

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

# ...from the bush

**Winter Arrives!****Number 17(B!) December 2007**

## Charlie Cares

A lot of people asked us about the bears this fall. Of course they're here. After all, we live over 30 clicks out of town, right in their back yard. The bear trail, along which our neighbour travels every other night, runs right through our yard.

I didn't really know about our particular bear until I put some fermented blueberries into the plastic composter at the end of our yard one day. It's a tribute to the strength of modern plastics that he didn't get drunk that night as he couldn't open the thing. I was a little more observant around the place after that, and one day, I noticed scratch marks on a tree higher than I, at six foot four, could reach. 'Hmm, It's a good thing I know exactly what to do when and if I meet him,' I thought. I had become the next best thing to an expert from all my research.

Linda'd found out a few things on the internet about black bears before we moved. First, they'd much rather run away than attack. Second, less than one person a year in the whole of North America is killed by a black bear. Bear *hunters*, however, are much more dangerous. She even found a supply of wolf urine through a future friend well known for his work with wolves. The plan was that you're supposed to put the urine in a little bag and swing it around your head when you meet a bear, thus pretending to be a wolf. Right....

Linda's research included information that the best way to scare off a bear is this: Stand tall, with your elbows out and your hands down and make yourself look big while facing the bear. Do a little jump in the air and make a loud 'Humph' when you land. This is bear talk for 'Please go away. I was here first.'

Linda's done it and it worked for her when she was out gardening alone. The bear just left!

Our neighbour was showing his grand-daughter his new hunt-camp and he did this with a mother bear and her cub. It worked for them as well.

It didn't work for me as many of you know!

I opened the back door one spring night to get some dog meat from our ice house when I happened to look up. There he was. He was HUGE, standing about ten feet from the door, clearly saying "Shoot me or feed me, I don't care which." All rational thought left my mind. Luckily, Linda heard my nonsensical burlblings and quickly slammed the door and snapped the bear-lock shut. We spent the next two hours, and then the next three nights, listening to the ice house being ripped apart and the dogs barking until I decided that I'd better stop fighting and become part of our community out here. I emptied the ice house of its dog meat, frozen fish and sausages, split it fifty-fifty (or close enough, those sausages were a lot of work) and left the neighbour's share a mile down the road. He did come back later that year to say thank you.

This year there were more than 50,000 calls to the MNR about bears. The streets in Haileybury and other northern towns were full of bears and lots were shot. Since the blueberry crop'd failed and the loggers were really active, the bear food out here was scarce. We ran boxes of meat scraps, from our butcher in town, out to the "bear spot" to save our friend from a fatal shopping trip.

There's a push on to bring back the Spring Bear Hunt in hopes of solving the present 'Bear Problem'. But the hunt, in fact, has been going on all year and the problem continued as long as bears were forced to forage in town. They're asleep for now so we'll see what the spring will bring. We all live in hope!

All the best from the bush, Charlie



**BNS CORNER  
GAS**

**ATV Accessories & Repair**  
**Fishing Tackle & Licenses**  
 102 King Street North Cobalt  
 next door to NCFM

# voice from the bush

SLIPPERY ELM, ORME D'amerique, *ULMUS RUBRA*

by **Charlie Johnson**

While we were planning to get our pups, I told Linda of the theory that good feeding of any baby during its first six months improves its health and strength for life. Consequently, we fed the doggies the best of everything. Milk-soaked oats in the morning, goat's cheese, honey and herbs etc. at lunch-time, and raw meat and a good raw soup-bone to chew on to get their digestive juices working at the day's end. Incidentally, those bones kept them from chewing on our furniture and our shoes when they were teething. This super-diet proved the theory correct, as the dogs top 110 pounds each. Not bad for a couple of mutts, eh?

One of the herbs called for in our chosen book of directions (The Complete Herbal Handbook For Farm And Stable by J. de B. Levy) was slippery elm powder. It was added to their morning meal to help tone and strengthen their developing digestive systems.

I'd come across this herb long ago in my endless reading about the pioneers. A young farmer tricked his sick cow into eating a bucket-full of slippery elm keys smushed up in a slop bucket, so curing itself from some stomach complaint or other. However, it was our pups that brought me my first real contact with this herb.

