

The Bergen News

Bringing Bergen Together

January 2022

Birds, Beasts and Botany in Bergen

by Bob Griebel, photos by Brian Keating

Bobcat (*Lynx rufus*)

Sighting a cat in the wild is always a rare and special event. As a youngster I encountered a bobcat while wandering in a brush patch on our farm in Castor, and still recall how excited I was. It was a thrill, therefore, to get these photos emailed from my sister in Calgary. Her neighbour in Inglewood is Brian Keating, whom you may have heard discussing wildlife on CBC Radio. His back yard was visited by this family of bobcats several months ago and these pictures of mama bobcat and her three half-grown youngsters were snapped



by Brian. I find it interesting how relaxed and at ease these feral cats appear to be in an urban landscape.

Bobcats live coast to coast in the United States and range far south into Mexico, but they occupy only a narrow strip of territory across southern Canada. Unlike *Lynx Canadensis* (the very close cousin of the bobcat), which can hunt effectively in deep snow, the bobcats' hunting ability is limited by a deep snow pack. This precludes the bobcats' ability to survive in the Canadian boreal region. I

would suspect few bobcats establish a territory in the Bergen area, but would be very interested to hear from any readers who may have come across one in this neck of the woods.

Like many other members of the cat family, the bobcat is a solitary hunter, nocturnal and extremely secretive. The animals establish a hunting territory, the size of which varies depending on terrain and food availability, ranging from less than a square mile up to 75 square miles in size. Bobcats



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A Trip to Newfoundland, Part II

by Shelley Ingeveld

We spent two days at Port Rexton, visiting the Clarendville Farmers' Market on the Saturday; we had the idea to fix up a "Come From Away" gift basket for the Sundre Hospital Futures silent auction fundraiser and had the best fun gathering items at the market. Two vendors gave us items when they heard what we were up to. They wanted to support our hospital too. Again, we were blessed by some very nice people. After lunch we drove to the Bonavista lighthouse where John Cabot landed in 1497 at the new found land.

We spent the next day and night at Dildo and travelled up to the Groves Historical Site at the north end of the peninsula, where there is still evidence of the rock walls early pioneers made to guard their gardens from the milk cows.

On our way to St. John's, we stopped at Gander to tour their Aviation museum. It was good to read through all of the history and especially about the hospitality shown to the stranded passengers who arrived on Sept. 11, 2001. The planes landed on runway 1 and runway 2 was the parking lot for the 39 planes. The air traffic controllers did a great job getting all those planes in safely. One pilot wanted to continue to his American destination but the controller advised him to land in Gander or risk being shot down. He decided to land in Gander. There was a town down the road that gave lodging to some of the passengers who drank the local pub dry every night; the pub staff would travel through the night to get stock for the next night! The great people of Newfoundland gave all they had to make folks welcome and comfortable. There were two stranded gals who were assigned by the Red Cross to the

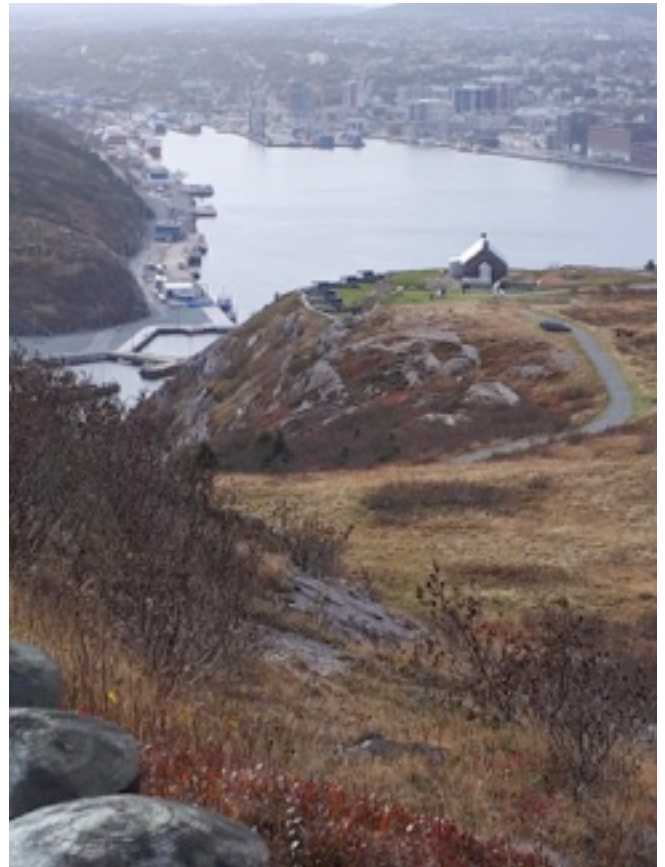
local Legion Hall. They decided they wanted to go camping instead of being inside, so they went to Canadian Tire, bought a tent and sleeping bags and set up on the Legion's front lawn!

Canadian Tire gave **View from the Citadel into St. John's Harbour** the local Red Cross all it needed for the stranded passengers for free. It was a five-day gift by the time folks got on their way again. Some of these details I got from a book I bought which you might want to borrow sometime.

