



Focus on Floradale

Volume XXXII No. 1

Floradale Mennonite Church

April, 2016

Youth care for the environment

By Taylor Clemmer

On Saturday April 16 our youth had the opportunity to clean up a local trail. Psalm 24:1 says, "The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it." With Earth Day just around the corner, we wanted to play a part in helping to care for creation and all that belongs to the Lord.

Early Saturday morning, some of the youth meet at Megan Martin's house to head off to the Kissing Bridge Trail near West Montrose. We spent the morning walking the trail and enjoyed the warm weather, while we filled our garbage bags full of collected trash. The beautiful spring day made it especially easy to get outside and help the environment.

We all enjoyed not only getting to clean up the trail but

also getting to spend the morning socializing. As we walked we ran into several locals. It was nice to have a small chat with them, while they thanked us for helping tidy up.

Even though we had only collected about three garbage bags full of trash, we still felt good about what we accomplished. We hoped there was going to be more garbage to pick up, but it's nice to know that people are becoming more considerate about where they're putting their garbage. After walking and cleaning for about two hours we headed back to the car for some Tim bits that Tim Horton's provided as part of their sponsorship.

Even though it was a small event, we all felt like we contributed to a big deed at the end of the day. It just goes to show that picking up even just the slightest bit of trash can really make a positive effect on our environment and community!



On April 16 the youth helped to clean up the Kissing Bridge Trail. From left: Owen Read, Kyle Martin, Reg Martin, Amanda Martin, Taylor Clemmer, Katie Gerber, Ryan Bauman

Youth winter retreat

By Katie Gerber

Katie wrote this article in Feb. 7, but somehow it missed getting into the Feb. issue. Our apologies to Katie.

This past weekend the MYF and I attended MCEC's youth winter retreat at Silver Lake Mennonite Camp. We had an awesome time hanging out with each other, meeting other youth groups, playing games, worshiping and eating! I personally loved the opportunity to connect with and be inspired by the youth pastors/workers and sponsors within our area. It's always helpful to hear how others are running their programs, engaging their youth and balancing responsibilities.

The theme of the weekend was mental wellness, and the focus was "Faith in the Midst of Emotions." Al Strong, who works for the Canadian Mental Health Association of Waterloo Wellington and Dufferin and is a mental health speaker and comedian, joined us for the weekend. He is a very engaging speaker who not only makes Toronto Maple Leaf jokes and picks on his audience throughout his talks, but also has been diagnosed with Bipolar 2 disorder and has made several attempts to end his life by suicide. I, along with the rest of the retreat attendees, were encouraged to view mental illness as a common illness that not only 1 in 5 people experience, but that 100% of people are affected by through their relationships with others. Al played clips of the new and touching animated movie, *Inside Out*, a story that takes

place inside the mind of an 11-year-old girl as she deals with her emotions. Through these clips and stories in scripture, Al brought up several points that I found very encouraging:

- 1) Jesus' table is big enough for everyone, and he especially makes time for those who are struggling (Zacchaeus and the woman at the well). He needs to be our example of inclusivity.
- 2) There will be really difficult times in our lives, as there is a time for everything. Through these hard times, God shows us He will NEVER give up on us.
- 3) When Jesus was overwhelmed with emotion (in the Garden of Gethsemane), He did not suppress them. He confronts his emotions and brings them to God.
- 4) In the movie *Inside Out*, the character named Bilbo is upset and while Joy tries to find a quick fix to make him happy, the character named Sadness

takes the time to sit with Bilbo, to be there with him and to understand. It is okay to take time to be sad; feelings are feelings, neither bad nor good. It is so important to be willing to sit, and be present with people as they work through these emotions.

The discussion of mental illness and working to create more inclusive environments are vital to the work of the church in terms of being welcoming. This weekend encouraged me to recognize the importance of creating a space and environment that welcomes those who may be struggling with mental illness to be heard, to be cared for, to share their struggles and to experience comfort and support. It is my hope and prayer that we as a church would be willing to walk alongside those struggling, whether that means we are sitting in silence, making casseroles, driving to appointments, dutifully praying or actively listening.

Hopping Thursday children's musical.