The first thing I discovered was that a combination of slippery elm powder and honey'd better be rinsed off or wiped up straight away or it'll set like rock. Ah, the agonies of my procrastination habit!!

But one day, slippery elm helped to save my life. The therapeutic dose of my psychiatric medication varies with the stresses in my life, so I'm constantly on the watch for the signs of too much or too little. One time, I badly missed the indicator until I was definitely in the middle of a

toxic reaction from an excess. Slippery elm came to the rescue.

I mixed up a cup of warmed milk with a teaspoon of honey and added a teaspoon of slippery elm powder. After a couple of minutes, it had thickened and I drank it down. It tasted absolutely delicious, a good sign, and the symptoms of toxicity began to abate. I'm on the right track, I thought and carried on. After another half hour, I had another dose of slippery elm, milk and honey, also delicious, also improving the situation. The third dose, half an hour after that tasted revolting! Oops, thought I, enough is enough. I thanked it and poured it down the sink before quickly rinsing the glass. I then was safe to assess the appropriate dose of my medication and lived to tell the tale.

Linda takes the herb, in capsule form, when her stomach is upset and, most recently, as an aid to a quick recovery from a diverticulitis attack.

The story of a good friend of ours now comes to mind. She had incipient ulcerative colitis with its attendant agonies caused, in her case probably (and commonly), by prescribed antibiotics. Our friend was able to overcome the huge hurdle of trying something weird and new and took slippery elm just as I've described it above. She got the condition under control with this treatment, within about two weeks or so. Another friend did not fare so well and I send a good thought her way whenever I get a stomach ache in the middle of the night and get up to take the Slippery Elm.

As far as I know modern medicine has nothing even close to this wonder cure for the digestive system and it's as close by as the pharmacy or herb store.

All the best from the bush, Charlie

## **GRAMMA'S CHIPPER**

Warm up with a Hot Breakfast!

**444 LAKEVIEW DRIVE JUST AROUND THE CORNER FROM N.C.F.M.**

## ...from the community

### Area Food Banks & Charities

These agencies face a special problem at this time of year. It's tough enough to fill the shelves, or meet the needs of the members of our community who are struggling with illness, joblessness, addictions or single parent poverty on a day to day basis. The Christmas Season tends to shine a light of a different kind for families who have no spare funds for extras.

Our first year out here a dear friend showed up with a bushel basket full to overflowing with groceries that were definitely not affordable with every dime going towards finishing the inside of the house.

We were so grateful that first Christmas; for the beauty of the place, the kindness of friends, the continuing work on our very own home and the taste of an orange from Morocco!

This year, now that the nieces & nephew are older, we contribute, on their behalf, to area children who would not otherwise have much under the tree. The bins are usually set up at various places around the Tri-Towns and the "coats & boots people" are also busy at this time of year.

Most of the area organizations looking for donations can be accessed through the Temiskaming Shores Service Organizations, local Churches, the Radio Station, Newspapers or Municipal Offices.

IT'S UP TO EACH OF US TO CHOOSE HOW WE SPEND OUR ENERGY IN THIS SPECIAL SEASON!

**Holiday Greetings to you all !**

*from Charlie & Linda*

### SUBSCRIPTIONS TO '...from the bush'

Just send stamps and your mailing address(es) to  
**Charlie Johnson, RR#1,  
North Cobalt, ON P0J 1R0**

### UPDATE on 'the best from the bush'

Our time was well spent at the Farmer's Market Christmas Craft Fair in November and we'd like to thank all our friends and readers for attending, for buying books and for your kind words.

The book signing went well and every time I looked over at Charlie he was autographing yet another book for yet another beautiful blond! He struggled through it, though, in the name of art....all those hugs & kisses and compliments. What a trouper!

The only error in Market etiquette was on my part. I made pumpkin bread and peach loaf to share with friends who came to sit. Several people, after rigorous taste testing, were quite put out to find that there were no loaves to purchase. I managed to placate them with promises of including the recipes in December's newsletter.

See page six for the recipes and I'm sure they'll taste great (just like the samples).

Our thanks again to the Farmers' Market organizers and participants. A special thanks to all the faithful customers who came to share in the event!

We have a few books left for those of you who may want an extra copy or two. Just send 5\$ and 1\$ for the postage for each book. The address is written in the box above.

