explained the colonoscopy procedure to me in a thorough, reassuring and patient manner.

I nodded thoughtfully, but I didn't really hear anything he said, because my brain was shrieking, 'HE'S GOING TO STICK A TUBE 17,000 FEET UP YOUR BEHIND!'

I left Andy's office with some written instructions, and a prescription for a product called 'MoviPrep,' which comes in a box large enough to hold a microwave oven. I will discuss MoviPrep in detail later; for now suffice it to say that we must never allow it to fall into the hands of America's enemies..

I spent the next several days productively sitting around being nervous.

Then, on the day before my colonoscopy, I began my preparation. In accordance with my instructions, I didn't eat any solid food that day; all I had was chicken broth, which is basically water, only with less flavour.

Then, in the evening, I took the MoviPrep. You mix two packets of powder together in a one-litre plastic jug, then you fill it with lukewarm water. (For those unfamiliar with the metric system, a litre is about 32 gallons). Then you have to drink the whole jug. This takes about an hour, because MoviPrep tastes - and here I am being kind - like a mixture of goat spit and urinal cleanser, with just a hint of lemon.

The instructions for MoviPrep, clearly written by somebody with a great sense of humour, state that after you drink it, 'a loose, watery bowel movement may result.'

This is kind of like saying that after you jump off your roof, you may experience contact with the ground.

MoviPrep is a nuclear laxative. I don't want to be too graphic, here, but, have you ever seen a space-shuttle launch? This is pretty much the MoviPrep experience, with you as the shuttle.

There are times when you wish the commode had a seat belt. You spend several hours pretty much confined to the bathroom, spurting violently. You eliminate everything.

When everything was ready, Eddie wheeled me into the procedure room, where Andy was waiting with a nurse and an anaesthesiologist. I did not see the 17,000-foot tube, but I knew Andy had it hidden around there somewhere. I was seriously nervous at this point..

And then, when you figure you must be totally empty, you have to drink another liter of MoviPrep, at which point, as far as I can tell, your bowels travel into the future and start eliminating food that you have not even eaten yet.

After an action-packed evening, I finally got to sleep.

The next morning my wife drove me to the clinic. I was very nervous. Not only was I worried about the procedure, but I had been experiencing occasional return bouts of MoviPrep spurtage. I was thinking, 'What if I spurt on Andy?' How do you apologize to a friend for something like that? Flowers would not be enough.

At the clinic I had to sign many forms acknowledging that I understood and totally agreed with whatever the heck the forms said. Then they led me to a room full of other colonoscopy people, where I went inside a little curtained space and took off my clothes and put on one of those hospital garments designed by sadist perverts, the kind that, when you put it on, makes you feel even more naked than when you are actually naked..

Then a nurse named Eddie put a little needle in a vein in my left hand. Ordinarily I would have fainted, but Eddie was very good, and I was already lying down. Eddie also told me that some people put vodka in their MoviPrep..

At first I was ticked off that I hadn't thought of this, but then I pondered what would happen if you got yourself too tipsy to make it to the bathroom, so you were staggering around in full Fire Hose Mode. You would have no choice but to burn your house.

Andy had me roll over on my left side, and the anaesthesiologist began hooking something up to the needle in my hand.

And then it was time, the moment I had been dreading for more than a decade. If you are squeamish, prepare yourself, because I am going to tell you, in explicit detail, exactly what it was like.

I have no idea. Really. I slept through it. Soon I was back in the other room, waking up in a very mellow mood.

Andy was looking down at me and asking me how I felt. I felt excellent. I felt even more excellent when Andy told me that It was all over, and that my colon had passed with flying colors. I have never been prouder of an internal organ.

**ABOUT THE WRITER:** Dave Barry is a Pulitzer Prize-winning humor columnist for the Miami Herald. Although this item was making its round on the internet.

## **LET THE FLOWERS BLOOM –Walt Humphries**

In 1936, when Yellowknife was founded, many people came north from Alberta and particularly from the Peace River Area. Most came by boat, because unless you had a lot of money, that was the only way to travel north at the time.

This was during the Great Depression and people were looking for work and better times, so often the whole family came. Along with what clothes, food and supplies they had, many brought garden seeds and their green thumbs with them. After they found or built a place to live, they soon had a vegetable garden established.

The same was true of many of the families that moved north, to work at the mine sites. The Negus, Con and Giant camps, all had gardens. There is a photo of the garden behind the Mine Mangers house at Negus and it was pretty impressive. (page 241 Yellowknife Book by Susan Jackson). At Con there was a community garden in a natural draw, where people had plots and it was a notable and productive garden. At the Giant town site, many people had gardens around their houses.

Yellowknife was an isolated community and supplies came in periodically by barge in the summer, so people grew vegetables out of necessity, to save money and to get a wider variety of fresh vegetables than the barges brought in.

There were also several market gardens over the years at various locations in old town and along school draw. Later as the town expanded, there was one by Frame Lake and Niven Lake where the city hall is now. There was one where the multiplex now sits, another at a Brodies draw towards Giant. The correctional institute or camp at the Yellowknife River bridge had gardens where the inmates could work. Also most churches and missions in the north grew vegetables and Yellowknife was no exception. So the settlers, the miners, the prisoners and the priest all tended gardens.