Our last two days and nights were spent in St. John's where we again had fun adding to our gift basket for the silent auction and doing a little shopping for ourselves. We had two nights of great sea food suppers. The first night was in the Shamrock City Pub which



Citadel built to commemorate John Cabot's arrival. The first transatlantic message was sent from here



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EVERY DOG HAS ITS DAY

by Jessie



ADVICE ON TRAINING PERSONS

Have you ever overheard your persons talking about “how to train a dog?” “Yes, I know that’s a joke and you know it’s a joke ‘cause in the end us dogs will do what we will do and there’s nothing the humans can do about it.

But I can do better than that. I can give you a little advice on the training of humans. For example, my male person is a real sucker for cookies. He absolutely must have two or three with his morning coffee. Well, as it turns out, I have developed a taste for cookies, too. Human cookies that is, not dog cookies which are suitable only for ordinary dogs, not high class dogs like me. So I have figured out a plan. When the person starts eating a cookie I go and sniff my breakfast and give it a disdainful look. Then I plant myself in front of his chair, look into his face, and give him “the eyes”. (Any dog who doesn’t know what that means is not worth the effort of explaining.) The person grows more and more uncomfortable as I watch every bite of that cookie disappear into his mouth. Then he brightens up. “She just needs priming” he says, “just like you have to prime an old pump.” So, he gets up, breaks off half his cookie and drops it into my dish. I hustle over, fetch out the cookie and eat it. That pleases the person immensely. I go on and eat my breakfast—which I had planned on all along. The person is very pleased at his brilliant idea and I am very pleased at my brilliant idea—which was to get a cookie,

We are both in such a good mood now that he might give me another cookie.

Stay tuned. I may think of more helpful hints as my brain thaws out from the winter deep freeze.



The Bergen News is very grateful for the rural community grant received from Mountain View County to assist in our operating costs. Thank you for your continued support.

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mark their trails with urine and scent every kilometer or so and, like domestic cats, they bury their scat.

Compared to cougars which often weigh over 200 lbs., the bobcat rarely tips the scales at over 35 lbs. The animal has a fine, dense pelt which can range from grey to yellowish brown. Black spots and stripes and black-tipped guard hairs provide excellent camouflage. The animal's ears, forehead, cheeks, and tail tip are streaked with black.

Unlike its close cousin the lynx, which feeds almost exclusively on snowshoe hares, the bobcat is a very opportunistic feeder, taking almost any other creature it encounters and can overpower. Although mice, squirrels and rabbits form the bulk of its diet in this corner of the world, it will also eat fawns, carrion, insects and fish. The animal has excellent hearing which it uses to locate small rodents. The bobcat hunts by stealth and short bursts of speed, using its lengthy canine teeth and sharp retractable claws to dispatch the prey. Although the bobcat does not represent a threat to cattle and horses it will tackle sheep, goats and pigs, given the opportunity.

Bobcats breed in February and March and, after a 62 day gestation, give birth to litters ranging in size from one to seven (generally three). Rocky crevasses or large hollow logs are used as dens. Like domestic kittens, the young are born furred and blind, with eyes opening at ten days. Within a month the youngsters begin exploring their environment and are weaned by two months of age. The kittens spend the next four to six months traveling with their mothers and disperse in early winter. A bobcat in the wild would be lucky to survive five years, with death occurring most often by trapping or shooting, starvation, and predation by coyotes and cougars. In captivity a bobcat has been reported to live an amazing 32 years. The bobcat population in Canada remains strong and healthy and it is listed as a "species of Least Concern" on the IUCN red list. Let's hope it remains that way.

***Note from editor:** All seems to be going well in the Lundhill district. Ida Grayson is recovering nicely from her bullet wound and young teacher, Kate O'Rourke, has seen no more of the young fiddler, Leif Arneson. An October snowstorm highlighted the inadequacy of some of her pupils' winter footwear and has left her worried about how they will cope with the cold and snow to come. Her concern prompts her to write a couple of letters.*

Teacher

by Marilyn Halvorson

The October sun was still strong enough to melt the early snow but I knew real winter would soon be upon us. With that in mind I sat down to write two letters:

Dear Aunt Nettie and Uncle Evan,

I know you are hoping to make a trip out here before the roads get too bad. I am writing to ask you a favour when you come.....

Dear Mother and Dad,

All is going well here and I love my students but I am hoping you can help me with something. Particularly, Dad, I think your Sunshine Club might take on this project...

(The Sunshine Club was an "old boys' club" that met to do good works and socialize. Sadly, in Dad's case, a bit too much of the socializing came out of a bottle and too little of the paycheque found its way home on a Friday night—one main reason I was closer to my aunt and uncle with their happy home than to my own quarrelling parents.)

With those missives on the way there was nothing more to do but wait—and prepare for the Halloween party at school. Living in what most city people would have called poverty, the Lundhill children were not in the least disadvantaged when it came to the ability to have fun. Whispers and giggles emanated from all corners of the school for a week as costumes were planned and discussed. Ida Grayson sent a note promising popcorn balls for the party and other mothers offered to make sandwiches and cake. Next time Mr. Mac went to the store I rode along and bought a bag of candy and two dozen apples.

The night before the party, Mrs. Mac knocked on my door and came in bearing a voluminous old black dress. "Here, my dear, try this on for size," she said.

"But..." I began.

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Musings: Hope

by Phyllis Cormack

And so another new year is upon us. It sneaks up and bursts on the scene along with the fireworks at midnight, December 31st.

There's something about a new year approaching that causes a certain amount of anticipation, and hope that the year will be an improvement over the last.