On Friday, April 22, the children from the Hopping Thursday program performed "Tattybogle," an upbeat, happy little musical that encourages us to think about new life and new beginnings. This photo of the scarecrow was taken during a rehearsal since the performance happened too late for this issue of the *Focus*.



Mennonites Got Talent

On Sat., Feb. 29, people from Floradale displayed some of their talents at Floradale Mennonite Church.



The youth provided some improv.

The Ishaka family sang a song.



Shirley Redekop and Rita Bauman's skit had a couple ladies touring Floradale.



Nancy and Rob Mann (above) sang "Anything you can do, I can do better!"

Barb Draper (left) did a historical monologue about a woman who lived in Floradale in 1862.

Roy Draper (below) read a politically correct version of "Little Red Ridinghood."



The evening was a lot of fun with a wide variety of talents. People were brave and let it all hang out.

Tyler Kehl (left) finished off the evening with some magic card tricks. He completely confounded Jerry Hesselink.



Women's Fellowship learns about addictions

By Barb Draper

Leah Cressman talked about her work at House of Friendship's Al-Control Residential program at the Women's Fellowship breakfast at the Crossroads on Sat. March 5, 2016. Leah is married to Blaine Cressman and so is a daughter-in-law to Sharon Cressman.

"I love my job," said Leah, as she began her talk. She said that when she moved to Elmira four-and-a-half years ago she had a degree in Psychology and began working part-time with House of Friendship. Insisting she is not an expert, she says she has learned a lot on the job.

Addiction is a chronic but controllable brain disorder. Too much drug or alcohol consumption changes the brain so that it craves more. It is the same part of the brain that deals with the need for food so that coping with an addiction is like starving.

Addiction happens when a person develops an unhealthy coping mechanism that initially provided relief. It is very seductive in that at first it seems to make the stressors go away. Leah says she has learned to ask what pain the substance abuse is covering.

There are three risk factors for addiction. Abuse or other trauma is a big risk factor as is poor mental health and 40 to 60% of clients struggle with mental health issues. A family history of addiction is a third risk factor.

Leah said she has learned that there is no magic formula. What works with one individual won't necessarily work with another. Addictions can be a problem regardless of a person's age, gender, social status or level of education.

For a long time it was assumed to be more of a men's problem, but women just hid it better and the problem of addictions continues to grow in society.

The House of Friendship has six addiction service programs and the residential program works with more than 500 women each year. Since the conclusion of the "Under one roof" campaign a couple years ago, five of the six addiction services are now in one building rather than scattered around the city. The addiction programs are funded by the Waterloo-Wellington Local Integrated Health Network (LIHN). Specific donations can enhance the program beyond the basics. For example, a donor has given funds to give music and art lessons.

If someone needs help in Waterloo-Wellington, there is a 24/7 hotline to call (1-844-437-3247). After an assessment there is usually a wait time for space. The client needs to be free of drugs and/or alcohol before entering the residence. For the first two weeks there is little freedom and lots of group meetings to work at relapse prevention. Each client has an individualized program which is usually between four and ten weeks. As a one-on-one counselor, Leah works with two or three clients at a time. Her biggest goal is to build a relationship with each client so that the person feels comfortable talking.

"I give hope," said Leah. If the person expresses feelings of negativity and hopelessness, she tries to encourage them and to provide "voice, choice and control." Often they feel very alone and Leah's task is to listen. She believes it is

important to show gratitude when they are able to share their feelings.

For Leah a good day is one where she feels lots of hope such as the time a woman expressed that this was the first time she realized she didn't want to do drugs again or the time a client wrote three pages about how she has grown as a person, when she came into the program feeling that she was useless.

The work can also be very challenging and relapses are part of the journey. Getting nine women in one house to live cooperatively can be difficult. On hard days Leah says she reminds herself that she cannot do it for them and she regularly prays, asking God for wisdom and supernatural patience.

"I've witnessed God do miracles," said Leah about the work she does. For AlControl, success is having a better life, not necessarily being victorious over addiction.

When asked about how to avoid addiction in the first place, Leah said having loving and open family relationships is important. She also said that the longer you can delay the first experience with alcohol or drugs the better.

