



Suzanne Schroeter's

Scrapbook

Sharon, Lois and Who?

On Sat., March 15, I attended a children's musical concert which disappointed me.

Sharon, Lois and Bram are a very popular and successful group currently on a national tour. As music teachers, the trio felt more could be offered in the field of children's musical recordings, where Raffi has long been the only alternative to Disney discs. As a compliment to Raffi's three excellent children's records, we now have "One Elephant/Deux Elephants" and "Smorgasbord" from Sharon, Lois and Bram. Both records have strong ties to traditional children's songs, games and chants. A detailed guide book accompanies each album with activities and actions for many songs. Perhaps if one were to categorize the Sharon, Lois and Bram albums in comparison to Raffi's, we could say Sharon, Lois and Bram are more creative in their musical presentation and more up-tempo. Raffi has a quieter voice and less percussion in his back-up band.

Back to the concert. Since they are tops on the preschool charts, the Sharon, Lois and Bram concerts were a sell-out. Two concerts were presented at two locations. Unfortunately we attended a performance at the auditorium of the National Archives Building.

To the organizers of children's concerts — PLEASE choose a suitable location. At the National Archives Auditorium the seats require at least a 70 pound weight or they will spring shut. Consequently most children sat on daddy's lap. But since Sharon, Lois and Bram encourage lots of audience participation there was considerable standing while doing actions. In a sea of parents, few children could see anything, let alone the performers. An open gym/auditorium setting where the kids could gather around the performers and the parents could sit on the side-lines would have been much better.

Despite these drawbacks, the music of Sharon, Lois and Bram charms adults and children alike. There's lots of humor, echo singing and motions to keep a crowd of children listening for an hour, which really says something. If you are eager to develop an appreciation of music in your child as well as an ability to "listen", I highly recommend Sharon, Lois and Bram. Incidentally, watch for the trio's new music book called "Elephant Jim" — a perfect mate for Dennis Lee's "Alligator Pie"!

Raisin River joyride — "Sure"

By Dave Denman

Dave Denman, of Ottawa, is a frequent visitor to Russell. In the following article, he tells in tongue-and-cheek fashion of his first real canoeing challenge — the annual, spring Raisin River Canoe Race north of Cornwall. Dave made the trip with his friend Mark Stiles, also of Ottawa. Mark has canoed the Arctic.

Ever notice how a casual "Oh sure" can get you into an unprecedented situation?

Well that's exactly how I found myself charging through wild white water recently with nothing between me and certain death but a canoe.

"Oh sure," I had told my good friend and good canoeist Mark Stiles when he invited me to be his bowsman in the 21-mile Raisin River Canoe Race on March 30. The course runs from St. Andrew's West through Martintown to Williamstown.

The two ominous words just came out, tripped off my tongue. You know. But I was a sailor, had been skipping my trusty Laser around Lake Deschenes on the Ottawa River for the past few summers. This canoeing business could only be a joyride to a proven salt like me. To add to my flippancy, Mark pooh-poohed my only occasional brushes with a paddle. I should have realized. I should have read more into his wry grin.

We even went through the motions the day before the race — J-stroking, ferrying, drawing, cross-drawing, paddling — nothing that seemed too complicated...at the time. The first premonition of what lay ahead came when we drove part of the course after registering the day of the race. I saw some of the white water and my butterflies wanted to fly south. None of the other contestants — including Mark who still wore his wry grin — seemed jittery so I turned my thoughts to the beauty of the bright spring day and the free-flowing river.

The gun cracked at noon on the nose and the 228 contestants

stagger-started the 114 canoes into the current. I anticipated a leisurely Sunday outing. Snug in my life-jacket, paddle at the ready, my butt had barely touched down in our 85-pound aluminum vessel when my ears were pinned by my partner screaming for me to "lean into it" and "put my back into it." The object, I quickly understood, was to pull ahead of the three other canoes starting with us. Yessir, we were in a race!

I pride myself with being in relatively good shape but, despite our stroking past earlier starters, I was concerned about my ability to keep up the punishing pace. The slave driver in the stern, who had many long canoe trips in his portfolio, was obviously bent on making a decent showing. On we went, plummeting into white water, manoeuvring through the slots, the adrenalin flowing, paddling and more paddling.

Occasionally, another canoe plowed by as if we were standing still (lighter craft, I thought). The most challenging spot was the falls

in Martintown, a fish ladder being the only route around them. You had to hit the ladder dead on. Fortunately, my perseverant partner took pity and we portaged. The raspberries and jeers of "chicken" from onlookers was the price we paid to avoid a certain dunking. There was compensation in the cheers of spectators who lined bridges along the way. Some 3,000 people viewed the race.

After three hours, 22 minutes of steady stroking, my numb legs, stiff lower back, rubbery shoulders and cold, blistered hands crossed the finish line with a certain feeling of accomplishment. There was also a souvenir medal, roast beef dinner and bar at the church hall in Williamstown to ease the pain.

I piled back some of the good food, pondering the good job of organizing by the Raisin River Conservation Authority and looking ahead to the first relaxing jaunt of the summer in a laser on Lake Deschenes.

Tree plant takes root

The Russell plant-a-tree day is going to get off the ground after all, says organizer Paul Boardman.