So, what is hope? Webster says "hope is a wish or desire accompanied by expectation of its fulfillment". And why would someone hope for something if they didn't expect it to happen? We "hope" many things for ourselves or others. Better health, a job, improved relationships. The list varies with the one hoping. Perhaps when we sign a card we say "hope to see you soon", "hope all goes well with ...", etc. There is no end to what we hope.

This word can encourage the feeling of promise of better things in the future or the anticipation of being together with those we haven't seen for a long time. Hope is a positive sensation that reinforces the thought that tomorrow is a new day and, for some, the assurance that "this too will pass".

I have a magnet on my fridge that sports the words "A thrill of hope the weary soul rejoices for yonder breaks a new and glorious morn". It's true that every morning is new and a lot of the time the only thing stopping it from being glorious is our mindset. We let worry rob us of time that could otherwise be joyful. If the word, joyful, is too strong how about pleasant? There's something about being around a "woe is me" person that can take the joy out of an otherwise good day.

So are you weary? Check into hope. Hope doesn't go away. It's there. Shake the dust off. Give it a polish. I know... you will say it's not that easy. You don't know what my life is like. I'm sorry that this world doesn't give everyone trouble free, worry free, and otherwise glorious days. That's not how it works. We all have our disappointments and more difficult challenges to deal with or overcome. But if you don't have hope what do you have? The One who created the world is the source of all hope. He is in control of all things and knows the struggles of all of us.

May His hope and peace be yours throughout this new year, 2022!

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"No buts. Put it on."

I obeyed and it enveloped me from neck to toes. "Perfect," she said. Then she produced one of her husband's old straw hats, stuck three knitting needles through the crown to form a tepee, and swathed the whole thing in more black cloth. To the inside of the hat she pinned several strands of old binder twine, frayed out to look like straggly hair. "Now, have a look in the mirror. See if our pretty teacher isn't really an old witch!"

"That's for sure!" I laughed. "Now all I need is greenish skin."

"That, too, can be arranged," said Mrs. Mac, "but I think we'll wait for the party for that."

And so it was that, on the afternoon of the party, Mrs. Mac hustled me off to the girls', uh, comfort station, where she slathered my face and hands with a mixture of butter and green food coloring and rubbed it in well. When I emerged, transformed by my black outfit and green skin, the children were wild with glee.

Their own costumes were great, too. Naturally, the three young Graysons were cowboys, complete with big hats, bandanas, and spurs which they joyously clanked all afternoon. Several of the Cranston boys were hobos, and I caught myself uncharitably thinking that very little effort had been required to change them from their ordinary ragged selves. There were also fairies and dogs and monsters and any number of unidentifiable creatures, a tribute to the mothers' ability to create something with not much of anything to work with.

The party went wonderfully with games and food and costume parades. Then I filled one of Mrs. Mac's washtubs with water and we began bobbing for apples. I set a time limit for each student to attempt to get the apple in their teeth. If time ran out it was the next person's turn. This worked perfectly well until it was Willie MacPherson's turn. Ah yes, my Willie of the frogs in my bed. He had been keeping a low profile ever since his grandfather had taken him in hand and marched him unceremoniously to school after one of his sulks, but now he took exception to being told his turn at the apple bobbing was over.

"But I ain't got my apple yet."

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CHARLOTTE

by Noreen Olson

A phobia is an irrational fear and arachnophobia is an irrational fear of spiders. It's a common phobia, and it can be treated, but the treatment I read about involved stroking hairy-legged tarantulas while they crawled over your arms and hands. I'd rather have my phobia thanks.

I don't know when my phobia began but it may have been on a lovely spring day when I was about nine. My baby sister was outside in her buggy, and when I turned back the netting to check on her, there was a spider on her pillow. I had a screaming meltdown that scared Mom, the baby and probably horses in fields miles away. I survived my spider infested country childhood, grew up and moved to town where there were weeks that I could avoid them completely.

Then I got married and moved back to the country and into an old farmhouse with an unfinished basement and shadowy attics. The spider population must have been at an all time high in 1963, because the old house fairly crawled with them. Pick up a rug and three spiders scurried in different directions. I could have had a heart attack cleaning behind the fridge or under the stove. In the morning there would be two in the sink and three in the bathtub. We had an electric stove and spiders immolated themselves in the recessed burners. Also in the kitchen was a little stove that burned garbage and augmented the water heater. Spiders lurked in its woodbox. I screamed a lot, but spiders do not hear, so screaming didn't accomplish much. They sense sound through the vibration of the hair on their legs!

I had always tolerated Daddy Long Legs (harvesters), probably because they move slowly and can be caught and thrown outside. I actually like those tiny red velvet ones, and gradually I developed a shaky truce with the really small varieties, but I am afraid I still shriek at the big fast ones. And those humungous, horrible orb spiders that lurk under awnings and eaves and plug the space between deck railings are really more than I can manage. I want them sprayed. I swear I can hear them walking across the deck!

The new house is, mercifully, almost spider free. Once in a while one comes in on a plant or bouquet of flowers but it's pretty rare that we find one on the loose. And then during a particularly nasty cold snap in early December, Ralph noticed a minuscule grey dot in an almost invisible web in the kitchen window. It was too cold to put her outside and she was very, very small, and very well behaved. Then we made a big mistake, we named her.

