



Ramblin' Ruth

Autumn Odyssey

By Ruth LeBlanc

reeds on the Main Street of our downtown.

Now I am living on a street that was named Squaw Road. In these days of political correctness it has been renamed, but it is land steeped in native history.

When the men of the Ojibway tribe, whose reserve is mere miles away, left for war, the women and children came to this land to keep their families safe. Across the street is a small river where they gathered and hid until the warriors returned from battle. On a still night, you can picture them fishing the river and speaking in quiet tones of worry about the fate of their loved ones gone to war.

My menagerie of furry friends stay close to home and my side, seemingly respectful of the dense forest. Except Buddy, that is, my stubborn old black cat who defied all attempts to keep him from wandering in the woods. Just two weeks ago he darted between my legs and out the back door into the darkness, never to be seen again despite endless searches calling out his name.

Declawed and wearing a bell collar, he has disappeared without a trace. This old tomcat has me losing sleep as his feline friend Floyd wanders the house howling from worry and loneliness. Hopefully Buddy isn't trying to find his way back to his home at Musselman's Lake.

As I drive new back roads this fall, admiring the leaves, I will keep a lookout for my old pal Buddy. When he returns he will be introduced to the back deck with a new kids' gate, at least that's what I'm hoping.

The leaves are changing to bright crimson and gold, a sure sign of the end of a very short summer.

The next month is the perfect time to pack up your family, hop' into your car and tour the back roads to enjoy the fall spectacle of changing leaves. My favourite route is taking Ninth Line north and just twisting and turning my way through the countryside.

Since moving in August, after nearly three decades as a laker, I am settling into my life in Bobcaygeon as my transition continues. It is not that difficult when you are surrounded with beautiful forests and picturesque lakes at every turn.

In many ways it reminds me of Musselman's Lake with its abundance of mature trees and clusters of cedars. Another striking similarity is its strong ties to the native peoples. Traces of their past have been found buried in the ground, as arrowheads and pottery fragments have been found in Whitchurch-Stouffville.

A documentary on television last year showed the awesome discovery of Mantle, a large First Nations village located in the east end of Stouffville, which was comprised of different tribes who lived peacefully together. Today, new homes built on land laden with pottery fragments of their past, on what is now the Tenth Line just south of Main Street.

In the early 1900s, native peoples would travel to Stouffville using a route around Musselman's Lake. Carrying handmade goods they would sell baskets woven from

Farewell To The Cars Of Summer



This snazzy 1973 Mustang convertible, owned by Norm Smart, (centre, with Sue Court and Jerry Corbit) was featured in a car show at the Stouffville Legion this summer. Rick Callaghan photo

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