

When Doc is sick, all is not well

There are many things in this big, wide world I take for granted.

My wife is one. On my return from a 20-kilometre paper trek, she's there with a word of praise and compassion. If she isn't, I wonder why.

My car's another. On the coldest of mornings, I expect it to start with the flick of a switch. If it doesn't, I wonder why.

My physician's another. Whatever the illness, be it serious or slight, he has the answers. If he hasn't, I wonder why.

And so it goes, those everyday occurrences on which we continually rely.

Unfortunately, the river of life doesn't always flow smoothly. Every so often, rocks and rapids impede its progress. And when this happens, particularly with men, the roof caves in. We're concerned, confounded and confused.

So it's been for me. Ever since late last summer, when Doc Graham turned the key in his office door.

Glenn's been my caregiver for what seems like forever. Truth is, he's only the fourth personal physician I've known in a lifetime.

While this may sound strange, our association was more than doctor-patient. It was a mutual admiration society. I admired him for his patience and he admired me for my petulance, solid proof opposites attract.

Doc Graham had a book

on me, possibly the thickest book on file. And while a pharmacist could decipher his scribble, it knowingly contained everything from a minor sore throat to a major circumcision.

The former lasted two days, the latter prevailed 60 years.

For me, an office visit was mostly routine, simple pulse and blood-pressure checks, requiring 10 minutes at the most. However, should someone cancel or arrive late, he would take the time to talk.

"So how's the family?" he would ask, calling all six sons and daughters by name.

His advice to me: "Do what you like and like what you do," always concluding the conversation on a positive note: "You're doing fine, just fine."

Whether I was or wasn't, I always felt better going out than coming in.

But the negatives didn't escape him, either. He was well aware of a little idiosyncrasy called needles and my aversion to same.

"I know you're not going to like this," he would say, "but you need to have some blood work done. Your cholesterol's still too high, we've got to get it down."

It was through his insistence, (plus an understanding nurse, a comfortable cot and a cold glass of water) I finally overcame this fear. He had more faith in me than I had in myself. I'll always be grateful.

While newer breeds of physicians call offices and hospitals home, such was not the case with Doc Graham. On several occasions, on answering our door, we discovered a roly-poly GP standing there, black bag in hand.

"Just driving by," he would say.

But we knew differently. For my son Paul, 14, was then battling chronic asthma, attacks so severe, he twice barely survived.

Our concerns were his concerns. His presence eased our fears.

While medical doctors are trained to treat the sick, they themselves are supposed to be immune to maladies. Or so we sometimes think.

Sure, a barber grows hair, a shoemaker wears shoes and a farmer drinks milk, but an ailing physician? Never.

Wish this were so. They're human too.

Doc Graham included.

While his form of illness, described as a heart attack, has been kept under wraps, the snow-covered ramp let's everyone know all is not well at Doc's place.

Daily, people, some former patients, stand on the sidewalk and stare. Hoping against hope they'll see some movement, maybe a light, any sign of activity. No luck.

All is dark. The door is locked. The way it's been since August.

So what's the latest? When will Doc be back?

"Not for six months and maybe not then," a friend told me Saturday, her voice trailing off to a whisper.

So, at 6383 Main Street, a vacuum remains, an eerie emptiness that may never be filled. I hope not.



Roaming Around

with Jim Thomas

WHAT'S FOR DINNER?

There are moments when I feel like an athletic misfit, not so much for how I play sports (with more enthusiasm than skill), but for how little I understand about football.

I do know that this is Super Bowl Weekend, but only because it's what all my hockey buddies talk about — Point Spread!

One thing I do know is that we sell tons of extra lean ground beef this weekend. Chili seems to be the meal of choice to watch Super Bowl by. If you're more of a fan than a cook, we'll have Doreen's chili on sale this week in our frozen area. It'll serve 2-3, and it's real good.

Reg. \$10.95/pkg.

25% OFF THIS WEEK

... and keeping in the Neanderthal aspect of the game, we'll have our ...

PILE O' BONES

On sale as well. These are prime rib bones which have been marinated in our Teriyaki, or you can get them au naturel. Anyway you get them, they're delicious, filling, and rather Neanderthal.

Reg. \$3.99/lb.

Cooking instructions will be available!