With winter here we won't be out to town as much but Charlie has another book in the works (a guide to local foraging and some basic remedies found literally on our doorsteps) so another chance to visit may be coming by the Spring!

We're always up to something out here!

All the best, the EDITOR

0101000101110101011000010110111001110100011101010110101111000011100001110010011001010111001101110011  
**QUANTUM  PRESS**  
01010001011101010110000101101110011101000111010101101101011110000111000001110010011001010111001101110011

**32 Armstrong Street  
PO Box 1587, New Liskeard, Ont. P0J 1P0**

**(705) 647-3832  
quantumx@parolink.net**

---

---

# CRAFTS...from the bush

Mandalas

by little bear

---

---

Mandalas are used in First Peoples cultures around the world. Materials differ depending on where one lives and the purpose of the mandala itself. For example, a round piece of rawhide, decorated with symbols of significance to the Warrior, would be used as a Shield for protection in battle. A circle of birch bark, tied to a hoop of dried dogwood, etched with the symbol of a certain animal, would carry the Medicine of that Animal's Spirit for the person who keeps it nearby.

It is always important, whatever materials we choose, to learn when and how to harvest from Nature. As any student of my classes will tell you- I find and recycle many of my materials. There are lots of things in this world just waiting to be made useful again. For example; fabric cut with pinking shears or hemmed in a round piece can be used for the mandala canvas and a wrapped wire coat hanger, formed into a circle can become the hoop! Use your Im

**Materials: Hoop, Circle of Hide, Fabric or recycled material** (eg. Inside of old purse cut to fit hoop), sinew or heavy thread, wrap material (eg. strips of hide, lengths of fabric, old purse strap cut in strips), **craft paint & brushes or markers, feathers, beads and picture** or template (cardboard outline) of the animal, bird or symbol you wish to use (if an original design is to be used I suggest drawing it on paper first). Take time to thank the animal(s) used in the Mandala and to consider the purpose and meaning.

**1. Wrap the Hoop;** length of strips depends on diameter of hoop and size of material used. A quick way to figure it out is to wrap an inch of the hoop then unwrap and measure how much was used. A hoop measuring 30 inches around the circumference with 2 inches of wrapping covering an inch of the hoop would then need 60 inches of strips for wrap plus whatever is needed for knotting it, etc.

**2. Stretch the Hide** (or fabric being used as the canvas); by sewing it around the hoop with sinew. If hide is used then punch the holes at equal intervals and be sure to hem fabric first to give it added strength. I sew the piece on then tighten it afterwards to make sure it sits in the space evenly.

**3. Draw the Symbol (s);** Using your choice of template, photo, picture in your mind or whatever take a pen or pencil and sketch the position and shape of the item. Fill it in with paint or markers. Think about the meaning it holds for you as you work on the piece.

**4. Decorate the Hoop;** Using feathers, stones, found objects & special items that compliment the underlying meaning of your Mandala attach decorations to the piece.

**5. Research the Symbolism;** Find out what you can about your chosen symbol using the library, the internet and any other sources available!

## Original Artwork by Little Bear



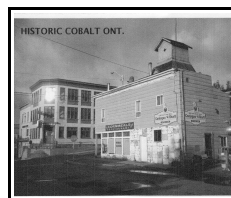
This Lynx Medicine Mandala was just sent off to my dear friend on the East Coast. I used a Dogwood hoop with a stretched piece of moose hide sewn on with sinew. The image is done in leather paint. Lynx is the Symbol for Secrets and are rarely seen.

**NORTH COBALT**

**NCFM**

**FLEA MARKET**

Christmas Shopping at it's best!



**Corn Meals**  
**Restaurant**

50 Silver Street in Historic Cobalt

Tuesday to Saturday 8am to 8pm

Saturday & Sunday 8am to 2pm

**HOME COOKED MEALS with a Traditional Taste**

---

---

# ...from the cave

**Gifts**-Reprinted from December 2006

by little bear

---

---

**W**hen we moved out here I thought that my involvement with town, people, government, and most other things would decline. I expected to spend my time growing and preserving food and watching the seasons change. Instead I have found myself advocating for trees, being a goodwill ambassador for the local bear population and attending meetings with various Ministries to protect our way of life.