Leah's recommended resources:

To watch:

HBO series, "Addiction"
CBC, David Suzuki, "Wasted"

To read:

Drink by Ann Dowsett Johnston
In the Realm of Hungry Ghosts by Gabor Mate

Groups:

Al-anon
Nar-anon
Alcoholics Anonymous
Narcotics Anonymous
Celebrate Recovery

'This Will Lead to Dancing'

By Mary M. Martin

On April 9 Floradale Mennonite church hosted the play "This Will Lead to Dancing" selling 145 tickets. The audience reflected a sprinkling of representatives from numerous local churches and communities. Many of the people (125) stayed to enjoy the spaghetti

supper that followed the play, providing an opportunity for people to connect and also to discuss their experience of the play. There was a positive energy in the gym as people gathered around tables chatting and eating and it reinforced my belief that eating to-

gether can create community and can bridge differences.

There was almost unanimous enthusiastic agreement that the play was very well done. At times chuckles could be heard and indicated that people appreciated the humour which balanced the intensity of the play's content. However, I also sensed a guarded reluctance to discuss the questions the play may have generated and maybe this was because people are unsure of how to talk about a topic that can be so controversial. I was reminded of a phrase we would use at work when almost everyone knew about the issue but no one would talk about it: "there is an elephant in the room."

Years ago in my work life I necessarily had to confront my beliefs and feelings around the same-sex question. I think it was Henry, a character in the play that said, "faith without investigation would be easy" and as he said it, I was reminded of my own investigative process. I learned that listening had an important role in gaining understanding and that is my wish for us as a church community. We will not all come to the same understanding but will we listen to each other with grace?



Johnny Wideman, Kimberlee Walker and Ellen Reesor of Theatre of the Beat brought a play that explores how a church deals with same-sex attraction.

Nichelle's Salad

Red or green leaf lettuce, torn
(1-2 heads, depending on size)
1 Granny Smith apple, thinly sliced
1 cup sweet onion, thinly sliced
½ English cucumber, halved and sliced
¾ cup dried cranberries
¾ cup pecans, toasted
approx. 150g goat cheese

Dressing:

½ cup olive oil
1/3 cup cider vinegar
¼ cup maple syrup



Put dressing ingredients into a sealed container and shake well. Put lettuce in a bowl and pour half of the dressing over the lettuce and toss.

Put remaining ingredients over the lettuce in the order given. Pour the remaining dressing over the toppings and season with salt and pepper.

submitted by Nichelle Bauman

(This salad was served at the potluck on March 20 and people asked for the recipe.)

Depending on electric power

Since we were planning this issue on Easter weekend when the ice storm caused major power outages, we invited people to reflect on what happens in their lives when the power goes out.

Dependence on electricity

By Ashley Bauman

We are in a world that is so dependent on electricity and technology that when the power does go out, you have to resort to hobbies that don't involve hydro which can be challenging for some people. I do enjoy when the hydro goes out because it allows me to focus on more important things and avoid distractions from social media on my phone or fiction/reality series on television. The hydro has been out for a significant amount of time only a few times in my life.

When the hydro goes out, I often find myself playing games. I was sent home from work a few years ago during an ice storm due to a power outage. My brother, Nick, was at home too and we decided to play a bunch of rounds of the game "Guess Who." We were going to play this on the couch, but realized that our couches recline with a button and require electricity to do so. I guess if you rely on your couch to be reclined with electricity, you are pretty dependent on hydro! We had a good laugh about that.

I also vaguely remember in August over ten years ago, it was the last weekend Elmira was hosting a Fall Fair and Mom was at home making jam over the stove. The hydro went out, so she had to finish making the jam over the BBQ on the back deck.

Having a job that requires me to be on the phone and at a computer all day I guess makes me fairly dependent on electricity. I think if the hydro went out more often, we would appreciate the luxuries we have with electricity and the luxuries we forget about without electricity.

Ashley works at RWAM Insurance Administrators Inc. in Elmira.



Dealing with power outages

By Christina Martin

Growing up I always thought that power outages were fun. The power going out meant we got to play games, use flashlights and candles. Now, I feel a little differently about power outages.

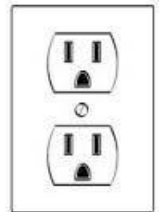
I am a cook in a nursing home and we are very dependent on hydro in the kitchen. Our ovens, mixers, fridge, freezer and dishwasher are all connected to the main power so when we lose it, it's all hands deck. We do have a generator that kicks in a few seconds after the hydro goes out, but not everything is hooked up to it.

