

Glen Alda Seniors

by Doug Field

A friendly, active and open group.

The past couple of weeks have been exceptionally sad, yet very busy for us. I had to head off to Quebec as soon as the seniors lunch was over on the 28th of June. Just the day before we had been informed that John's mom had passed away, but he was still able to make the rally I was heading to. The next bad news was that a good old friend I was planning to visit in Perth when I passed through, also lost his battle with life that morning, but I at least I was able to have a good visit with his wife Marilyn. I picked up my grandnephew, Evan, the next morning in Brockville, and then the real driving began. When we arrived in New Richmond Quebec, I was informed that night by Bev that her sister had also suddenly passed away in Syracuse. The next day, she had to make another call to inform me that a favourite aunt of hers, whom we both loved dearly, had passed away that day in her 99th year in Smiths Falls. This must have been a very hard time for Bev, her being on her own amongst this devastating series of events. We discussed the way she was feeling, and she wisely made the decision to go and stay with one of her other sisters in Bobcaygeon while I was away. They must have had the opportunity to sort things out amongst themselves, and also had the opportunity of speaking with Bev's other sister in Perth, because she was feeling much more optimistic when I returned early in the morning of July 4th. Not great, but a much more resigned, optimistic person greeted me on my arrival. You would think that would be bad enough, but our chair volleyball buddy Bev L from Coe Hill also passed away suddenly. She will definitely be missed by that group and us as well.

What are the chances of this particular chain of events occurring in the space of just a matter of days? The odds must be substantial, but happen they did. People, you have to be mentally prepared to bend with the vagaries thrown at you in life. I have spent many years working with people who have not had much to look forward to, but most soldier on facing those obstacles with chin raised and an optimistic outlook. You may or not know this, but Bev and I lived for a couple of years in Northern Zambia (1970-72) and would ride our little, (our only transportation), 1969 Honda 65 Sport off onto the many walking paths which were the real roads for people to move around on. We would come to well removed villages where we were greeted with openness. There was always some child who the headman would send for to act as interpreter, we would drink tea and exchange greetings and information about our lives and theirs. There was no thought of racial differences, cultural differences or economic differences; instead, there were people connecting and both sides realizing that we were really not that much different, we just came

from different places. What I am getting at here is that these visits changed our lives, and in particular our outlook on life in general. These people had nothing, and I mean nothing, at least in the terms which North Americans value. In actual fact these people had a different sort of wealth in abundance. They had a huge sense of family, yet they accepted death as a part of living. Yes, they grieved as we do, but they also realized that life is for the living, and that the memories of those who have passed on will keep living in your memories thus giving you the strength and will to keep living with joy and happiness. Not a bad way of looking at life is it?

Now on to the purpose of this column: the activities of the Glen Alda Seniors Group. July the 12th was our second Bar-B-Q of the season. Numbers were down somewhat from the last one, but a few of our members had other commitments. What we did have was great weather, no bugs, good food, and a great cook in the guise of Barry Rand. We were pleased to finally talk a certain Coe Hill long term resident into attending, and guess what, she was pleasantly surprised by our group of friends. I do believe that Brenda will be back. We were also more than happy to welcome some relative newcomers from the Apsley area to the meal as well. Welcome to the area Nancy and Gary, we hope you will return as you will most certainly be welcome. Our second meal outside this will obviously be another Bar-B-Q, but as to the weather conditions I haven't a clue as at this writing as the event has yet to occur. I do know that Barry will most likely cook, and I will stay in the kitchen running the dishwasher again, everyone else will share the other chores, and have a good feed, and a good time as well.

August is the last month for the Bar-B-Q season at the hall, but tradition says will head to Liz.'s in September as we do every other year. The usual August fair of great pot luck deserts, salads, and other good things to eat, will be once again available to compliment the hamburgers, sausages, and hot dogs we always cook up for these outdoor meals.

Our hopes and wishes are that the changeable weather will give the NK Roads Department a break so they will be able to continue the work of installing the playground equipment that was purchased for the Hall. Hopefully they also will be able to finish landscaping the Bocce, Badminton and Croquet area so we get to use that area at least once or twice this year. Keep your fingers crossed.

Remember you are always welcome to come and join us for a good meal and to meet great bunch of people.