I expected to be able to work less and instead have learned to do much more. I expected to replace my small business with food production and, instead, have found out just how difficult it is to grow enough food for a year's eating. I expected to relish the solitude and, instead, have found out what friendship means. I expected to be realistic about raising our own meat but nearly threw up when I tasted our rooster, "the boss", after he injured so many hens we had to dispatch him. Shows you what I know.

I hope to discuss, over time, some of the issues that unexpectedly impact our life in the bush.

Last winter we heard howling from the neighbours property and thought one of their dogs was asking for attention. After several hours we realized, with night approaching, that it was probably a stray. It had snowed lightly the day before and we saw, at the intersection down the road, truck tracks with only the prints of a dog originating on the passenger side of the vehicle.

We put out food and called the SPCA not expecting any results. However through the SPCA's agent, Stephanie Auger, we found out that a local family's dog had gone missing.

With an incredible sense of timing the family car, our truck and the snow plow all converged in time for the plow driver to report on the dog's location. Dog and family were reunited.

I asked a few questions and decided that it may have been a neighbour's solution to their nuisance dog problem that caused all of ours. This was not a great conflict resolution strategy...the SPCA can help if anyone finds themselves in a similar situation. Call them first!

This story, thanks to everyone involved, except the "dog napper" of course, had a happy ending as does our more recent dog story.

Last month another dog arrived out here on a weekend night. She spent the night in Charlie's shop, with a moose hide for company, and we tried to introduce her to our two dogs, Schnuggly & Bear, the next morning. She was not a dog lover.

We made the calls, drove around looking for a bed for her, and finally were able to get her a room of her own with our vet & vet tech. I won't say their names, to protect them from a wave of homeless animals, but they have our gratitude.

With help from Happy Paws our little friend was on her way to a family looking for a "people oriented" pooch.

Every year families have to consider the heart felt requests to Santa for a new puppy or kitten. The care, expense and the 10 or 15 year commitment an animal requires are seldom at issue when making children's wishes come true at this special time of year.

Before granting a wish that could become someone's nightmare please check with the SPCA, P.R.A.T.H., or Happy Paws to find out what needs & expenses an animal requires. Dr. Catt is on the radio regularly with a list of homeless animals. If you think you and your family are up to the challenge then please see the area shelters to choose an animal in need of your love. Often fees are reduced for vet needs and the animals may already have had that very important operation..

back to the cave ... little bear

**Merry Christmas to the People  
that Manage our Area Animal Shelters  
Call to adopt a pet or for information**

<b>Dr. Catt</b>	<b>647-1688</b>
<b>Happy Paws</b>	<b>672-2536</b>
<b>P.R.A.T.H .</b>	<b>679-5579</b>
<b>SPCA</b>	<b>647-5288</b>

## **KEEPERS OF THE CIRCLE CHILD CARE SERVICES**

121 Scott Street, P.O. Box 1414,  
Temiskaming Shores, ON P0J 1P0  
**Phone: (705)647-7874**  
Fax: (705)647-7778



### **KIRKLAND LAKE FACILITIES:**

109 Burnside Ave, P.O. Box 102,  
Kirkland Lake, ON P2N 2V5  
**Phone: (705)567-6177**  
Fax: (705)567-1138

# Herbs & Recipes...from the bush

## Pumpkin Bread & Peach Loaf

by Linda

**Last month** my Cinnamon Roll recipe did not include cinnamon in it's list of ingredients. I've often forgotten to add the cinnamon when making the recipe so I know it still taste's great but forgive a newcomer to the recipe page. Charlie will be back in the New Year but this month I'll fulfill a promise.

To celebrate our two days at the Farmers' Market Christmas Fair I decided to make some cakes from dried and pressure canned fruit in order to promote and encourage these methods of preserving. Not only were the cakes a real crowd pleaser but the Roberts family gift for baking (My Nana's breads, pies and cookies were the pride of Muskoka) had resulted in an unexpected problem.

People happily ate the pieces of both cakes and then, after deciding which they preferred, many of them asked to purchase a loaf.

"Oh, I don't have any to sell", says I, to the consternation of many taste testers. So, in order to appease the would be purchasers of my delicious cakes, I promised to put the recipes in the next issue of our newsletter. Here it is. Enjoy!