Our first priority, of course is the residents, so after we get them looked after we are back to the kitchen to get a game plan. We are prepared for power outages in the kitchen, we have back-up canned food, disposable dishes and a different, "emergency" menu to go by. Once we get eve-

rything sorted out the craziness seems to subside.

As far as power outages at home go for me, they haven't been the worst thing. I live in town so our power isn't usually out for more than a couple hours, unlike some people who are without it for days. We also still get running water in town when there's no power.

So all in all in my 23 years, power outages have not been that bad. They definitely affect my life, but nothing I can't work around.



When the power goes out

By Doug Draper

Ah, electricity, you don't know what you have till it's gone. It is somewhat humbling to realize your dependence on it, like when you are heating up soup on a camp stove by candle light (outside of course!). I was somewhat fortunate during this past ice storm; most of the times that the power was off at my house I was either asleep or at work.

I work at a Frey's Hatchery as something of a foreman; I am one of the people who may have to respond to an alarm if something goes wrong. We hatch chickens all year round, which means we always have eggs/chicks in our machines. The worst-case scenario is if the power goes out in the 24 hours before the chicks are ready to come out of the hatches.

At that point they have emerged from their eggs and are drying off. I'm told that, at that point, if the hatchers don't have power for 15 minutes the birds will start dying. Fortunately I've never seen that happen. Every farm or hatchery facility we have has a standby generator ready to kick in. I'm responsible for two of them, so that means I can't get a day off work if the power is out!



When the lights go out

By Fred Redekop

Growing up in the 1960s in Niagara-on-the-Lake, we always feared that the Russians would drop a nuclear bomb on the power stations that were on both sides of the Niagara River. The power plants were only a few kilometres from our house. In school, we had drills where we were to hide under our desks just in case there was a nuclear attack. That seems so hilarious now.

If the Russians dropped the Bomb there, the whole Northeast would be out of power. When our lights flickered or went out when I was at home, I wondered if the bomb had dropped. Whenever the power goes out, I think of this memory from my past. When the lights went off a few weeks ago, the memory was at the front of my brain. And I think of getting under a chair. Ha ha.

So I know that hydro is very important in my memory and my life. I/we depend on it so much. Life would be pre-historic without it. It is not only about T.V. or cell

phones or microwaves... it is all of life.

So, I have known that I rely on the power grid for my life. I would hope that I would depend on the Light of the World in the same way. But power or hydro is finite and human... and the Light is Divine. Although Jesus was very human and that kind of deep humanity should be part of my power here on earth.

The Light of Christ is always there, limitless in my mind. But the Light sometimes goes out in my experience and in my life. God seems to have switched the light to off in my life. I know it is me, but I can say it is God. The Bible does not bring a shine to my life. Creation seems dreary and closed. No light. And people seem to focus on the negative and bring darkness. But, in the end, it is me who is struggling to turn on the power cord to God.

It will come back to me in a flash of Light. Or a daffodil. Or a friend. Or a passage of Scripture or anything if I have the eyes to see it.

Come Lord Jesus... Light up my Life.



How does a person cope when the power is off?

By Kathleen Cober

When we were farming the power was off on one occasion for approximately three days. The ice was so thick on the gravel road that a person could have skated on it. We had a woodburning cook stove so I was able to prepare meals for the family. Also the

stove provided heat since the oil furnace wasn't working due to the power failure.

We used coal oil lamps in the evening for lights. We had jigsaw puzzles to work at during the day and in the evening Don would play his guitar and we would sing. There were a couple songs that the children always asked him to sing. One was "The little shirt my Mother made for me." I always enjoyed these times when we were housebound for a few days and we would do things together.

In the barn, cows had to be milked by hand instead of with the milking machine. We shipped milk in cans and fortunately we had a few extra cans to hold the milk until the milk truck arrived to transport it to the dairy.

At Parkview Manors, where I live now, when the power is off I eat sandwiches or finger foods. I have a camper's lantern which gives lots of light in the evening. I can go visiting or work on a jigsaw puzzle in the main dining room. The only thing that caused me concern last month, when the power was off, was having no phone for a few hours. My cell phone did not work until the next morning.

