

TAKE ONE!**THEY ARE FREE!****TAKE ONE!****THEY ARE FREE!****TAKE ONE!**

...from the bush

Winter on the Way!**Number 17 November 2007**

Charlie Harvests

Now we've had the first nip of frost, it's harvest time out here in the bush. As well as our daily fresh eggs whose deliciousness I won't describe lest you get jealous, we've been picking stuff as it became ready all summer. From time to time, we picked and canned curly kale leaves, leaving the plants to grow more. The jars keep for several years and you can see immediately whether it's safe to eat or not from the lid. If it's popped up, toss it. Otherwise, enjoy; it's fine. The kale added to our collection of greens such as spring nettles and the Good King Henry we canned earlier. But more about the chickens.

The teenage roosters've been practicing their crowing muscles for a while now, sounding like rusty wheels needing oil, and facing each other off before running away in a great hurry. We learned, the hard way of course, there's only room for one rooster in our yard, so we started our endless discussions about flock improvement and which one we should keep. I think all we were really trying to do was put off The Day.

It came in the end, so two at a time, they were "readied for the pot" to put it delicately. The first mouthful of meat made it all worth while. It was *SO* good! I feel for you folk who have to eat store-bought chicken that tastes so bland.

The next crop in was potatoes. I'd

tried growing them under leaves or straw instead of hilling them with the roots and rocks that pass for soil in the potato field. Of the five pounds I sowed under leaves, I harvested eleven pounds! Finally, we made a profit on the spuds. What I really learned is that there's no substitute for good soil, so I'm building raised beds which I hope to fill with dirt before it freezes.

We had to buy beans this year as our crop only gave us a few meals, but the tomatoes!! Wow, the tomatoes!! We and the chickens have been picking them for a couple of months now and I pulled the rest of the green ones off the vines (Should I say 'trees'?) when frost threatened. Linda'll let them ripen inside layers of newspaper in their basket in the house. We've boxes of jars for winter soups & sauces.

The only crops left to come in are the carrots, the rest of the kale (better after a frost) and my three pumpkins. These are the ones that grew high in the air until the plant grew tired of holding them up and gently let them sink back down to the ground. One of them's actually turning slightly orange... if I look at it at sunset.

Anyway, the pantry is full of boxes of jars containing our summer's harvest, the woodshed is full of logs cut, split and dried so, as the song says; let it snow, let it snow, let it snow....

All the best from the bush, Charlie



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voice from the bush

HERBS-Witchcraft or Wisdom

by Charlie Johnson

In the old days, I mean two hundred years or more ago, there was a running feud between the herbalist 'witches' and the schooled doctors that makes the present run-in between Big Pharmaceuticals and herbal folk like Ricola look tame. When was the last time you heard of an alternative medico being tossed into the river in a Dunking Stool or being burned at the stake?

And the 'witches' were good. They could perform a Cesarean operation with a reasonable expectation of both mother and baby surviving. We know this from the literature of Shakespeare. MacBeth was lulled into a false sense of security when he was told that no man of woman born could hurt him. Unfortunately, MacDuff's birth was just such a Cesarean operation, likely performed by a team of midwives. The doctors of the day couldn't have done it successfully; it would be a few hundred years before they even began hand washing before surgery.

Marie Caisse, the nurse who promoted an old Native recipe for the treatment of cancer, now known as Essiac, (her name spelled backwards!) ran foul of the medical profession in the 1950's and was hounded through the courts. They made her life miserable but at least she didn't end up tied in a sack full of stones at the bottom of the bay.

Big Pharma has always been opposed to herbs even though all medicines came, originally, from nature.

The example of digitalis comes to mind. A country doctor in the 1800's did a series of experiments with the plant Foxglove, *Digitalis Purpurea*, and found he could relieve some heart diseases. His research was later discredited by a scientist who force-fed a bunch of turkeys with foxglove leaves until they died. Today, digitalis is a well-respected medicine for some heart conditions.

The reason for this antagonism's fairly clear. There's no money to be made in a cup of tea, whereas an exclusive pill can be as costly as you please, especially if the patient can be persuaded he or she can't live without it.