### PUMPKIN BREAD

1 cup	Honey
1/2 cup	Brown Sugar
1 cup	Oil (I use Sunflower)
3 cups	Pumpkin (puree)
1 cup	Walnuts (finely chopped)
1 tsp	Sea Salt
2 tsp	Cinnamon
1 tsp	Cloves (finely ground)
4 tsp	Baking Soda
2 1/2 cups	Whole Wheat Flour
2 cups	White Flour (unbleached)

**Preheat** oven to 350 degrees. **Oil** 3 bread tins.  
**Combine** Honey, sugar, pumpkin, nuts, salt, cinnamon, cloves and baking soda in a large bowl.  
**Mix** well. **Stir** in remaining ingredients.  
**Spoon** into 3 bread tins.  
**Bake** for 1 hour or until done.  
\*Cover with foil if browning too quickly.  
**Let sit** in the pan for 20 minutes then turn onto wire rack to complete cooling.

### PEACH LOAF

2 cups	Dried Peaches (or Apricots)
1 cup	Currants
1 cup	Nuts (chopped)
1 tsp.	Orange Rind (grated)
1/4 cup	Brown Sugar
1 cup	White Flour (unbleached)
1 cup	Whole Wheat
1 tsp	Sea Salt
2 tsp	Baking Powder
1	Egg
1 cup	Orange Juice
1/4 cup	Oil (Sunflower)

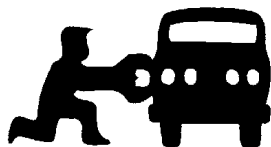
**Soak** fruit for 1 hour.  
**Preheat** oven to 350 degrees. **Oil** 1 bread tin.  
**Mix** white and whole wheat flour, baking powder, salt and brown sugar.  
**Add** fruit and nuts and orange rind stirring until well coated with flour.  
**Beat** egg, oil and orange juice together then **Blend lightly** with dry mixture until moistened.  
**Spoon** into pan.  
**Bake** about 1 hour. Cover with foil if brown.  
**Let sit** 1/2 hour in pan then turn out on rack to cool.

## BEN'S AUTO REPAIR

GENERAL REPAIRS

71 Cross Lake Road  
North Cobalt

672-2036



## Knickers

Ladies Lingerie ♥ Sleep Wear ♥ Leisure Wear

19 Armstrong Street, New Liskeard

Phone & Fax (705) 647-8585  
PO Box 1496, New Liskeard ON P0J 1P0

# OPINIONS from the Bush

Government

by A. Buschmann

**I've been thinking a lot** about our system of government these days, how it doesn't seem to be working very well. Winston Churchill said that democracy was a bad system but it was the best we had. I'm afraid he was right since I don't think we could change it even if we really wanted to. I don't know of any successful revolution that caused a real change in a country's method of government ever, except possibly 10,000 years ago when male dominance took over from humanism in Europe and war was invented.

I mean, the Russian Tsars' secret police were just as effective as Stalin's (and now Putin's?) in controlling the Opposition. The French Revolution replaced one heredity-based ruling class with another, as far as I can tell, and the American Revolution seems to be on-going. They're still on a war footing, ready for the Red Coats when-ever or how-ever or where-ever they show up.

Here in Canada, we seem to have adopted a kind of Monarchy, just like 'Over 'Ome', with the Crown passed back and forth between the Liberals & Conservatives. Along with that, we've got an enormous non-elected bureaucracy ruling the roost from the major centres while remaining blissfully unaware of outlying regions and their 'special needs'. Our taxation system's increasingly dysfunctional with 'downloading' of services and 'uploading' of cash.

So, what to do, what to do. Given that the structure can't be changed, then what I'm hoping to do is try to change it from the inside in my own small way. Like someone told a social reformer once, choose your battles.

The battle I'm going to take on is to try to bring back the requirement for 20/20 vision for a Canadian driver's licence. It's a problem that affects me so I'm going to try to do something about it!