We assume Charlotte is a "house spider." There are about 580 species of spiders in Alberta and several kinds of house spiders. She has caught two flies so far and we have picked up their empty husks from the windowsill. Sometimes she disappears for a couple of days, we assume hiding in the window casing, but so far she has always returned. If she stays small and unobtrusive she may remain in the house until the weather warms. Then we will put her outside. She (we assume it's a she, no way we can tell) is not a really fun pet, does not come when called, doesn't beg for treats or belly rubs, but she does manage her own food supply, doesn't need a litter box and is certainly low maintenance.

Please Note New Rates for Subscription Renewals

To our loyal Bergen News subscribers: Please check your mail labels for your expiry date. You may mail your renewal to The Bergen News c/o Marilyn Walker Box 21, Site 9, RR 2, Sundre, T0M 1X0. Renewals by e-transfer can be sent to editor@thebergennews.ca Subscriptions are \$20 annually or \$15 for an email subscription. First time subscribers may use the same addresses to set up a subscription. For additional information call Marilyn at 403-638-2156. Thanks for your support.

Bergen Church News

by Phyllis Cormack

The Bergen Church is located on the Bergen Road one mile west of the Highway 760 intersection. For Sunday morning services online please go to our website <http://bergenmissionarychurch.ca/> then click on the Facebook page where alternative services will be listed.

Bergen Church is open for services every Sunday starting at 10:30 am.

Masks are required and are available at the door along with hand sanitizer.

Seating is such that attendees can spread out. We are allowed to have 50 people in attendance.

Various adults are presenting the Children's Feature followed by Toddler Time and Sunday School for the younger kids.

There are Bible studies in progress.

If you are interested in Friday night youth group, the contact person is Adam Elliot, our youth pastor. His phone number is 403-586-3598. Adam encourages kids enrolled in Grade 7 through Grade 12 to join in and take part in the activities he has planned, as well as in the short Bible lesson.

"The Den" has been open for some time now and is successful. It is the Sundre Youth Center. Various activities are available for kids who are looking for a place to be welcome after school.

The skating rink at the Bergen Church is operational and has seen some use now that the weather has warmed some. Information regarding the rink will be posted online.

Prayers go out to so many families and acquaintances who are experiencing health struggles or bereavement.

Meals were delivered to various households on Christmas Eve. The service at the church was well attended.

Congratulations to Dale and Cathy Erickson's daughter Annelise who was married December 28th to Brody. Best wishes and God's blessings to this happy couple.

It's always a blessing to hear of answered prayers or praise items of everyday occurrences where God's hand is evident.

The Sundre Ministerial is a team of churches in the Sundre area who want to help during this difficult time. If you find yourself in need of help, whether physical or emotional, please feel free to contact this number and they will be able to direct you to an appropriate resource: 403-636-0554.

You can also go to the Sundre Ministerial web page — sundreministerial.blogspot.com — if you'd like to contact a church directly. Click on 'Church Listings and Links'.

If you want to donate food to the McDougal Chapel food bank, it can be taken to the Chapel. There is a door bell you can ring to alert them that you are there. You can also donate by e-transfer. Contact McDougal Chapel or check their web site for information.

If you have prayer needs, please call or email Leila Schwanzenberger at 403-638-4175 or leila@processworks.ca. Thank you to those who pray faithfully.

Pastor Rob Holland's number is 403-672-0020.

Olwyn is in the church office Tuesdays and Fridays, 10:00 – 4:00 p.m. The church's number is 403-638-4010 and the fax number is 403-638-4004.

The Church has a new email address. It is office@bergenchurch.ca

The website is <http://bergenmissionarychurch.ca/>

If you have comments on anything that you read in the Bergen News, send your response to The Bergen News, ljsyer@telus.net or the Bergen News c/o Marilyn Walker, Box 21, Site 9, RR2, Sundre, T0M 1X0.

Views and opinions expressed in the articles are those of the authors and not of the Bergen News.

The People of Glenbow: Cook — Margaret Mole

by Shari Peyerl

Food is an important part of holiday celebrations, but do we always appreciate the people who prepare our festive treats? All too often, historical records focus on the wealthy party-goers, while the people working behind-the-scenes are forgotten. This photo from the Vanderhoef collection is a classic example: the notation on the back names the dog, but not the woman.

The woman's simple, dark clothes covered by a large functional apron and her position at the servants' entrance of Glenbow's Stevenson home suggest she belongs to the working class. (The ruins of this house are located on private land today, but can be seen from the park trails.) This home was occupied by the wealthy New York Vanderhoef family from 1914 to 1919.

Known historical documents identify only two female servants here: maid, Jenny Johnson and cook, Margaret Mole. Jenny was able to surreptitiously "borrow" the gowns of slender Mrs. Vanderhoef, so this stocky woman appears by default to be Margaret. Margaret had auburn hair and blue eyes, stood five feet tall, and weighed 180 pounds (years later, in 1924).

Born in England, Margaret Thompson married Anthony Redman Mole in 1907. Andy immigrated to Calgary in 1910, and Margaret joined him in 1914. Eight months later, Andy enlisted in the Canadian Expeditionary Force of the First World War. Margaret then found work at Glenbow, as the cook in the home of Mrs. Gertrude Vanderhoef and her young daughter, also named Gertrude. In spring 1916, Margaret was widowed. She was 34 years old.