I am in reasonably good health because I challenged every pill I've been prescribed and I cut the dose as low as it could go and still be effective. This has caused me quite a few run-ins with my doctors over the years, but I always try to remember who's body it is. This confusion of responsibility is, I believe, part of the reason for the crisis in our medical system. Personal action in the form of clean living, proper diet, exercise and herbal medicines certainly help me.

Those people who try some of the herbs I recommend have also had good results following the tried and true "if it tastes good, drink it, if it doesn't, don't. Usually, by the time I see these folks they are desperate enough to accept help that doesn't come in a prettily coloured gelatin capsule.

To be fair I should add that if I'm in a car wreck please phone me an ambulance. Don't make me a cup of tea nor fetch the nearest drum-beating medicine man. There's most certainly a place for Western medicine and it's modern miracles. Without pharmaceuticals, I'd be screaming my little heart out in some padded cell somewhere.

However, the enormous stress on our health care system could be eased a great deal by people eating properly, exercising moderately and, of course, figuring out who is responsible for the body in question.

I am doing much better now that I know the answer to that one!

All the best from the bush, Charlie Johnson.

GRAMMA'S CHIPPER

The best french fries in North Cobalt

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...from the community

Shopping Notes: I'm walking more than eating these days (well, trying to....) so will stop in at some stores I've been meaning to visit. I really need a good bra...just as important as the walking shoes, I think...so its off to Knickers for me! I had a few questions for Brenda McLennan when I arrived and I learned a lot.

How long has Knickers been in downtown New Liskeard?

We've been here for about five years now!

What made you decide to open a ladies lingerie store?

My four years at Walmart turned out to be great market research for learning what local women were looking for but were unable to find...

I started Knickers with these women in mind.

What sort of things do you sell?

Bras, Lingerie, Bathing Suits year 'round, Sleepwear and Accessories in a full range of sizes including those for fuller figures. We carry high quality garments with a price that is in keeping with what most of us have to spend. I also have jewellery made by Northern Ontario artisans and include pieces without metal for those with skin sensitivities.

What problems have you seen from improperly fitted bras? I've seen bruising and scarring from pinched tissue. I've had women tell me of their neck pain and sore shoulders from stress due a lack of support and I've seen ridges on women's shoulders where the bra straps have destroyed muscle tissue over years of wear.

How will a professionally fitted bra make a difference in my day? The even distribution of weight will decrease shoulder pain and relieve the stress on your neck. A good bra makes you feel like you're not wearing one at all!

What is the biggest problem in getting a proper fit? When looking for a bra we often choose the wrong body diameter in relation to cup size. In most stores there is a real lack of size choices but at Knickers we have you covered.

Brenda tells me there are Gift Certificates available for Christmas, Birthdays, Anniversaries and for Holiday Wear!

"The best...from the bush"

A selection of our first year's articles, recipes, crafts and poems is at the printer's shop! The first batch of copies, along with re-order information, will be available mid-month to our subscribers, advertisers and faithful readers, without charge, through our usual distributors. REQUESTS FOR REORDERS AT \$5.00 EACH PLUS \$1.00 POSTAGE CAN BE SENT TO CHARLIE AT THE ADDRESS BELOW.

Further copies will be on sale

(ideal for gift giving) at the

Riverside Farmer's

**Christmas Market on Friday,
November 23rd from 3pm to 9pm
and on Saturday, November 24th
from 8am to 3pm**

**Charlie plans to be at Riverside
Place on Saturday, Nov. 24th,
starting at 10 am** to sign copies of our book and to visit with friends for as long as his retiring nature can handle!

We look forward to seeing you there!



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Ladies Lingerie Sleep Wear Leisure Wear

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CRAFTS...from the bush

GIFTS THAT KEEP ON GIVING....

by little bear

Traditions are made over time. Everyone has seen us haul out our favourite little ornaments every fall, every Christmas, every summer and every spring. We've got the "pine cone people" made by one of the kids, or grandkids, ten years ago and the fall wreath with the droopy red maple leaves made of plastic... So this year why not make something that can become a tradition for your friends and family.

Framed photo galleries that can have your latest pictures sent to update the display are a wonderful tradition. Making a scrap book for family that can have pages added for each celebration and milestone is another great gift that keeps on giving. I heard of a great idea recently: taking photos of family events and scenes from vacations and creating a year long calendar. That would be a great tradition to start...and not too difficult to keep up with the increasingly popular cell phone photos.