The situation's this. I'm not a very good driver to begin with as I'm easily distracted and have a slow reaction time. That's why I rarely wave back at people when I'm driving. For a while now my glasses have been wrong and currently are so far off that I can't read a speed limit sign 20 yards away. Kids at the roadside are beginning to look like fire hydrants. Not good. So I got my eyes checked recently, only to find that I'm seeing well within the limits of the law. Horrors on horrors!! There are people out there, behind the wheel, who see worse than I do? This'll seriously affect my life if they don't see me at the same time as I don't see them!

I plan to write a letter asking for reasonable eye sight standards to be brought back. I plan to send copies to every relevant Minister in Ontario, there's at least three at my last count, and to their senior civil servants. Of course my M.P.P.'ll get one, too. Then the secondary organizations'll come in, like the O.P.P., both local and Head Office, as well as the Opticians professional organizations and any other relevant group I can think of...

Like I say, one battle is all I'll likely be up for, so I'll give it my best shot. I'll let you know what happens, if anything. I'm not real optimistic...After all; there are none so blind as those who *will* not see.

At least that's my opinion,

A. Buschmann.



## SMALLMAN PHARMACY

Winter's here.....see us for symptomatic relief!

368 Main Street, Haileybury (705) 672-5261

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

## FEAR

I was born in the middle of a war and so introduced to terror very early on in my life. I met fear when my father came back from the Army in 1945. I've only recently become free of chronic fear as a result of a lot of work on my part, a lot of guidance from Above and a lot of love from my community. I'll try to stay away from the War On Terror concept, although it's very tempting to ask who'll sign the Peace Treaty on that one.

One of the things that's brought me to this happy state's been my ability to go through whatever faced me in the day, whether I was scared or not. When my work situation in England became untenable, we decided to go to a new country. All I knew about Canada was they made candles out of digestible fats there because the 'Eskimos' would be poisoned by regular candle wax when they ate them. So much for the English education system. Yes, I was scared, but I faced a bleak future if I'd stayed.

I quit a nominally secure job at Stelco when I saw that my eternal soul was about to be compromised by financial imprisonment if I didn't. I knew it was the wrong place for me and I wouldn't be able to justify my life to The Great Accountant In The Sky if I stayed. I could imagine Him saying "You're telling me you didn't do what you knew was right because you were **afraid**?" That was as far as my imagination would take me so I quit and started my journey through the Psychiatric Industry. In my case, it was 'Better to try and go crazy than not to have tried at all'.

In my journey to this Shangri-La in the bush, I've had to face exactly what my fears are. Am I afraid of the dark? Of bears? Of dying? Am I afraid of being alone? Of having a good

enough score card when I meet T.G.A.I.T.S.? I'll take these one at a time.

First, the dark. It rarely is pitch dark. If it is, I take precautions, like putting a second lantern on the picnic table so I can see it and don't get lost, which is the biggest danger out here. Next, bears. Our nearest neighbour is 600 or so pounds but much prefers not to have any contact with us. He only showed himself to me the once, in Spring when he was starving. Am I afraid of dying? Well, I'd better look hard at that, because it's going to happen. As far as I know, the only people who are reputed to have avoided death were Mohammed and Elijah (or was it Elisha?). All the rest of us die.

The people I've talked to and read about who've had near-death experiences say that death itself is rather wonderful, although the actual transition can be a rough one. Nothing much to done about it, so why worry?!

This brings me in the end to my biggest fear; Facing up to the Final Accounting in The Sky.

When my father was 63 and I was 29, he said to me "Charles, my life has been wasted." I determined there and then that I would have something of value on my little plate to offer to The Great Accountant when I met Him.

This I now have. Through the process of facing down my long list of fears, one by one, I have found my voice. From the feedback I get from all of you I can truly say my Life has not been wasted. I will bring my Spirit to the Accounting and the Absence of Fear is the shining thing of value that I will take with me wherever next I go.

I'm sure the work will continue, though, I'm not done here yet!

Charlie



**ROYAL LEPAGE**

**BEST CHOICE REALTY, BROKERAGE**  
INDEPENDENTLY OWNED and OPERATED

*Best Wishes from Best Choice*

131 Whitewood Ave., PO Box 2139,  
New Liskeard, ON P0J 1P0

Office 705-647-6848 Cell 705-647-2645  
Fax 705-647-9285 Res 705-679-8334  
suzanneothmer@royallepage.ca  
www.bestchoicerealty.ca