Encouraged by belated response to the idea, Mr. Boardman told the Castor Review he is placing an order for 20,000 seedlings with the ministry of natural resources in Kemptville. He is looking at May 17 to plant the trees as a community undertaking to replace those lost to cutting and disease.

He envisages a central committee representing community organizations and individual volunteers to coordinate the tree plant. Participants would meet at a central location and, armed with seedlings, would be deployed to specific, mapped out areas.

Planting seedlings, which require only a slash in the ground and a tamp of the foot, is not strenuous, he said, adding he once planted several hundred in a matter of a few hours.

Mr. Boardman fielded his idea for a tree-plant in the Castor Review in January however he was ready to drop the scheme when only one resident returned an involvement form. He said a renewed appeal in the March 6 issue of the Review resulted in "a lot better response" and he decided to forge ahead. He said that, on top of an adequate written response, many people had voiced their support for the idea on the street.

He said Russell Township council had reacted well to the idea and he hoped to convince it to pay the minimal charge for the seedlings. He also hoped for a donation of fertilizer for the trees.

To better coordinate the tree-plant, he is asking those who want to participate to send in the completed form accompanying this article.

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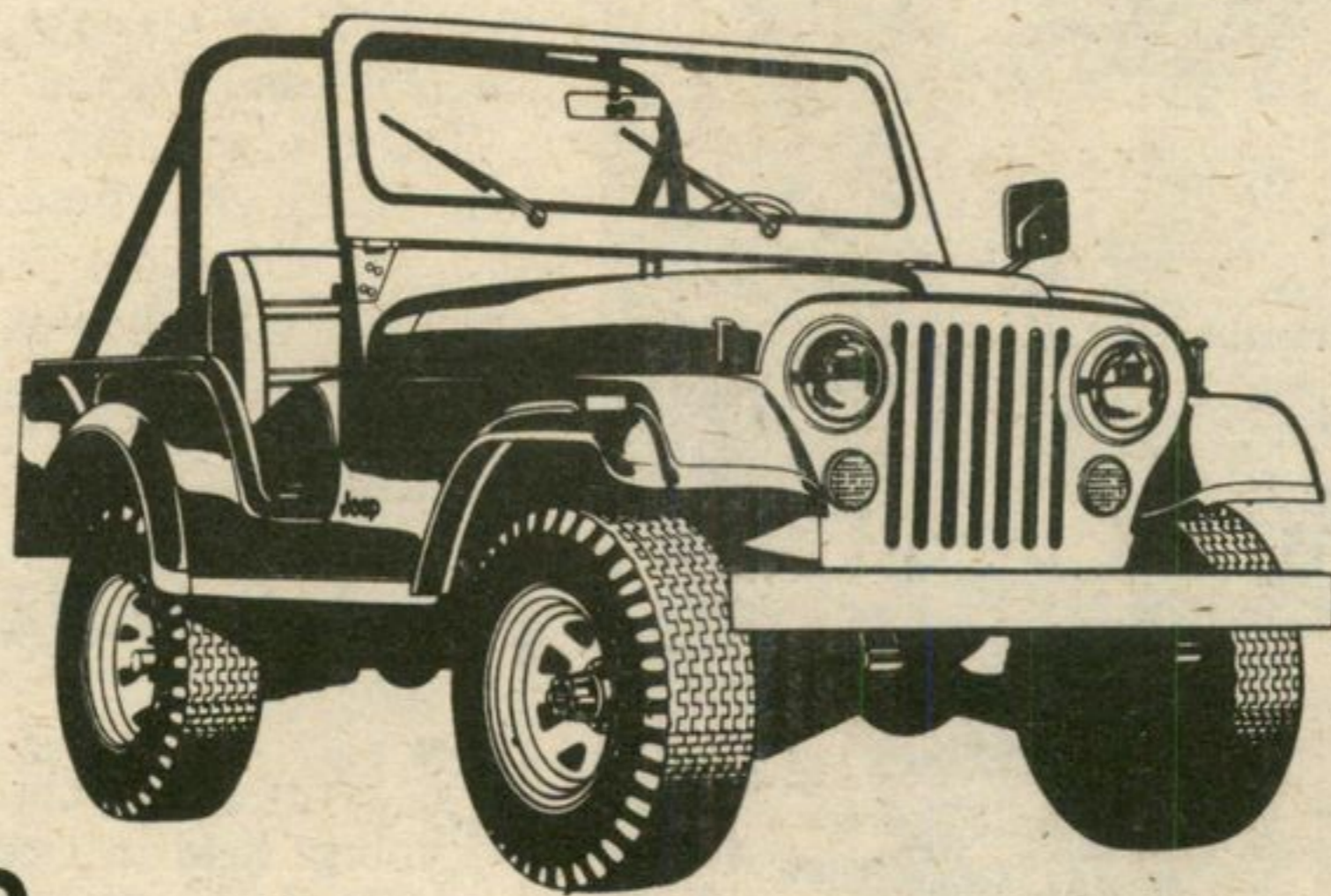
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Get involved in the Russell Tree Plant

Fill out this form and send it to Paul Boardman,
Box 418, Russell, Ont. KOA 3B0.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____



Sat., April 26 at 7 p.m.
in the Russell Public School

Sun., April 27 at 9:30 a.m.
in the Castor Valley Baptist Church
Meeting in the Russell Public School

Sun., April 27 at 7 p.m.
in the Castor Valley Baptist Church
in Kenmore