For the craft idea in this month's newsletter I thought I'd suggest a Medicine Pouch since choosing items for the pouch continues. A Medicine Pouch is traditionally worn, when appropriate under our clothing and contains things that support us on our Spiritual Path. Everything about the Pouch counts!

Usually the Pouch is made of animal hide, the choice of which is also quite relevant depending on the person's "animal totem". Traditionally information about the totem is received through Birth or given through Ceremony or found through a Dream or Vision Quest. It is, I believe, acceptable to make someone a Medicine Pouch using items I feel are right for the person. The items to be beaded, braided or sewn onto the Pouch are, for me, a process that occurs over time. Items arrive that I realize would fit with a few other pieces I've got squirreled away in a box on the treadle sewing machine...which I haven't used in years because its so hard to get to with all the wooded boxes sitting on top of it...

Anyway, here's a pattern to use for the actual pouch. The thong or necklace can be beaded or purchased as a length of leather; there are lots to choose from at NCFM. The pouch holes can be punched, marking holes every 1/2", using a nail, hammer and piece of wood to protect the table top; or it can be sewn if you use ultra suede or other fabric. The main thing is to sew found items like small shells or drilled stones, etc. on to the pouch in a way that compliments the person in mind. I usually put one item, like a special stone, inside the Pouch before giving it away. I also smudge the items as part of the process.

Make the pouch 6 inches long by 2 1/2 inches wide and fold in three 2" segments. Two sections with form the pouch and the third section becomes the flap of the pouch. Sew the neck lace to each side and decorate it to suit the recipient. Its a great thing to make for yourself, as well, since we could all use a little reminder of who and how we are trying to be in our day.

Flap of Pouch	Body of Pouch (2 sections)	mark holes every 1/2 " matching each side
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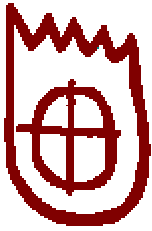
IF WE DON'T
HAVE IT...

YOU DON'T
NEED IT!

...from the cave

Gifts

by little bear



Every year at this time I think about all the great churning up of manufactured need that goes on around the Christmas Season. I think it's great that people want to give each other gifts. I think it's terrific that people want to stop and think about the shining example of right living who's birth we choose to celebrate at this time each year. I even think it's wonderful that many people go into debt and are paying the rest of the year for the celebration they had in December as long as they think it's worth it!

I just think that a few weeks per year isn't NEARLY long enough to fully experience the Joy of Giving.

First Peoples on the West Coast had huge Potlatches and were known to go into debt to throw a real bash with amazing gifts for everyone. These were eventually banned by the europeans who took over the land. I believe they judged this custom with foreign eyes and could not see the celebration for what it was - a wonderful expression of heartfelt gratitude and joy.

I find that it is possible to continue experiencing the Wonders of Christmas all year 'round. With time and attention I have been able to celebrate Happy Tuesday and Merry Wednesday on a regular basis. With careful planning I have been able to improve on the GiveAway with heartwarming results throughout the year. Here's how I do it.

The first rule is that the Little Bear GiveAway includes things I really love. If I don't like it, need it or won't miss it then it doesn't count. Otherwise it's just called 'cleaning out the closets' and, while it's important to keep the "stuff" under control, it's not what I have in mind when I use the term GiveAway.

The second rule is that it not be done on any prearranged holiday like birthday or Christmas. I find Mondays are good for those you'll see at work, since very few of us like to come back to the old grind after the weekend.

The third rule is that nothing is exempt from becoming a GiveAway so Monday's gift could be a lovely *lunch* prepared for fellow workers, or a *gag gift* to perk up everyone's spirits; or *fuzzy slippers* for someone who's feet have been hurting; or it could be early morning *health shakes* with your blender or a *jewellery trade* with the co-workers...it's endless and inspirational for everyone. Creativity is what its ALL about.

An interesting thing happens when we practise this GiveAway Spirit. We pay more attention to others; we become pro-active in setting the tone for our day; we begin to develop a healthier attitude about stuff & things, and, above all else, we discover that participating in making someone else happy (even for a few minutes) has a similar effect on our own state of mind. It's hard to have a bad day when planning a joke or buying the food to make a healthy lunch for co-workers.