While at Glenbow, Margaret cooked elegant meals for the Vanderhoefs and their guests, working with specially imported foods like cantaloupe, and turning common vegetables into fancy dishes by "lacing strips of beets in and out and arranging them in tiers."

When the Vanderhoefs left Glenbow, Margaret moved to a mansion in Calgary's Mount Royal district, where she worked for Eugene Coste, founder of the Canadian Western Natural Gas, Light, Heat and Power Company. She then worked in the Mount Royal residence of real estate magnate Charles Traunweiser (owner of the Yale and Empress hotels), where she was responsible for such events as fancy bridal shower teas.

The lack of Margaret's name on the back of the Vanderhoef photo might be an indication of under-appreciation, but an alternate interpretation is possible. In 1924, Margaret travelled to the New York residence of her "friend" Miss Gertrude Vanderhoef. Perhaps Margaret was so beloved that her identity was obvious to the photo's former owner.

Wishing you all a Happy New Year full of yummy treats, and sending special good wishes to those who create them!



Margaret Mole?, c.1916, inscribed: "Ranch and Buzz"; Courtesy of the Vanderhoef/Evans Family Archives.

Bergen News 2021 Financial Report

by Laurie Syer

Below is the account of Bergen News expenditures and revenue for 2021. The Bergen News ran out of money in June of 2021 and appealed to subscribers for help. Thanks to the generous contributions of many of our readers, we were able to pay our bills and plan to continue in 2022. Our current bank account balance is \$2,298.00. This will keep us going for approximately six months. We will apply to the County for a Rural Community Grant as usual. We won't know the results of that until July. Subscriptions come due and are paid throughout the year. We are optimistic about our ability to keep producing the Bergen News. Thank you for all your support.

Expenditures

Postage	2057.00
Printing	2884.00
Web Page	176.00
Labels and office	201.00
Total Expenditures	\$5318.00

Revenue

Subscriptions	2340.00
Advertising	300.00
Single copies	140.00
Extra Donations	1483.00
Mountain View County Grant	2000.00
Total Revenue	\$6263.00

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"Nonetheless, your time is up. We will all have apples later."

"But..."

"Willie! Move." I took him firmly by the arm and helped him to his feet, receiving a nasty glare for my trouble.

Next up was little, red-headed Davey Johnson. What he lacked in size he made up for in determination. He plunged his head right under the water like a diving otter and came up soaked but grinning with an apple gripped firmly in his teeth. That was too much for Willie.

"You're a rotten cheater!" he blurted out and, before I could stop him, he lunged forward and pushed Davey's head back under water. Davey surfaced sputtering and near tears and without his hard-won apple. At that point, my Irish temper took over and I grabbed Willie by the collar and dragged him unceremoniously to the farthest corner of the room. "You stay here and don't you dare move!" I shouted at him.

He stuck his tongue out at me. "I don't have to and you can't make me, you old..." Considering my costume, if he had said witch I might have forgiven it, but he chose a rhyming word instead. In the moment while I stood utterly stunned by his outburst he turned and ran out of the school.

The room, which had been ringing with the excited shouts and laughter of the children, suddenly went dead silent. The silence was broken by the shocked whisper of little Ruby Cranston who, in her gentle and religious household, had probably never heard a bad word. She nudged her older sister. "What did he call Miss O'Rourke?"

With admirably fast thinking, Martha returned the whisper. "A witch. Hush now."

That broke the spell of silence. Big Bob Sutherland leapt to his feet. "I'll get the little..." There was a pause and I knew that Bob was sorting through his own limited vocabulary for an acceptable word to describe Willy... "beggar for you Miss."

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A Winter Find

by Shirley Huchcroft

On a beautiful, sunny, crisp winter day, I came upon this winter beauty. Careful research revealed that it is the rare Canadian Snowshoe Flower/*Snowshoeie canadensis* in the family *Snowshoeaceae*, of which this is the only member. Eager to record this plant's features, I documented it according to protocol as follows:

Abundance/Distribution: Rare. Found in select northern climates.

Habitat: North of the 49th parallel in cool, snow-covered areas.

Blooming Period: December to March

Description: This fragile, low-growing native perennial arises from a long rhizome, producing a single 9 to 11-petaled white flower about 1.5 m. across on a stout stem. Leaves are opposite and small. Petals and leaves have a mesh-like scaly texture and are white to grey. Blossoms are short-lived, particularly in late March. The absence of chlorophyll in this plant means that it is a parasite, living off the nutrients of other plants hidden beneath the snow. *Snowshoeie canadensis* is threatened by trampling by humans and animals. All parts of the plant are edible but could numb the lips. Also, it is wise not to consume any yellowed bits.



Winter Walks in Bergen

Was exercise one of your New Year's resolutions? Come walk with your neighbours and see how fast the time flies! We walk on Friday mornings at 10:00 a.m. provided the temperature is not colder than -15C. Several of our recent walks were cancelled. If you want to know if we will be walking, please contact Sandy Easterbrook at 403-638-1283 or email me to get on the contact list, at kettlecrossingfarm@gmail.com. Here is the upcoming schedule:

January 28	Bergen Rd. and Rge Rd 52, going N
February 4	Bergen Road and Rge Rd 52, going S
February 11	Pioneer Lodge Road and Range Road 54, going N, stopping at Kettle Crossing Farm for Valentine goodies
February 18	Pioneer Lodge Road and Range Road 54, going S
February 25	Pioneer Lodge Road and Range Road 55, going S
March 4	Pioneer Lodge Road and Range Road 60, going N

Ride With Me

by Donelda Way

The snowcapped mountains filled the horizon as we entered Olds. Leaving town in another direction, the unmarked, completely white fields had a few trees along the perimeters, causing my mind to envision pioneer families in horse drawn wagons, struggling with or enjoying this long distance trip.