I found this authentic "Kentucky Recipe" in the original spelling, for washing clothes, when the power is off. Enjoy!!

1. build a fire in back yard to heat kettle of rain water.
2. set tub so smoke won't blow in eyes if wind is pert.
3. shave one hole cake in bilin water.
4. sort things, make 3 piles, 1 white, 1 cullord, 1 work britches and rags.
5. stur flour in cold water to smooth, then thin with bilin water.

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6. rub dirty spots on boards, scrub hard, then bile, rub cullord but don't bile—just reench and starch.
7. take white things out of kettle with broom stick handle and reench, blew and starch.
8. speed tee towels on grass.
9. hang old rags on fence
10. pore reench water in flower beds.
11. scrub porch with hot soapy water.
12. turn tubs upside down.
13. go put on cleen dress—smooth hair with side combs—brew cup of tea—set and rest and rock a spell and count blessings.

Editor's note: For those of you unfamiliar with old-fashioned washing procedure, I would read "cullord" as coloured, "bilin" as boiling, "rench" as rinse and "blew" as blue.



The recent ice storm resulted in lots of ice on the trees. These long icicles hung around for at least 24 hours.

Focus on Floradale is published 5 or 6 times each year.

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Here comes the sun! Adventures in living off the grid

By Vicky Roeder Martin

We have been living our off-the-grid adventure for almost two years now. It has been Derek's dream for a long time to build a solar system and live off the grid. Our property on Little Falls Road in Sprucedale (half an hour north of Huntsville) is 1/2 km past the "no winter maintenance" sign, which means hydro lines are also 1/2 km away! Obviously bringing hydro to our house would have been very expensive, so it was a great location to put in solar. (And by the way, Derek does maintain the road in winter with his plow.)

As an electrician Derek was up for the challenge of designing and installing our system. Since we built a large house with room for a bed-and-breakfast business on one floor and since we also put up a large shop for Derek's electrical business and hobby woodworking shop, we needed a large solar system. We now have 7 Kw in solar panels and two small wind turbines that give us an additional 0.8 Kw of power.

Derek went through a lot of frustration at first and he spent many hours figuring things out, adjusting and re-adjusting and testing the system. It turned out we had bad batteries, a highly unusual occurrence, but incredibly frustrating nonetheless!

Along the way, we've learned that solar panels don't work with any amount of snow on them, despite people claiming otherwise! Also, on cloudy days you get an eighth to a tenth of solar production. Derek recently changed the

angle of our roof panels by raising them up on brackets. This is better for catching the sun's rays in the winter and they shed snow more easily as well.

But all of this has been a good learning experience and it will definitely help him in his business, since not many electricians install off-grid systems. Apparently they are much more complex to install than the microfit systems. (The ones that are commonly seen, where people feed the electricity back into the grid.)

All that being said, living off grid isn't that much different from everyone else. That's one of the things we hope our future Bed-and-Breakfast guests discover—you can go solar and still have a modern lifestyle! (By the way, we are blessed with great internet and cell service, which isn't always the case us here.)

But living off grid has definitely raised our consciousness about power usage. When we buy something, we always look at how much power it uses, particularly when it's not even being used. For example, some TVs and CD players use a lot of "phantom power" when they are plugged in but turned off.

The other change is our focus on how much the sun is shining! When it's going to be a sunny day, we always do lots of laundry and try to vacuum etc.—the power is free, so why not use it!

Of course we have a diesel generator for back-up power, but Derek enjoys the challenge of running it as little as possible, so he's always encouraging us to use power while the sun shines! The

running joke is that when the dishwasher is full after supper sometimes and I want to run it then, Derek will say I should have used it at 2 o'clock in the afternoon when we were dumping power. And I tell him, then we have to eat supper at 1 p.m.! We laugh and tease about it, but I really do appreciate his commitment to living off solar as much as possible.

Last year the generator didn't run from April until the end of October. In fact, we were usually dumping power! (Too bad we can't store that for the cloudy, snowy days!)