There's a lot of bad stuff going on almost everywhere I look and over which I have no control. I've found a way to participate in creating good stuff that continues to surprise and delight me when ever I venture forth from the cave...oh, and it works *very* well at home, too!

...from little bear

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Herbs & Recipes...from the bush

Best Bread Recipe Alternatives

by Linda

Last month's Recipe was sufficient for about four loaves of bread, using only 1/3 of a cup of maple syrup or blackstrap molasses. With savory tastes being much better for us than sweet I prefer to use garlic, sage, ginger, cardamom, thyme and cinnamon to preserve and add taste to my dough. Of the four loaves I usually make one of them up as something else. Here are my favourites.

Follow these instructions following the first rising of the dough. Cut dough into four pieces, cover and let rest for ten minutes. After the dough has rested fill three bread tins and gently press or roll the fourth dough ball out into a 12 inch square. Choose one of the following recipes then allow it to rise with the bread.

Cinnamon Rolls

Mix together

1/2 cup of butter and

1/2 cup of honey

Spread on the flattened dough.

Sprinkle with

1/2 cup of walnuts

1/2 cup of raisins or currants

1/2 cup of coconut

(or whatever you have on hand)

Roll up and turn joined area to bottom.

Cut into thirds with a sharp serrated knife (using short quick cuts so dough will not stretch). Then cut thirds into three and place in cake tin evenly spaced with join tucked in so it won't open while rising. Let rise with bread.

Bake 20 minutes in with bread but keep an eye on it while baking so it doesn't burn or become overcooked. Rolls are done when the top springs back after being pushed down lightly.

Garlic Rolls

Mix together

3 tbsp. Garlic (chopped fresh or dried)

2 tbsp. Parsley (fresh or dried)

1 tbsp. Celery Seed

1 tbsp. Oregano

1/2 cup butter

Spread on the flattened dough.

Roll up and turn joined area to bottom.

Cut into thirds with a sharp serrated knife (using short quick cuts so dough will not stretch). Then cut thirds into three and place in cake tin evenly spaced with join tucked in so it won't open while rising. Let rise with bread. Bake about 15 or 20 minutes and test by pushing down and if dough springs back they're done.

Brush with butter when finished. This keeps top from becoming brittle, or it would if they lasted long enough for the air to get at them....

Cheese Rolls

Spread 1/2 cup butter on flattened dough.

Grate 1 1/2 cups cheddar cheese

or Crumble 1 1/2 cups feta cheese

Sprinkle cheese on dough and

Add bits of dried onion, &/or olives, &/or sun dried tomatoes &/or dried mushrooms, or whatever you have on hand.

Roll up and turn joined area to bottom.

Cut into thirds with a sharp serrated knife (using short quick cuts so dough will not stretch). Then cut thirds into three and place in cake tin evenly spaced with join tucked in so it won't open while rising. Let rise with bread and bake for about 15 minutes. Test for "springiness" then brush with butter and turn out onto rack to cool (so the cheese won't keep cooking!) And Enjoy!

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OPINIONS from the Bush

Nuclear Energy

by A. Buschmann

When I was politely asked to leave the boarding school where I had overstayed my welcome, I was thrown into a social vacuum in my home town. I looked around for a group to join and found the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, the C.N.D. Although at first it was a drinking club for me, I became more aware of the political implications of the nuclear industry after we went on a protest march one weekend.

When the Cuban Missile Crisis happened and the Doomsday Clock (that's the one that says how long we've got till the end of the world) was one second from midnight, the head of the C.N.D. was too disheartened to organise a protest. She had learned what I already knew, which was that politicians are deaf to the voice of the common people, no matter how many march, or how many letters are mailed.

We used to crack a lot of jokes about nuclear fall-out, as the radio-active dust from bomb tests was called at that time. There were dozens of tests taking place all over the world then. I recall the Russians exploded a bomb every two days for a whole month, just as some test ban treaty was being signed.

We would say "Drink your Strontium 90" instead of "drink your milk" because the radioactive isotope of strontium passed right through the cow's stomach into her milk. It was impossible to get rid of, too.

In the U.S., citizens were told to wash all their fruits and veggies to remove it. A physics teacher in New England had his students pick some local vegetables and run them past a Geiger Counter before and after washing. No matter how hard they scrubbed, the radio-activity was unchanged. The food was still unsafe.