"Let's go to Eagle Hill Coop". The road looked like it might be a bit slippery. I glanced toward the sky out my driver's side window. "That sky looks like it is going to snow before we get home". Within minutes the snow had begun to fall, increasing in intensity, it seemed, as I blinked. Traveling up a hill my husband observed a band of horses moving fast through the almost whiteout conditions. A rider was urging them forward through an open gate. "Another fellow is following the first guy. He is leading two horses," my husband said. We made a quick purchase at Eagle Hill and headed home. We breathed a sigh of relief. The storm was behind us now. Visibility and driving conditions improved immensely the closer we got to home

Hwy 760: "Whatever is coming toward us is BIG". On an angle, I pulled in across a farm entrance. "Do you think I am in far enough?" Large signs hid the entire grill area of the pilot trucks. "Slow Down", "Wide Load", "House Moving." I commented, "It's a bungalow that fills both lanes." The driver of the third pilot truck pulled in closer to my vehicle. Through open windows we talked. I did as he instructed, "Please, back in further off the road". I was glad I did! The house filled both lanes and shoulders as it slowly and safely passed by.

QEII: "It's our week for house moves". This time there was one pilot truck following the unit which was traveling north also. The unit slowed going up a lengthy hill. My husband guessed, "a mobile home, probably 14 ft wide by 70 ft long". I was thankful there were three lanes, making passage quite comfortable.

Hwy 22 a short distance from the approach to intersection of Hwy 27: A large, stately, white-headed eagle perched on a fence post, surveying the activity of approximately 20 crows/ravens. Other black birds perched on adjoining fence posts or flew in to join the feasting on the road kill. Posted beside the road: Farm Eggs—\$4.50.

Hwy 27: "Let's leave extra time to get to town and accomplish our goals". Entering town, unexpected one-lane-only bridge construction delayed us.

"Strange place for seven or eight pine cones in the middle of the road". *Unexpectedly* those cones winged upward into bird flight. *Surprise!*

The burning barrel was smoky, giving off an array of smells that were a bit pungent to my nostrils but quite interesting to our dog and feral cats. Thankfully, this smoldering was not near where we park our vehicle.

The two of us and the dog walked our laneway in a winter wonderland. Fresh snow-laden trees lined the deep snow-filled ditches and flat areas near the fences. The dog bounded and swayed through the trees and snow with ease on his long springboard legs. The snow squeaked with each step along the packed tire treads. An overhead plane and a passing truck were the only other noises right then.

Daytrip to Calgary, mid-morning: the mountains appeared to be close enough to touch. Every peak and crevice was extremely visible.

Later afternoon, seen in the rearview mirror: the clouds looked like bright pink cotton candy that had been stretched out in bands from east to west along the chinook arch. As dusk set in, the sun made a blinding gold backdrop for the almost solid grey mountains. The trees went from individual dark forms to a strip of blackness along the foothills. Darkness set in. "It is easier to drive in the daylight, but this is good practice. Builds confidence in my continuing driving abilities." To stimulate further alertness, a few peanuts to snack on were poured into the top of my travel mug, quiet music was turned on, headlights were put on bright. Travelling at night took on its own serenity.

Until the ears moved I didn't see the moose tucked away in the willows. Like hydraulic pistons the legs pumped and the young animal moved away from us.

"Beautiful markings in the snow along the ditches" my husband observed. Sunlight from the south accented every scalloped curve and lip, causing picturesque shadows. Another day the tree shadows stretched out to the exact lip of each scallop.

A Recipe For the New Year

by Pat Gibbs

Well folks, another brand new year has begun and I would like to begin my article by giving a big applause to Jamie Syer and Michael Manning for their amazing piano duo back in December. Jamie was in Bergen and Michael was in Tucson, Arizona. I felt like we were at the Bergen Christmas concert and Jamie was playing Christmas carols for us. I must admit there were some happy tears as I clapped loudly when they finished. A big thank you to Sally Banks for e-mailing us about this so we could watch them play.

And now for some happenings in Al's and my corner of the world. Before Christmas, my daughter and I were coming home from a day of shopping in Red Deer on the busy QEII. The highway was, as usual, quite busy and most people usually drive a considerable bit faster than us gals do. We stay in the slower lane, which keeps us happy and the rest of the drivers happy too. Now for the excitement! We had a car ahead of us and a car on our left and one coming up from behind us. Out of nowhere, a deer ran right in front of us and into the ditch! Both Melony and I were stunned and had no time to react. Our mouths dropped open and we stared bug-eyed at each other. She asked me, "What happened just now?" I finally found my tongue and replied, "I believe that deer had a death wish and we let her down!" It is difficult for hooved animals to run on pavement, thus it seemed like a movie in slow motion when she ran across in front of us. Guardian angel? Absolutely! Just the way the cars were spaced and the timing of the deer crossing were nothing short of a miracle in my mind. I'll bet if you think back over your life you could remember circumstances and events that happened and realize how fortunate you were to live to tell about it.