We've also learned to think about how much power appliances consume and to question which ones we really need. Anything that has a heating element in it, such as slow cookers, microwaves, toasters, coffee makers, hairdryers, irons etc., use much more power than people realize. For example, running a hair dryer is the same power consumption as 214 LED pot lights! So we rarely use one, although paying B-and-B guests are not restricted!! Of course, on a sunny day, none of this is a problem!! We've also learned there are many creative solutions; we use our camping toaster and coffee maker on our gas (propane) stove. And we've realized we didn't need a microwave anyway.

We love the idea of independently powering our little piece of paradise here. It has raised our awareness of how our actions impact the environment and how to link our faith and our lifestyle. It is definitely an ongoing journey!

Come visit sometime—our B and B is a work in progress, but we're open for family and friends! And thanks to the sun, we never have power outages!

Memories of being without power

By Nicole Woeschka

If the lights go out, there are very different thoughts that go through your head when you are a child compared to when you are an adult when the lights go out. As a child, it could be frightening and exciting; as an adult, I find myself immediately thinking about the sump pump, the fridge and freezer, and if it's wintertime, the pipes. As a child your only concern is what are you going to do now that the TV won't work.

I have a few different memories of power outages. The first one I can remember was when the power was out and we weren't sure what we were going to do for dinner. We ended up cooking Kraft Dinner in a pot on the wood stove. This was HUGELY exciting for me as I was still quite young and this was not how mom usually prepared our meals. I remember thinking it felt very much like Little House on the Prairie (a favourite game I liked to play) although the Kraft Dinner was very unlike what they would have made!

Another memory I have is when it must have been during the summer as we sat out on the patio

in the backyard and played Skip-Bo by candlelight under the pergola. I was a little older at this point so it didn't feel quite as exciting, but we still managed to have some fun together.

A third memory that comes to mind for me is a more recent one. A few years ago we were without power for approximately 50 hours. It was April and not overly warm yet but luckily Fergus had power so Tyler was able to borrow his brother's generator. I know for sure it was April because I was frantically trying to get ready to go to work at our Home Hardware Market! I remember plugging my hairdryer into the generator and being so glad to get to work where it was WARM!

Luckily most of Drayton was not without power during the latest Easter weekend power outage although trying to drive to and from work around all the downed power lines did propose a bit of a problem!

It's rather funny the different things that we remember about power outages. People can experience the very same thing and remember it very differently. I think that's my favourite thing about reminiscing about past events is hearing how others remembered it.



Men's Breakfast in support of Foodgrains

Jeff Bauman again organized a men's breakfast to learn more about the work of Canadian Foodgrains Bank on Sat. April 16. David Epp, the regional representative of CFGB in Ontario did a presentation about his recent trip to Ethiopia. Thanks to Susan Martin and the catering committee for preparing the breakfast. The community growing project will grow corn this year.

Getting to know Erin Miles

I grew up in St. Marys and spent my summers biking into town, swimming at the local pool and quarry, camping out, and generally exploring our 20-acre hobby farm. During the school year I took skating and piano lessons and for a few years was involved with the local children's choir.

As a young adult (and not as young adult!), I continued my love of the outdoors and worked at a variety of summer camps; working as a lifeguard, programmer and eventually as a Camp Director. This love, took me to Alberta for a number of years where I fell in awe of the mountains. They are a wonderful reminder of how small and new we are in the big scheme of life.

After about six years, I returned to Ontario and worked as

an EA (Education Assistant) in schools, a supervisor at a Boys and Girls club and then back to camp as a director! Since that camp closed, I met Lloyd, we have 2 girls and are settled in Elmira.

I still indulge in my love of being outside and hope to foster this in our girls by taking the girls for long walks, trips to the park, gardening, and building them a treehouse—big enough for large sleepovers! Each year we travel back to Saskatchewan to visit with Lloyd's family and some years we also go farther west to the mountains. I love to read and am a DIY/ renovation show addict!! Those shows always make me want to try something new.



As I settle in the office, I look forward to getting to know more of you.

Blessings,

Erin Miles

Administrative Assistant
Floradale Mennonite Church



Earl Wideman was born May 11, 1944 in Elmira to Menno and Salema Wideman. He was the second of eight children and the oldest boy. He married

Erma Frey in 1965 and settled in St. Jacobs. He bought W-S Feeds and joined the Fire Department in St. Jacobs in that same year. Over the next 10 years they had four children: Laurie, Paul, Anne and Sherry.