This brings up one of the worst problems with nuclear energy. There is a huge amount of

mis-information surrounding it. I don't know what to believe. Are there really mice running around inside the burned-out shell of the Three Mile Island reactor? What do they eat and how many heads have they got? Is this supposed to comfort us somehow?

I do know that the useful life of a nuclear generating plant is about 30 years. I also know that the spent fuel rods remain unstable and dangerous to life and limb for billions (and I mean billions) of years after they are "used up". Radioactive uranium's half-life is 4.5 billion years. Germany is considering phasing out all its nuclear power stations by 2020. The Japanese recently had two radioactive leaks about which they lied; first saying there was no danger and then admitted there was. The Ontario taxpayers have paid for the Pickering and the Bruce Power Stations at least twice over already and may have to pay a third time as we all continue to bail out the struggling hydro monster we've helped create. Check your next bill for yet another 'prop up' payment listed as a debt recovery or some such thing.

I was intrigued to hear recently that the nuclear industry has finally admitted to the dangers of spent fuel rods and are looking to stable rock formations in which to bury them for the many, many, many years it will take for them to become safe.

Yet again, eyes are looking northward for places to hide the evidence of excess, or maybe it'll be the Niagara Escarpment that will glow in the dark in a thousand years!

Whatever our representatives down south decide to do to meet the province's energy demands, the only solution I see from out here is *reduce the use*; pull out the plug and turn off the light.

At least that's my opinion, A. Buschman

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S P I R I T U A L I T Y

I was raised with the concept of there being 'That of God in everyone', but I quickly developed the awareness that the Devil was pretty well present in everyone, too. I had a voracious reading habit and one of my favourite books was *The Little World of Don Camillo* by Giovanni Guareschi. It was about the moral struggles of an Italian priest in his dealings with his best friend and worst enemy, Peppe, who was a Communist, therefore atheist, mayor of their little village. All through the book were drawings of the priest with an angel on one shoulder and a devil on the other, both whispering good advice into each ear.

I realized fairly early on in my adult life that I needed a definition of God that made sense to me and in the end came to this conclusion. Every definition except one was incomplete, God is always a little bit more. The most complete one for me is 'God is love'.

As for the opposite force my personal dealings with a spirit of negativity came to the fore when I was deep into my recovery from one of my mental conditions, multiple personality disorder. I believe this is a survival mechanism in which the person presents different 'masks', depending on the situation, and has at its core some sort of spirit possession. In my case, this spirit would only talk to me and my therapist when all the other masks had been talked into disappearing and there was nowhere else for this evasive entity to hide. Although it called itself Mephy, short for another Devilish pseudonym, and was very scary, it was in fact a very frightened being. When the therapist & I asked him what he was frightened of, he said he was afraid that God wouldn't forgive him for his terrible acts. We tried to explain that God is love and he, Mephy, had in fact saved Charlie's life, so he was not as absolutely and completely negative

as he would have us believe. Through the Therapeutic process I was eventually able to have "Mephy" leave me and I went on to a more standard form of talk therapy for the next several years.

After dealing with the belief that we are "good or evil" as posed through the "Mephy" conversations, I find that I'm much more interested in the idea of right and wrong. All of us face choices every day as to whether we'll do something the right way, usually the hard way, or whether we'll do it the wrong way. Linda once asked a minister how she could tell if she was doing God's will or not. He said this. "If there is nothing in it for you, if it is the harder of the choices and there is risk to yourself associated with the choice you make, then you're probably doing what God wants you to do." I believe this philosophy can only be followed to its fullest extent in the context of another of her theories, the University Of The Earth.

It goes something like this: We are all here as Students of Life and a whole range of topics are available. It isn't possible to know by looking at a person what 'course' they're on or what level; kindergarten or Ph.D. We can never be positive about anyone's curriculum or the level of "study" they have attained and each person is answerable to a much higher Power. Judgment (or grades if you like) are also not available in an earthly way but in a higher Spiritual realm. This means that the only appropriate prayer for a struggling friend would be "Thy will be done, not mine."

We have man made laws to deal with individual paths that put others at risk, of course, but ultimate forgiveness, condemnation, judgment and issues of life and death are best left to the "Principal" not to we students!

Class is certainly still in session! Charlie.



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