

A friendly, active and open group.

What do you write about when it is very cold outside and you do not feel like spending time in the great outdoors? Let me see. Well for one, winter like weather is finally here, and it looks like it is here to stay for a while, for two, nah, let's talk about number one.

Winter arrives each and every year in this part of the country at this time, that is a given and is not up for discussion. How you choose to handle winter is a decision you have to wrestle with every year. As far back as I can remember, winter has always been my favourite season of the year mainly because there are no bugs! I have always loved the cold crisp feeling of clean clear air on my face and in my lungs. I grew up playing hockey on outdoor ponds and rinks, I went for long walks in the bush on trails I used every day so they needed no clearing and they were always solid and well packed from constant use.

As I grew up, we, as kids, used to go outdoors to smoke so we did not smell like chimneys when we returned home. Winter helped with that, but now that I am older, and I hope wiser, and have not smoked for a very long time. I know that you always smell of smoke if you smoke, no matter where you smoke.

Time went on and Bev and I moved to Africa for a

couple of years. We missed the winters and when we returned home here to Canada in 1972, our parents showed us pictures of the winter of 1970/71, which showed the snow half-way up the windows on the second story of my family's home - I was glad I missed that.

As a teenager, hockey and downhill skiing were first and foremost my favourite winter activities, but to earn the money to go skiing, I shovelled in hundreds of driveways to afford those activities. I distinctly remember looking forward to a good snowfall as the more snow there was, the more money I could charge to move it. Nobody ever complained about my work as I always tried to do a very neat job, which resulted in most of the referrals for more work that I got, which as a result put more money in my pocket. Back then, we used metal shovels and they were heavy - not the wimpy limp things they call shovels nowadays.

When we were married in the sixties, I often drove down to my parent's home to shovel their driveway as they were getting on to the age we are now, and dad was finding it difficult to shovel it on his own. During much of the seventies, eighties, nineties, and well into this new century up until the last two years, we made cross country ski trails and snowshoe trails for miles around where we have lived. The past two years we have failed to do, so as there is far too much ice, and mild temperatures, so that the soft fluffy base you need to make good trails was simply not there. It is really a shame as we still both enjoy getting out of doors and experiencing winter at its finest.

I am bored to tears today looking out the window at a clear sunny but cold day and not being motivated to be out there ... what a shame. Actually, while writing this last statement, I decided I should go for a good walk in the bush. I have done so for the past three days now, and wow, I missed that. I'm glad I got off my duff after writing that last bit. There is now a good base which made the walk an enjoyable experience. So now my motivation is back where it should be, and a daily walk is now back in my bag of tricks for the rest of winter.

January is somewhat of a slow month for the Glen Alda Seniors Group, as so many go to warmer climates, or to places closer to family and friends for the winter. But the *get togethers* up here are just as rewarding now as for the rest of the year. The "Pot Luck" was a successful way to open the month, and the "Guys Cooking" did not occur, as both of them had other plans apparently, so Bev and I stepped into the fray and cooked-up a tasty treat for our intrepid crew of winter stalwarts to finish off the month of January.

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