



the painted box

by Wendy Thomson in Buck Creek, Alberta
We have a problem these days that we don't know quite how to solve. It involves Minnie-the-ferret. From all appearances, she'd settled down quite happily in her multi-unit cage, and was quite content out behind the house where she not only got full benefit of the entire day's sun, but also could watch people out doing the chores.

The first sign that something was amiss came one day she was running loose in the house for exercise. Dashing out from under the stove, she took hold of the hair between our big hound's toes and tried to drag her behind the freezer.

The sight of a less-than-one-pound mini-Minnie trying to make off with a more-than-100-pound dog was ridiculous. Feet braced, Min pulled and tugged, but Sue didn't even twitch.

Then, perhaps meaning it as sort of a nudge, Min scuttled up beside Sue and nipped one of her nipples (not hard, thank heavens.) Sue woke, but just couldn't believe that this tiny thing standing glaring at her was actually trying to HERD her!! She was too stunned to retaliate, and we got Min out of there before Sue gathered her wits.

Gotcha!
Since then, Min has bitten me and also son Jim. While I was carrying her, she reached up and gashed my chin with her razor-sharp fangs. Two days later, after spending a few hours sleeping in socks and sweaters she'd dragged out of our suitcases and into the cupboard to make a nest, Min was being taken back outside. I saw her eyeing Jim but didn't even have time to say "Watch your chin!" before she got him too! We both looked quite odd for days.

What we're trying to decide now, is whether it's something lacking her diet. Being unable to get her favorite pork kidney since we got here (and trying to cut down on the feed bill) we tried her on

chunks of raw coyote. She loved it! As Gord said "Maybe it's the only chance a little ferret gets to bite a coyote!"

However, I think I'll go back to feeding her stewing beef and see if we can get her tamed down again. Or I could try her on venison, but I hate to waste it.

Hunting
Incidentally, I was out hunting with Gord a time or two in October with his gun and me with my camera. Gord tried the sometimes successful ploy of clacking deer horns together to sound like two bucks fighting (and another deer comes to see what's going on) and then we tried eating Smarties to sound like deer eating something good, but we saw nothing except the tips of wild grasses lit by the low-lying sun.

I had a very enjoyable day though, quite successful as far as pictures were concerned. And of course once there was venison in the freezer, I spent time pouring over recipes and mixing up brews with this pleasing result.

ROAST HERBED VENISON
1 leg roast
2 bay leaves
1/2 cup soft butter
4 cups fresh bread crumbs
1 tsp. thyme
1 tsp. rosemary
1 tbsp. chopped parsley



"HURRY UP—it's heavy!" This coyote was Minnie's Christmas dinner. Because of the toll they take on cattle (especially calves in the spring) coyotes must be hunted. They're skinned and the pelts sold at fur auctions. Who knows—you just might see this one in Acton on somebody's parka hood!

juice 1/2 med. lemon
salt and pepper to taste
Slice garlic and insert in small cuts in the meat. Place meat on large sheet of foil with bay leaves underneath.

Cream butter with rest of ingredients. When an even paste, spread over meat smoothly, pressing it on well. Wrap in the foil and roast at 400 degrees, allowing 30 minutes per pound and 30 minutes over that. Uncover and roast another 30 minutes until crust is brown and crisp.

Our readers write

The island of Tobago

I found an island far and remote,
In the beautiful Caribbean Sea
So peaceful and quiet and picturesque,
Like heaven on earth it could be.

By Peter Covandish

Away from the bustle and every day rush,
Where peace must have surely been born.
Abounding in flora and fauna so lush
Fresh and pure as a lovely spring morn.

Clear blue, warm waters embrace the white sand,
Fish of every known color and hue,
And great turtles that burrow a place on the land,
Laying eggs of a hundred or two.

And they cover the sand so remarkably well,
That it's difficult really to trace,
Where their off-spring will hatch, and return to the sea,
Leaving no sign at all in their place.

The Pelicans soaring above the blue sea,
Diving swiftly to catch fish galore,
While the fishermen pulling their ropes patiently
Haul their fish laden seine nets ashore.

I know I left part of my heart in this place,
On each lovely lagoon and white shore,
And I hope that one day I will surely retrace
I know I left part of my heart in this place.