2.99 LB. THIS WEEK

CAMBAZOLA CHEESE

To me, this is one of the world's best cheeses because it combines that smooth creamy texture of Camembert and that equally creamy and smooth texture — plus amazing flavour — of Gorgonzola.

Now, if you haven't had Gorgonzola cheese in Italy, you just need to — it's worth the air fare! Anyway, it's a great cheese which, like all cheeses, is better if you temper it somewhat.

Another suggestion? Slice some onto a piece of Manoucher's Baguette with some ripe Bartlett or Bosc pear.

From Germany

Reg. \$5.29 / 100 g.

1/3 OFF THIS WEEK

ORANGE ROUGHIE

Bikini a bit tight? You'll need some of this for dinner — and maybe more than once! It's a very low-fat, and at the same time delicious, white-fleshed fish.

25% OFF THIS WEEK

Reg. \$13.95/lb.

CALIFORNIA NAVEL ORANGES

These are definitely more flavourful and juicy than the oranges that have been available lately. And a sharp price, too!

79¢ LB. THIS WEEK

CREAM OF CARROT SOUP

This is one of, if not the best-selling soups we make. We start by making our own chicken stock, use local carrots (while they're available) which are nice and sweet, we use cream and it's spiced just right.

Reg. \$5.49 ea. Serves 3-4

25% OFF THIS WEEK



SMOKED BLACK COD

Occasionally we smoke some very wonderful Black Cod from British Columbia.

One of those occasions will be this Friday noon and Saturday. If you want a real taste treat, step up to the deli counter and get some. It's wonderful!

GUINNESS SAUSAGES

I believe that these are unique to our store — and they're so good. What to serve with them? More Guinness, or any other beer that's close.

Reg. \$3.99/lb.

25% OFF THIS WEEK

CARAMEL WEEK II

This caramel week is a sequel to the first we had about a year ago. It was drama of the highest order — we were sure we'd be nominated for something great! Our problem at the time was the long period of time it took to make caramel and cool it sufficiently to use it in recipes. We realized too late the amount that we'd need for our special — we'd wildly underestimated the popularity. We had a pot of caramel simmering on every hot surface in the store — and a lineup of people waiting very patiently for their dessert of choice. Things change, and this time for the better. We bought a range just for making caramel — and we've perfected its manufacture so here goes, the 'Sequel'!

* CARAMEL MILK CHOCOLATE SANDWICH COOKIES

We sell these in packages, usually on the 'round about' in front of the meat counter. They get high praise. **\$6.95**

* TOASTED PECAN CARAMEL COOKIES

This is a thinner (not thinning) cookie that is hard to eat just one of. It seems to me that there are so many more in a pack — it's actually hard work to finish a pack at a sitting. **\$6.95**

* CARAMEL PECAN CRUNCH CHEESECAKE

I'm a texture guy — I'll eat one item at a time rather than combine different textures — but this cake has proven me wrong — combos can be good. I am informed that our customers have proven me wrong as well — it's a very good seller! **\$12.95 & \$20.95**

* CARAMEL APPLE PECAN COFFEE CAKE

This is essentially a bundt cake drizzled with warm caramel. Not only does it look really good — it tastes terrific! **\$10.95 ea.**

* CARAMEL APPLE SCONES

This is not your average hard-to-choke-down scone. These are amazingly sumptuous. **\$1.49 ea.**

* CARAMEL-APPLE BUTTER TARTS

These are our amazing butter tarts with a bonus of spiced apples and caramel. **\$5.99/6 or \$1.29 ea.**

* PRALINES AND CREAM CAKES

This has a chocolate Oreo crumb crust and a white chocolate mousse filling, layered with caramel and caramelized pecans. **\$8.95 or \$18.95**

* CARAMEL PECAN PIE

This would be one of our old-time favourites. They have a pastry crust and are best served slightly warmed with a dollop of vanilla ice cream. **\$4.99 or \$10.95**

We feel so confident with our caramel skills that we've put this whole selection on sale this week at **1/3 OFF THIS WEEK**

SPECIALS IN EFFECT UNTIL CLOSING SUNDAY FEBRUARY 1ST

Hours:

Mon. 11:00-7:00 ~ Tues. Thurs. 9:00-7:00 ~ Fri. 9:00-8:00

Sat. 9:00-6:00 ~ Sun. 10:00-5:00

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