

Another world on other side of border

We recently returned from a memorable holiday in Yankee land.

We took the long route via Gananoque's Ivy Lea bridge. In doing so, we escaped lengthy lineups and suspicious customs officials at the optional crossovers, Lewiston, Niagara and Fort Erie. The time we saved more than made up for the extended distance.

We traveled 1,745 kilometres or 1,099 miles for those of you who, like me, are graduates of the old school.

Our ultimate destination was Lebanon, Penn., home of the Blue Mountain Gospel Festival.

Lebanon, a city of 25,000, is located between Harrisburg and Lancaster. The festival site includes a huge complex that also serves as the city's fairgrounds. It has inside seating for close to 2,000, with additional space for banquets and displays.

People bring their chairs, set them up in pre-arranged places, then go eat and visit.

On the subject of visiting, this site is southern hospitality at its best, especially so when they learn two visitors in their midst come from Canada. I had my right hand pumped so often, the right shoulder was close to collapse.

Each greeting was accompanied by comments like:

"You mean you drove all this distance for one concert? Sakes alive, that's a mighty long way to come for so short a time."

The festival, by the way, extended over five days and five nights. We stayed five hours.

And talk about eat. Pennsylvanians obviously have huge appetites. We saw folks, some extremely rotund, wolfing down hamburgers and hotdogs like the Angus breed was all but extinct.

While there, plus traveling to and from, we made other observations:

- That most Americans know little or nothing about Canada.

- At a restaurant, a waitress stared in dismay at a Canadian \$10 bill and, after questioning its legitimacy, handed it back.

- Many eating places in both New York and Pennsylvania still permit smoking without protective partitions. When asked about a Tim Hortons, one respondent knew only that the company's namesake had once played hockey "with the Buffalo Bills".

- Because gas thefts are prevalent, most station operators demand pre-payment, even during daylight hours. Measurements are in gallons, not litres; temperatures are in Fahrenheit, not Celsius.

- Police officers in those



Roaming Around

with Jim Thomas

U.S. towns and cities we visited, serve dual roles. They not only walk their beats but provide directions to lost motorists. For protection, we learned many residents have guns in their homes. And it's not unusual for transport drivers to keep revolvers holstered in their cabs.

- Americans are intensely patriotic. Not only do they stand for their national anthem but they actually sing it, with some holding hands over their hearts. The Stars and Stripes are prominently displayed from homes and stores.

- A cross-section of America is also intensely religious. At least one radio station in every state carries nothing but gospel music.

- Americans are both a modern and a stand-pat society. Where else can one go where toilets boast automatic flushes yet men dry their hands on their pants?

Where else can one go and attend a concert where people of all races, colours and creeds accord guest groups multiple standing ovations?

We counted it a privilege to be there. For me, it was a dream come true.

For, at age nine, I would listen intently to a gospel group called The Chuck Wagon Gang. Their songs were featured regularly over radio stations out of Nashville and West Virginia. Unfortunately, due to distance, our DeForest Crossley radio could ride those air waves only at night.

That was 70 years ago. Never, did I expect to meet them, the third generation CWG personally.

On Friday, I did; even shook hands with Dave Emery, Julie Hudson, Penny Greene and Stan Hill, now working out of Pigeon Forge.

To make our trip and meeting complete, they autographed a now-treasured photo that, once framed, will hold a place of prominence in my Room of Memories.

No one can imagine the nostalgia associated with hearing the Chuck Wagon Gang sing songs I vividly recall as a kid. Their beautiful harmony rang from the rafters of the Lebanon Expo Center. And made our long journey, a trip we'll never forget.

Jim Thomas is a Stouffville resident who has written for area newspapers for more than 50 years.

T STUFFED PORK TENDERLOINS

This item is a pretty popular dinner choice at our store — and has been for quite a while. We have made a bread stuffing with dried fruit for the last long while, but this week you'll have a choice. I have challenged the meat counter team to have a new style available, starting tomorrow. Let's see what the best minds in the business come up with!

Reg. 9.95 lb. **25% OFF THIS WEEK**

OUR OLD-FASHIONED CABBAGE ROLLS

Cabbage Rolls are a hot item in our store. I imagine it's because they're so time-consuming to concoct that few of us make them at home. Whatever the reason, they don't last long in our freezer — especially when they're on sale. So come early and get them while they last!