Euchre

The crowd was smaller than usual at the euchre at St. Joseph's church last Friday evening.

Valentine events set

A couple of special events are being planned for Valentine's day, a bake sale and a tea among them.



New window in new shop

Renovations are visible in some of the stores which are being relocated this month. A new bow window has been installed in the former Acton Woodcrafts location, which will become an antique shop.

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Unexpected journey for his local letter

One Acton couple was late paying their dues at Acton Curling club this year. And they didn't even know it. Dick and Doreen Lee mailed their cheque to "Mrs. J. Sproat, 79 Roseford Terrace, Acton" on December 9—and Mrs. Sproat received it at the end of January.

The letter had been all the way to England and back and somewhere along the line someone had helpfully stamped Air Mail on it to speed its way home. "Try Acton, Ontario, Canada" had been added as well. The trip of a few blocks turned out to be an ocean journey for the letter. "It's the exception rather than the rule, thank goodness," comments postmaster Gord McKeown. He says usually letters sent to the wrong spot have stuck to another envelope. This happens sometimes with metered mail.

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ROASTS 89¢ lb.

GROUND CHUCK **85¢ lb.**

BEEF STEW 99¢ lb.

PORK CHOPS \$1.59 lb.

Encouraging reports Knox annual meeting

For the first time the annual congregational meeting of Knox Presbyterian Church was held on a Sunday, Feb. 8, following the morning service and a luncheon organized by wives of elders, with one of the best attendances in many years.

The minister, the Rev. Andrew H. McKenzie, presided at the business meeting, and Murray Smith was named secretary, in a brief period of worship references were made to the death of six esteemed members of the congregation who had died during the year. A. G. ("Sandy") McLean, Annie Wheeler, Eleanor Watkins, Betha Buchanan, Margaret Cole and Nora Kenney, and their loved ones were commended to God's mercy and love.

The Session report indicated that 15 new members had been added during 1975 and that eight had been removed, six by death, as noted above, and two by disjunction certificates. Mr. and Mrs. Robert Parker had become members of St. Giles' Church, Humber Valley, in Islington, in September after many years of affiliation with Knox Church, the last 18 of which Bob had served as an elder. The congregation, at the beginning of 1976, numbered 502 communicant members and approximately 315 families. During 1975 there had been 21 funerals and 25 weddings conducted by the minister, and 20 children were baptized.

Financial reports revealed many interesting facts. The total of revenue for all purposes was \$38,961, of which approximately \$8,500 was for missionary and benevolent purposes beyond the bounds of the parish. Among the missionary contributions were the following items: \$5,012 to the budget of the national church, 65 per cent of which is used for missions at home and overseas, W. M. S. gifts, totaling \$1,056, and sent to "headquarters" in Toronto, a gift of \$655 from the congregation and two organizations for Miss Donna J. Riseborough, a student for the ministry in her final year at Knox College, Toronto, who will be ordained in Knox Church sometime in May of this year, approximately \$600 to be used by the Presbytery of Brampton in its church extension assistance program, and an estimated \$300 in white gifts and used clothing sent to Toronto and Guelph for distribution.

Total receipts received via offering envelopes and in the way of donations, and administered by the Board of Managers, amounted to \$27,000, and of this amount \$1,000 was the generous gift of an active Ladies' Aid, and \$2,000, a legacy from the estate of the late Fred Cole. The Ladies' Aid had experienced another successful

year, and had enjoyed the fellowship in work of catering for eight weddings and banquets, and in serving lunches to relatives and friends after three funerals. The Heather Club had also served lunches following two funerals, and in the spring of 1975 enjoyed their usual successful rummage and bake sale.

New group
The Daughters of Knox was rejoicing in the fact that they had been able to organize a new ladies' group, the Bertha E. Buchanan Young Women's Group, named to honour and perpetuate the memory of Mrs. A. J. Buchanan, who had given many years of devoted service to Knox Church and particularly to its W. M. S. and affiliated auxiliaries. With the launching of this new group, Knox Church now has four W. M. S. auxiliaries in addition to the Ladies' Aid and Heather Club which are primarily fund-raising organizations working on behalf of the local church.

Church school
Mrs. Tom Watson, general superintendent of the Church School, indicated in her report to the congregation that the enrolment of scholars has very greatly increased this past fall, necessitating enlargement of the staff. This was very gratifying, and it is hoped that this trend will continue in similar proportion

to the rapid growth of the community.