As he gained the respect of local farmers with his commitment to quality products and customer service, his business grew. Eventually the business outgrew the St. Jacobs location and he purchased the Conestogo mill from Eli Martin. Although Paul officially took over the business in 2003, Earl remained actively involved until his retirement in 2009. Despite retiring, he continued to go to the feed mill every day to until he was too ill to work.

Earl was passionate about fire fighting and he had a natural aptitude for the skills required. Many have told us of his courage and skill related to fire fighting. This led to his being named the St. Jacobs Fire Chief in October 1980, after moving through the

Earl Wideman

May 11, 1944 – March 23, 2016

ranks. He became Fire Chief in Conestogo in 1984, serving both St. Jacobs and Conestogo. In 1990, Earl assumed responsibilities of Township Fire Coordinator and in 1995 he was named Fire Chief of Woolwich Township.

Earl enjoyed working with food in any capacity. From everyday soup-making to canning large batches of fruit, he was a willing and able helper. His favourite hobby was hunting and he spent many happy hours in the bush with his dogs, clearing brush and cutting wood for hunt camp. He also enjoyed fishing and made annual fishing trips until last year.

Committed to the community and to his church, Earl and Erma have been long-time members at Floradale Mennonite Church. In the 1970s they moved their membership from the Markham-Waterloo Mennonite Conference to Floradale. He and Erma were committed to the work of the House of Friendship in Kitchener and served for many years on the Urban Ministries committee preparing hundreds of pounds green beans and corn for the House of Friendship.

In 2012 Earl had a massive heart attack while slinging feedbags at the feed mill. He made a miraculous recovery and always commented on the

blessing of additional time with his family. In March 2015 he began have trouble breathing and was diagnosed with a rare, terminal lung disease called Interstitial Pulmonary Fibrosis. By May he was on oxygen and progressed to full-time oxygen supplementation

within a few months. Since November his health diminished steadily and he was housebound for the last two weeks on maximum oxygen. We were very blessed to have been with him at home until his final breath.

Excerpts from a daughter's eulogy

By Anne Wideman

If there was someone who appreciated good food, it was Earl. He was always in the kitchen, testing the meat, flavouring the sauce, adding a bit more of this or a little more of that. But he was just as happy to cut and peel and trim, or stir and fry and can. Their kitchen was a focal point, a place of, love and comfort. I believe that my dad showed his love for people and connected to others through food.

Dad also guided us. With a firm, fair and gentle hand he showed us the way—right from wrong, the value of hard work, humility, fairness, kindness and loyalty. He was unafraid of hard work, in fact he embraced it. Whether working 22 hours a day during corn-drying season, going to a fire call on Christmas Day or running a fire practice every Tuesday evening, he never showed fatigue and never let on that he thought it was a chore to be called to work when others were resting.

Dad never felt he was above any work that needed to be done. One day a customer found Dad doing some “dirty work” around the mill and asked him why he was doing work that someone other than the owner should be doing. My dad's reply was that if the work was good enough for his employees, it was good enough for him. He never wanted anyone to make a big deal out of his various achievements or awards. He did the things he did because he loved

it, because it was a way to contribute and make a difference, not for accolades or acknowledgement.

Perhaps his enjoyment of hard work is why our dad loved to laugh and have fun. He loved to tease and joke, with that mischievous look in his eye. He found joy in the little things: sharpening a knife to absolute perfection; playing the harmonica; a wrestle on the floor with his four kids trying to hold him down even after a long day at work; or a walk through the bush with his dogs.

So if regular life brought Earl happiness, imagine what vacation was like. Almost every weekend in the summer of our childhood we would head to the Conestogo Dam, boat in tow. We had an annual family vacation at a cottage at Chesley Lake for 46 years and there we built a foundation of family togetherness and fun that has defined us and all those we love forever.

So, Dad, if you were here, I would tell you these things:

- Whether you knew it or not, you have been a people person, liking people just as they are. I learned so much from that simple beautiful lesson.
- Your physical strength was obvious and well known. What fewer could see, but all who knew you well could feel, was a strength of character, a mental and emotional strength that made you a great man.
- Thank you for showing me that everyone deserves a chance and

even a second chance. Everyone needs help along the way sometimes and if I can help them in their journey, I should.