Reg. \$11.95 Pkg. of 4 **25% OFF THIS WEEK**

WHAT'S NEW!

'Las Chicas Del Cafe' coffee will have arrived by the time you read this. 'Las Chicas' is loosely translated as 'The Chicks' of coffee, a self-proclaimed moniker for 3 very vibrant Nicaragua 'chicks' whose parents own a coffee plantation in Nicaragua. In their words "We firmly believe that traditional coffee production, the preservation of the environment and the livelihood of its community are all intertwined. Our sustainable coffee ensures that our trade directly benefits the people, the animals and the plants within our community. As the daughters of a third generation coffee grower, we fulfill our birthright by bringing forth all the beauty and romance of coffee to our custom roasted beans and honouring the growers who passionately produce it."

Great coffee, now available, and 'Las Chicas' will be available next week to serve you some in person.

— OUR — CORN CHOWDER

Our frozen soup feature is sweet corn chowder. It's the season for corn and this is the perfect meal starter (or meal in itself).

We've done the work; you just heat and serve.

Serves 3-4 **25% OFF THIS WEEK** Reg. 6.99

HONEY CRISP APPLES

These have everything you could ever want in an apple, I'm thinking. They are sweet (sweet as honey), they are crispy (yup) and they have good flavour — and they're from my friend Ben's farm in Waterdown — so they're truly fresh-picked as well. These are great apples.

ONTARIO! **1.49 LB THIS WEEK**

WHAT'S HAPPENIN' OUTSIDE!

I've noticed that the sidewalk has once again "disappeared" and the parking lot is shrinking (once again) — it happens every Spring and Fall! This being the very beginning of Fall, we've received three full truckloads of outdoor Fall mums and planters, and another is coming tomorrow — a smaller truck full of pretty neat planters and window boxes — and some white asters, which I was asked for. If your garden is like mine, it's time to re-energize it with some seasonal personality. If you yourself need a bit of re-energizing, see our bakery ad!



HONEY GARLIC SAUSAGES

We'll be making these beauties in quantity this week. You'll find them on the mild side yet really flavourful.

Reg. 3.99 lb. **25% OFF THIS WEEK**

FRESH MANITOBA PICKEREL

These are one of my favourite fish — they're a big reminder of lazy day summer fishing.

These come from Lake Winnipeg. — Fillets — **12.95 LB THIS WEEK**

WHAT'S BAKING? THIS WEEK ...

We'll be baking with blues this week, and we'll have ...

BLUEBERRY WHITE-CHOCOLATE CHEESECAKE -

It's made with a shortbread crust, wild blues and white chocolate baked in the cheesecake filling, finished with a blueberry coulis and white chocolate shavings.

Two sizes... \$14.95 and \$22.95 ea.

BLUEBERRY SCONES - Made with wild blues, a touch of cinnamon and lemon zest..... \$1.69 ea.

DEEP-DISH BLUEBERRY

PIES - These are the large ones with a nice seasoning, lattice pastry topped or crumble.

Reg.....\$17.95 ea.

BLUEBERRY CREAM CHEESE DANISHES - Made with cinnamon-scented puff pastry, a lemon cream cheese filling and a wild blueberry filling.

Reg.....\$2.99 ea.

All these will be featured at ... **25% OFF THIS WEEK**

WHAT'S COOKIN'? AT THE DELI ...

I call my wife an 'air traffic controller' at home. If you've got a number of kids in flight, you always seem to be organizing 'take-offs' and 'landings' — and being sure they show up where they should, at the right time, with everything that they need. When it's all done, you need to eat too — and that's where we can help.

This week we'll have a feature on boneless air-chilled chicken breasts which have been roasted with peach schnapps B-B-Q sauce. As well, we'll be making large bowls (we've got big ones back there) of our fresh fruit salad at least twice each day — and there'll be a feature price on it as well.

If you want fast food that's homemade, we're it.

TERRY FOX RUN

Here's a good excuse to do something healthy for yourself by supporting a good cause.

Walk, run or bike 1 KM, 5 KM & 10 KM distances on September 14th, 9 am - noon starting at Old Unionville Library and Toogood Pond paths.

To participate, donate or volunteer contact nfletcher@yrmg.com or pick up your pledge forms here at the store.

MUSKOKA LETTUCE

This beauty organic lettuce is now back in stock after a couple weeks' lost time due to hail. This is lettuce as good as it gets.

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