New managers named to the 22-member board were Glen Findlay, Charles Kingsmill and David Ryder, and former members returned for the three year term were Jim McVeigh, R. M. ("Mac") Sproat and Alice Waldie.

Six new elders were elected, bringing the current number in the Session to 36. They were Grant Allan, Tom Berry, Heather Homer, Doug Mason, Wilfred McPeckern and Anne Moore. They will serve for a term of five years. Tom Berry had formerly served for a number of years on the Session of St. Andrew's Church, Streetville. This is the first time, since the Presbyterian Church approved of women elders in 1966, that women have been named to the office of elder in Knox Church.

After many years of service as an auditor James Inglis had indicated his desire to "retire", and this wish was granted, with expressions of appreciation for his fine services. Named to carry on as auditors were Bill Benson, Charles Kirkness and Herb Ritchie.

The Ministry of Housing will conduct a survey to determine the need and demand for senior citizen housing in Hillsburgh.

A research analyst will estimate the number of senior citizens living in the community whose housing is inadequate or who are spending more than they can afford on accommodation.

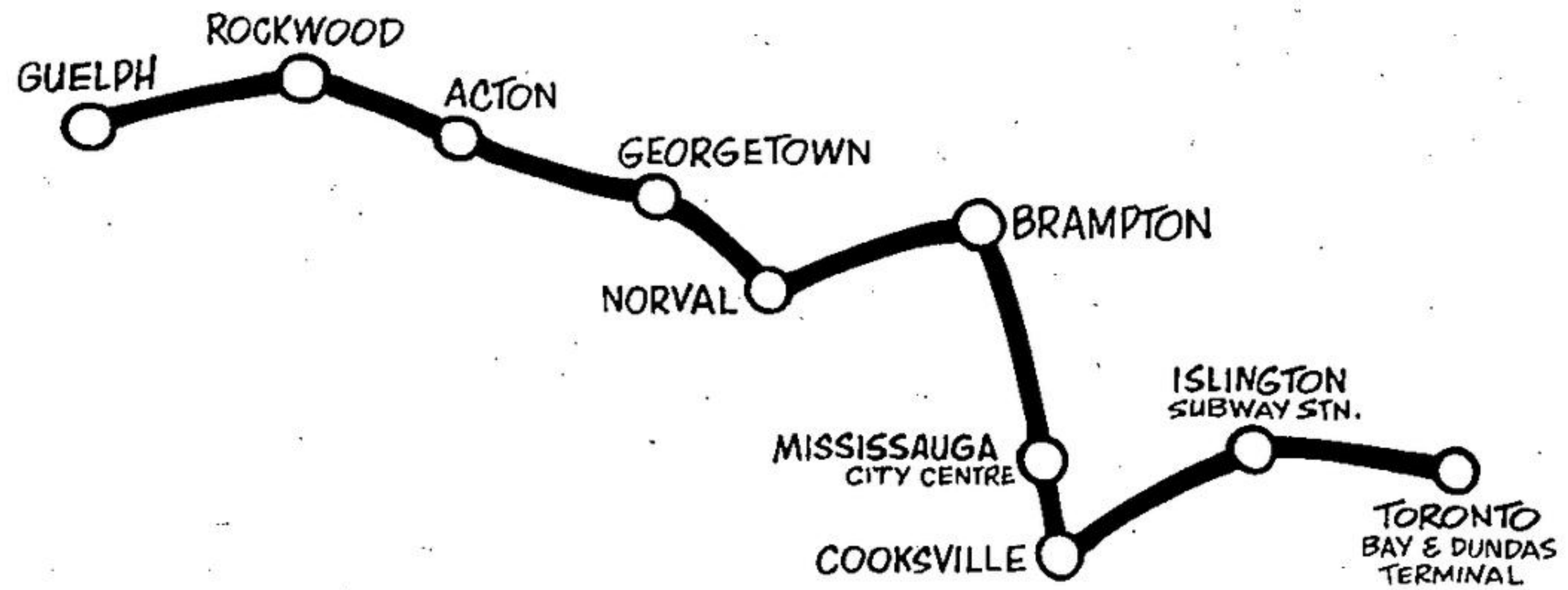
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