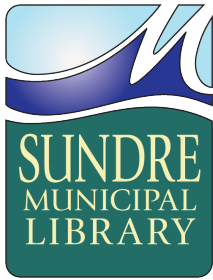
A more comical (or not) incident happened when a chickadee hit the window and knocked itself senseless. I quickly ran out and picked it up and placed it on a recovery pillow I have on hand for such mishaps. I then put the pillow and bird on the floor of our bedroom where it was cool and dark. Checking in later to see how things were going, I discovered it was good. The chickadee was somewhere in the room able to function and I just had to find him. Then I remembered I had taken the heat vent covers off and had not put them back again. I went into panic mode. I looked everywhere. Dear Lord, please don't let it have fallen down one of the vents. Last look was behind our dresser. There it was in the corner. I gently picked it up and cupped it in my hand. I was rewarded with a sharp peck and a hiss! Yes, a hiss just like a very frightened kitten. I went to the bedroom window and managed to open it with one hand and quickly released my feathered friend. Whew! I needed a coffee!

Christmas was busy but beautiful and our time with family and friends was precious and not nearly as problematic as deer and chickadees! Travel was good for all, even though the weather was very, very cold indeed. Jack Frost did an amazing ice crystal sketch on our sun-room windows, creating frond-like ferns and palm trees! We sing of Jack Frost nipping at our nose, but while outside walking, it felt more like a bite! Even our wood cookstove was grumpy and it took awhile to find the problem. A pipe was needing vacuuming to rid it of soot. Hubby dug right in and removed said soot. He emerged from behind the stove decorated with the stuff. However, there was still some left and I, being a bit smaller, offered to finish the messy job. I removed what I saw left in the pipe and since last one at the scene cleans up—well I won that job! The stove is behaving much better now.

I don't make resolutions, but I was thinking of a recipe for living in the new year, 2022. This would include ingredients such as sharing and caring for others. Being a listening ear when good and difficult times come along. Giving a hug when it's all you have to give to someone who is grieving and not worrying if they are vaccinated or not. The last three ingredients to be added to this recipe will be lots of Faith, Hope and Love. The most important being Love. With the Lord's help and wisdom may we all enjoy the results of this New Year's recipe!

Til next time.....

LOOK WHAT'S HAPPENING AT THE SUNDRE LIBRARY



Sundre Library

The library will be open:

Tuesdays 9:00 – 4:30

Wednesday 12:00 – 7:30 PM

Thursday 12:00 – 4:30 PM

Fridays 12:00 – 4:30 PM

Saturdays 11:00 – 2:30 PM

Sundre Library (403) 638-4000, www.sundre.prl.ab.ca

Rhyme Time

Thursday, February 3 & 17, 11:00 – 11:45 AM

Ages 3-5 with caregiver. Songs, stories and rhymes.

Registration Required.

Genealogy

Tuesday, February 1 & 15, 9:30 – 11:30 AM.

Learn how to research your roots.

Registration Required.

Adult Take & Make Kit ~ for Two (Theme: Treat Yourself)

Pick-up February 10-12 at the Sundre Library

FREE: Discover writing with Chocolate. Reserve by Feb. 4

Literacy Day Family Story time

Thursday, January 27, 11:00 – 11:45 AM & 1:00 -1:45 PM

Dress as a character from a book and win a FREE book.

Registration Required.

Tech Tutoring

Tuesday, February 8 & 10

Get 1:1 help using your tech. Call to make an appt.

Lego Club

Thursday, February 3, 3:15 – 4:15 PM

Ages 6 – 11. Come build with our Lego.

Registration Required.

Teacher, continued from page 12

At that point my own brain thawed enough to find some words. “No, Bob!” I cried, my mind painting pictures of how much worse the situation would become if Bob caught Willie and gave him a much-deserved thrashing on my behalf. “Let him settle down. I will deal with this later.” “Now”, I added, managing to quell the shakiness in my voice, “it’s almost home time. Let’s finish our game and clean up.”

The remaining children had their turn at apple bobbing and everyone received a small bag of candy, but it was a subdued group of children that headed for home that day.

It was a subdued teacher, too, who headed back to the MacPherson house, wondering if Willie had run there or to his father’s place or, heaven forbid, off into the woods somewhere.

When I got home Mrs. Mac’s troubled face told the story. “Oh, Mrs. Mac,” I burst out but she stopped me.

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Teacher, continued from page 13

“Not now, my dear. Give yourself time to collect your thoughts. Yes, Willie ran here, very distraught, and with a story which I am sure could be quite different from your point of view. He has gone home to his father now. Sit down and have a cup of tea and then we will talk.”

And talk we did. According to Willie’s story I had “grabbed him roughly by the arm and embarrassed him in front of the class by making him stand in the corner.” No mention had been made about him ducking Davey’s head under water or of the uncomplimentary name he had shouted at me.

Mrs. Mac listened quietly to my story and nodded. “I thought there might have been another side to it. For now, let’s put it out of our minds and prepare to enjoy the evening of visiting spooks.”

In the early October dusk they began to arrive. Some spooks came in ragged sheets, sporting grey-green hair made of the old-man’s beard which grew on dead spruce branches throughout the woods. Some wore the same costumes they’d had for the school party. All were full of shouts and laughter and the sheer joy of being young. The littlest ones were driven in wagons and democats by parents or older siblings. The medium-sized ones rode their school ponies. The older ones came later, after dark, and they didn’t come to the door. Only the excited neighing of the MacPherson horses alerted us to their stealthy approach through the woods. My heart leapt into my throat as Mr. Mac grabbed his shotgun and stormed out the door.

