



Suzanne Schroeter's Scrapbook

...IT'S SUPERDOG

He has travelled from East to West across North America. After learning to swim at the tender age of two months, he has practiced his strokes in the Mississippi River, the Pacific Ocean and the Green River in Utah. He's spent time in Vegas, L.A., and San Francisco and was almost ticketed once for catching a seagull in Long Beach. Who is this well-travelled bird-lover? None other than Shane, a 70 pound dog, now living in Toronto.

I learned of Shane's escapades while catching up on news and gossip at my family's annual reunion on Christmas Day. My cousin Dawn had just returned from her third working hiatus in "heavenly California" and was telling us about her problems flying home with her new pet Shane.

Flying stand-by is a tricky business at the best of times, but add a canine companion and you are bound to be in for a few headaches. What if the dog gets on and you don't?, I asked in an alarmed voice. Well, Air Canada assured Dawn they would notify her family at the destination point and hold the dog until it was picked up. As it turned out both Shane and Dawn arrived safely at Toronto International Airport.

Shane's life in California wasn't always rosy. While he was allowed to swim each day in the apartment pool and frolic with his friends at Dog Beach, some days were a letdown. Such as the day Shane spent patiently waiting outside the liquor store for Dawn's arrival. While his master was at work, Shane was picked up by the dog catcher and ended up spending the night in the pound.

Shane has settled into life in our colder climate. He's given up his daily swim at Dog Beach and instead settles for an evening walk in the slush in suburban Toronto. If they ever follow up the movie Superman with Superdog, you can guess who Dawn would nominate for the screen test. And she'd gladly go back to California to do it!

Seniors enjoy outstanding year

Russell's swinging senior citizens reported a year crammed with activity in 1979. President Bertha Smith said, "We are looking forward to an equally action-packed 1980."

This year's activities were marked by card parties, bus trips, entertainments for other senior citizen groups and a generally hectic round of events to tax the energy of those many years their juniors.

Bus outings included the National Arts Centre, Government House, Kemptville Agricultural College. There was a boat trip from Kingston, with dinner on the boat. The seniors attended Upper

Canada Village and saw George Blackburn's production, "A Day To Remember," took a trip through the Laurentians and visited the first Anglican Church in Lower Canada. Instead of Christmas gifts, the seniors contributed \$2 each for the Burn Treatment Centre, raising over \$100. They toured Eastern Ontario Children's Hospital and enjoyed Christmas dinner.

Four members passed away during the year. Mrs. Norman Dugdale and Mr. Ross are in hospital. Pot Luck dinners are held on the first Monday of every month, attracting an increasing number of visitors.

Barrie looks to 80's as new farm president

The first thought that comes to mind about Ralph Barrie is dedication. Mr. Barrie likes being the president of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, and he makes no bones about it.

"I sort of fell into farming because there was nobody to take over the family dairy farm," he said during an interview in Russell Village. "I actually had to learn how to farm all over again."

His true interests, however, have always been management oriented. While the president of the Balderson Cheese Co., Mr. Barrie was instrumental in the implementation of policies that have made the once small town company a \$12 million-a-year business.

"You acquire a sort of a business sense from working in a company like that."

That business sense led Mr. Barrie further from the farm into the OFA. In 1976 he was elected first vice-president and in November of '79 took over the ropes from Peter Hanam as the president of the largest farming organization in Canada.

"Peter was the perfect president for that time period," said Barrie. "He was very articulate, and I was amazed at his ability to put things down in paper."

Asked if he intended to make any major changes in the way Mr. Hannam ran the organization Barrie replied:

"The last few years have been very good ones for Ontario farmers but like everyone else they are starting to feel the pressures of the energy crisis, inflation, and in all truthfulness, the outlook for the eighties is not all that promising. There is a need not so much for change but for progression to cope with the ever changing problems."

His main challenge at the present time is to increase awareness among the farmers as to what the OFA can do for them.

"I don't think the farmers truly understand the benefit they can have from the organization. They are often too independent for their own good." Russell County president Rejean Leclerc voices his opinion:

"Many farmers don't seem to realize that farming goes beyond the farm itself. If no one looked past their own fences, then

farmers wouldn't be getting the prices for their products that they are today."

"One of our main problems in attracting and maintaining our members is that we have to constantly prove our credibility as an organization. Farmers tend to be very critical of each other and so at the end of each year we have to be able to say this is what we've done for you in the last 12 months and show them proof of our work."

In the near future, Mr. Barrie would like to see a property tax reform on a long term basis so that farmers would be reimbursed up to 50% of their land taxes. He would also like to implement a sort of Bill of Rights for farmers to establish just what normal farming practices should be and to protect farmers from harassment from urban natives who move out to the country for the fresh air just as the fertilizer is being spread.

"As responsible as possible and as militant as necessary." That's the OFA motto, but Barrie can see it altered slightly.

"I would like to build an organization powerful enough so

that it wouldn't have to be militant, it would have to be dealt with on its own merits."

Mr. Barrie sees big business as a major force keeping the farmers from attaining more power at the provincial level.

"I dislike intensely the impact that big business has on government policy making," he says, "and there is no doubt in my mind that there are some real power brokers that have a tremendous amount of power in the total food chain industries in Ontario, they have a significant amount of influence on the government."

With these statements Ralph Barrie had to leave for another of the meetings that have become a way of life for him since he got involved with the OFA; before he left, he gave a forecast for the eighties: "Well," he said, getting the look of a man with a mission in his eyes, "I predict you will hear a lot more screaming from the farmers, this energy scenario will take a lot of money out of our pockets. I think I came in at a good time because people will become aware of prices and realize that some changes are necessary."



OFA LEADERS

Ontario Federation of Agriculture president Ralph Barrie (left) visited Russell recently and met with Peter Romme, local OFA coordinator, Michel Bourgon, an OFA field man, and Rejean Leclerc, president of the Russell federation. (Michael Van Dusen Photo)

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