Cabbages and potatoes both did surprising well. So did rhubarb and there are still some patches around town that go back to that era. People also planted berry bushes like Saskatoons. While people were mainly growing things to eat, a few flowers did appear around peoples houses and cabins. Yellowknife was home after all. So the history of gardening and growing food in Yellowknife goes right back to its earliest days.

After the second world war, Yellowknife was again booming and going through a lot of changes. New town was being established and people had room for lawns and gardens. The airport was put in, so most people and freight came and went by plane rather than boat. Then in the 1960s a road was put in connecting Yellowknife with the south. Yellowknife was no longer isolated and freight including food could get here in a couple of days rather than weeks.

These new developments meant that the market gardens all closed because they couldn't compete with the imported vegetables arriving year round. The road also heralded a whole new era of gardening in the form of bedding plants. I believe that the Bromley's who ran the Marshal Wells store on main street, where Diavik is now located, brought them in first. This was a major change and every year it was a much anticipated event. The flats of plants would be laid out in the basement of the store and they would sell out in a few hours of feeding frenzy by the budding horticulturalists in town. Suddenly Yellowknife had lots of flowers.

Bedding plants meant that you didn't have to start the seeds indoors or in a greenhouse, if you had one. Starting from seed was a finicky business and putting seeds directly in the ground took quite a while to germinate, so bedding plants really gave people a head start of several weeks on the growing season.



Pros like Stan Hutyra, who was one of Yellowknife best known and most successful gardeners didn't need bedding plants of course. He grew all of his own plants starting them in a little greenhouse beside his house. He had a marvellous garden and was interviewed on the CBC television show Canadian Garden regularly. Stan's motto was don't plant until June 10th and the ice is out of Yellowknife Bay. Another accomplished local garden was Chris D. Briggs who wrote the northern classic Plant Magic for Northern Gardens, which was published by Outcrop in 1979. She listed plants that did well in our northern climate.



Most of Yellowknife's original gardens had been for vegetables but by the 1970s most of the gardens were for flowers. The Bromley store closed but bedding plants were brought in by the food store which was located where the centre ice plaza now sits. They would bring in racks and racks of them. Unfortunately, they never really got the idea that plants needed water. Wal-Mart and Canadian Tire now bring in plants but at times watering them and keeping them alive is also an issue, although they seem to be getting better with time. Personally, I think the city should have a by law against

planticide and a Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Bedding Plants.

Another notable development in northern gardening was when Arctic Farmers set up shop. Not only did they bring in and grow bedding plants themselves but their landscaping business certainly has made Yellowknife a greener and more floral place. Of course there is also the Garden of Eden who bring in bedding plants, bushes and trees. Every spring when the new plants arrive, suddenly Yellowknife is in bloom with flower gardens, planters and hanging baskets every where. The city puts baskets along Franklin Avenue and of course Adams Dental Clinic is a blaze of colours.

We have now sort of gone full circle and community gardens are starting to appear around town and this year there is even talk of a farmers market. People are starting to realize or rediscover the fact that vegetables can be grown quite successfully in the north. We also have ecology north running a very successful composting program creating rich loam or soil and diverting a lot of organic material from ending up in the dump. So Yellowknife is now producing its own garden soil.

When I was writing this piece, one thing that struck me was that all the old markets farms and once great gardens of Yellowknife are all gone or have been built on. As the town developed land that was good for growing things just wasn't given a priority over buildings. Yet now that there is a real resurgence of interest in gardening, City council could help by setting aside some lots for agricultural purposes.

Yellowknife has a much richer and colourful history of gardening than most people imagine. I believe the north will be better for it and can envision the day when some of our vegetables and berries are once again grown locally in the north as they once were.

It is time for some innovative thinking, experimentation and for old timers to share their gardening tips and stories with the next generation. Let the flowers bloom and let the vegetables grow in the land of the midnight sun.





#2 5710 50th Ave.  
Yellowknife, NT  
X1A 1G1

Tel: (867)873-9475

Fax: (867)873-4318

E-mail:  
ykseniorsociety@theedge.ca

Web site:  
[www.yksenior.ca](http://www.yksenior.ca)

Lounge Tel: 766-3250

### Board of Directors 2012-2013

|                                      |                     |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------|
| President.....                       | Maureen Hall        |
| 1st Vice-President.....              | Murray Jones        |
| 2nd Vice-President.....              | Floyd Adlem         |
| Secretary.....                       | Kathryn Youngblut   |
| Treasurer.....                       | Ramon Masongsong    |
| Social Committee.....                | Lynda Comerford     |
| Advocacy and Health Committee.....   | Floyd Adlem         |
| Co-chair.....                        | Bob Gamble          |
| Communications/Public Relations..... | Murray Jones        |
| Co Chair.....                        | Hal Lugsdon         |
| Membership Committee .....           | June Van Dine Arden |
| Fundraising Committee .....          | Barb McDonald       |
| Active Living Committee.....         | Dave McCann         |
| Directors (unassigned).....          |                     |
| Past President.....                  | Sandra Taylor       |

A full colour version of this publication is available from our web site.

### WILBUR & HARRIET



Bill Reid - Copyright 2013



**YK Seniors' Society Board Meetings**  
On the second Tuesday of each month

**Welcome to visiting Seniors.**  
Come and join us for  
**Lunch With A Bunch on Fridays at 12 noon,**  
at the Baker Community Centre, 5710 50th Ave.