Mrs. Mac chuckled at my horrified gasp. “Dinna worry yourself, lass. They play this game every year. Listen,” she said, as she opened the back door.

Suddenly there was the horrendous crash of the shotgun discharge. In the echoing silence that followed, Mr. Mac’s voice rang out. “That was a warning, ye young scalawags! Touch my privy and I swear I’ll fill your britches with rock salt and birdshot!”

This was greeted with wild laughter and the sound of pounding hooves as the dreaded privy-tippers made good their escape. Mrs. Mac peered out into the darkness. “Oh, saints be praised, he beat them to the punch this year. The noble MacPherson outhouse still stands!”

Thus ended the excitement of Halloween night. But there was to be more consternation two days later as we all assembled at the school house for church services.

Everyone was already seated and the first hymn was beginning when the Grayson family hurried in and took seats at the back of the room. This was a little strange as they usually sat front and centre, but I assumed that the change was due to their lateness. The service progressed and gradually I became aware of a lot of whispering going on in the back rows. However, short of turning right around and staring, I could not see the cause of the commotion. At last the sermon ended and we began to file outside. More and more whispers! Then I caught sight of it, Ida Grayson’s face. Her left eye was purple as a plum and swollen nearly shut. I felt my heart sink to my shoes. Truly there were men who beat their wives and acted like they had every right to do so. But Jim Grayson? Surely he was the mildest man in the country—and surely Ida was the most headstrong woman. Had Jim finally been pushed too far? Ida did indeed look a little chagrined.

The Graysons walked on out into the schoolyard and stopped. Ida turned to face the crowd. “Okay, everyone, I’m only going to tell this story once so you’d best pay attention. There’s a new young couple, the Sanders, who have moved into the old cabin down at the sawmill. I met them while I was out hunting my vagabond bull and they seemed a little lonely, so I decided to give them a small Halloween surprise. While Jim took the children trick-or-treating I put on men’s clothes, masked my face, and borrowed young Steve’s toy pistol. Then I rode up to the Sanders’ cabin and pounded on the door. When Mr. Sanders opened it I waved the pistol and shouted, ‘Your money or your life!’ Well, you’d never believe anyone could move that fast. He just hauled off and punched me so hard I fell right off the porch. I was real pleased my disguise had looked so real—after I came to, that is. And that poor Mr. Sanders, he was so ashamed that he’d punched a lady I thought he was going to lay right down and die—and I was barely even hurt.”

Jim gave his wife as stern a look as he could manage. “She’s just lucky she didn’t get shot again,” he muttered, sourly.

“Lighten up, old man,” Ida scolded, giving her husband a jab in the ribs with her elbow. “We may be in a Depression but we don’t have to go around being depressed,” she said, with a twinkle in her eyes—well, at least in one eye.

To be continued.

A Trip to Newfoundland, continued from page 2



View from St John's boat club

We had an early flight home the next day and met a nice fellow from Goobies. We had trouble understanding his accent, but we managed to hear that he and his wife were going to visit their daughter. I truly thought he said they were going to Italy to see her; later he said his two brothers were there too. I thought this odd and when we were in our seats on the plane, I asked Gerald about it; they were actually on their way to Edmonton. Perhaps we should have bought the dictionary to understand the local language?

Newfoundland has an abundance of fresh water with rivers, brooks, and lakes and springs coming out of hillsides. We saw some folks filling several large water containers on the side of the highway one day.

We were told that we booked at a good time of year as the hurricane season was over. It was easy to find grocery stores, wine stores, post offices, great sea food, and friendly people. If you really want to see icebergs, whales, and puffins, then go between June and September. But there is always great scenery and an abundance of walking/hiking trails regardless of the time of year. I would recommend a holiday to Newfoundland and Labrador and remember to watch out for moose.

has live music every night. The singer sang a song we heard during Celtic Colours two years before; he did a good job. The next night was at the Fish Exchange with a bird's eye view of the harbour.

Newfoundland gets three container ships per week to provide what is needed on the island. They raise only about 30% of the vegetables they use. We saw one cow/calf pair, four steers and six head of horses during our whole trip.

We had a great guided tour of St. John's on our last day provided by Steven of McCarthy Tours. He is a retired executive chef who had the privilege of cooking for Queen Elizabeth and Prince Phillip and that same year for Bill Clinton when the G7 met close by. He was so good at showing off his chosen home, (being originally from England). He found out we were ranchers so took us to visit Crosby (first name) at his dairy. He was great to visit with and when Gerald chided him about the McCormick tractor in the yard, he emitted the only cuss words we heard on the whole trip; his brother had chosen the McCormick and he had no use for it. Apparently, they are prone to break down. He apologized to me for his bad language. Steven told a story about the time when, some years before while he was still a chef, he cooked for the 2,000 people who came for the raising of Crosby's new dairy barn. Crosby and his brother have a dairy in PEI as well.

We got to see Signal Hill overlooking the entrance to St. John's harbour and part of the dock area as well.



Gerald and Shelley looking out to the Atlantic from near the Citadel



From My Office Window

by Brian and Kim Allan

Some COLOR for a cold January. Happy New Year to all and may it be better than 2020 and 2021; here's hoping!