- You have shown me the power of authenticity—of being who you are, not trying to be what you cannot be and being true to what matters to you and what you believe in.

I think you are one of the most courageous and brave people I know. I saw it in the way you stepped in as head of the Wideman family when your dad passed. I saw it as you started a business with a young family to support, and in your acts of bravery in long years of fire fighting. And most importantly, I saw it in the way you gracefully, without complaint, without crying injustice, accepted and dealt with your illness.

Thank you for loving our mother from the day you met her until your last breath and for showing us love like you had together actually does make a difference.

Mom, thank you for caring for our dad with such genuine love and affection, endless energy, constant gentleness and unbelievable commitment to his wishes. You looked heavenward for strength and guidance and you received it time and again. Your faith sustained you and Dad. Your goal was for him not to suffer. His was to die at home with you by his side. You did both. And you let us walk the journey with you which I know was truly very hard at times. And for that we will be forever grateful to both of you.

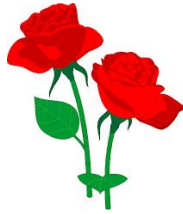
Anniversaries

Congratulations to Lloyd and Vietta Martin who will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on June 8, 2016.

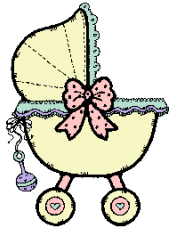


Derrick and Delphine Burkhart will celebrate their 30th anniversary on June 21, 2016. Congratulations!

Congratulations to Wayne and Andrea Bowman who will celebrate their 25th wedding anniversary on April 27, 2016.



Birth



Congratulations to Luke and Tricia Martin on the birth of their first child, Sawyer Mable, born Feb. 18, 2016

Meat canner breakfast

By Barb Draper

At the MCC meat canner fundraising breakfast on March 19, Jacob Reimer, a minister in the Old Colony church talked about when he received canned meat. In 1957, when he was a child in Mexico, his parents decided to move to Canada.

His father had lost his right leg at the age of 17 and he didn't think he would be able to go into the jungles of South America, so the Reimer family moved to Ontario. They sold everything and travelled in the back of Cornelius Peters' 1953 GM pick-up with a home-made camper.

For the summer they worked on farms in southern Ontario and then moved north of New Liskeard to an

old home without proper siding. Jacob remembers cracks in the walls in the upstairs bedrooms and a mound of frost on the covers where their breath froze. Sometimes the snow would drift in between the cracks.

They were joined by his mother's brother's family and so in that house with no plumbing and no power. He remembered as a 13-year-old going to the bush to cut wood with a bow saw and dragging the logs in by hand.

They would go out to the town dump, scrounging for food. They would back up to the dump and then collect cardboard so that if anyone came along they could pretend to be dumping cardboard.

The 35th annual Ontario Mennonite Relief Heifer Sale was held in Listowel on Feb. 19. This year 111 heifers and miscellaneous items were donated to sell. Heifers averaged over \$1800 per head, for a sale total of \$213,665 with cash donations bringing the total to \$225,000. Over 35 years the heifer sales have brought in more than 5 million dollars for the work of Mennonite Central Committee.

Many thanks to Clarence Diefenbacher who again chaired the heifer sale committee. A job well done!

ciated those who brought in a meal and stayed to eat and fellowship with us, or who took me out for a breakfast or lunch. Earl had a special day of hunting in January with a hunting friend. We also appreciated hugs from many of you at church, just when a hug was needed.

My heartfelt thanks to all of you for your love and care for the both of us through this difficult time. What would I do without my church family?

Blessings to you all.

Erma Wideman

One day a 1953 GM panel truck came down the back road where they lived. A representative from MCC in Kitchener brought them flour, cereal, apple butter and also canned meat. Jacob especially remembered the canned meat and said it was very good. He knows that it was Harvey Taves who brought the food, but he's never been able to find out how he knew that they were in need.

"I'm not sure if I've repaid what I've received from MCC" he said, but he has tried. "Probably it wasn't you who donated what we received, but your parents and grandparents," he said.

Plans are to can chicken at the Elmira Produce Auction, April 25 to 29. This is the 19th season for canning in the Elmira area.