

LarsEncore

September, 2012

The Newsletter of the Association of Retired School Employees

BULLETIN 54

President:
Bryden Murray

bryden.murray@sympatico.ca

Vice President:
Chuck Merilees

cmerilees@videotron.ca

Secretary:
Jan Langelier

langelier.jan@videotron.ca

Treasurer:
Mary Anne Bindner

mabindner@lbpsb.qc.ca

**Membership and
Phone Captain:**
Maureen Howlett

maureen.howlett@gmail.com

Past President:
Denis Daly

denisdaly@videotron.ca

Editor –in Chief:
Tricia Roet

tricia.roet@sympatico.ca

Associate and Interest Groups Editor
Bryden Murray

bryden.murray@sympatico.ca



LUNCHEONS 2012-2013

On the Following Fridays at 11:30am:

- Sept 28,2012 Casa Grecque
- Oct 26, 2012 Elixor
- Nov 30, 2012 Casa Grecque
- Jan 25, 2013 Mezz Amies

Casa Grecque

3855 Blvd. St. Jean, north of de Salaberry, on the east side.

Elixor: is in the Sources Mall at Sources and the 40. 3237 Boulevard des Sources Dollard-des-Ormeaux,

Mezz Amies: 985, boul Saint-Jean, Pointe-Claire. It is in the mall just past Brunswick heading north on St Jean.

If breakfast is your cup of tea join us at the Manoir at 8:30am on:

- September 14, 2012
- October 12, 2012
- November 9, 2012
- December 14, 2012
- January 11, 2013

The Manoir is on the corner of Hymus and Boul. St-Jean in Pointe Claire

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Why not come out to both!

If you need transportation to our lunches or other Larse functions we have many volunteers who would be more than pleased to give you a lift. Just give Al Jared (450 458-5471) a call and he will match you up with someone in your neighbourhood.

President's Address/ Message du président

Greetings to all. I hope that you have thoroughly enjoyed the summer and its fabulous weather and that this newsletter finds you happy and in good health. A special welcome to our new retirees many of whom have submitted their LARSE MEMBERSHIP FORMS. If you haven't done so, you can find another copy on the last page of this newsletter...do it today! Our annual dues are ten dollars. If you join as a 2012 retiree your ten dollars covers the balance of this year as well as 2013.!

LARSE (L'Association of Retired School Employees) is open to any retiree from any school board or from any CEGEP. LARSE offers a wide range of opportunities to participate, learn and socialize...and we aim to create opportunity not obligation. The L'ArsEncore news letter outlines the many and diverse activities available through our Association. It also highlights the activities of individual members. Feedback from our members is that these personal updates are greatly appreciated. If you would like to pass on news about yourself or a friend, please submit it to our Editor, Tricia Roet at tricia.roet@sympatico.ca.

Here are the members of the LARSE Executive Committee: Past-President: Denis Daly; President: Bryden Murray; Vice-president: Chuck Merilees; Secretary: Jan Langelier; Treasurer, Mary Anne Bindner; Membership: Maureen Howlet; Newsletter Editor:Tricia Roet; Nominating Committee: Daniel Abergel, Denis Daly and Al Jared; Members-at-Large: Wayne Clifford, Mickey Wernecke, Hanns Wernecke and Al Jared. Among our projects for this year will be the establishment of a LARSE web site.

We meet for lunch the last Friday of each month and for breakfast the second Friday of each month. The schedule of fall luncheons and breakfasts is on the front page. The November luncheon will also be the time of our Annual General Meeting when we elect our President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer. Other Executive members are appointed, as needed by the elected members. If you are willing to be a member of our next Executive, please contact Daniel Abergel at abergeld@yahoo.com.

We look forward to seeing you at our monthly breakfasts, lunches and/or many other activities and events in the next few months!



Bonjour et salutations à tous ! J'espère que vous avez passé un bel été avec le temps merveilleux que nous avons eu. J'espère également que ce bulletin de nouvelles vous trouve tous en bonne santé. J'aimerais souhaiter la bienvenue à tous nos nouveaux retraités. La plupart d'entre eux nous ont envoyé leur formulaire d'adhésion. Si vous ne l'avez pas encore fait, vous trouverez un formulaire d'adhésion à la dernière page de ce bulletin. Notre cotisation annuelle est de \$ 10.00. Si vous devenez membre en 2012, votre paiement de \$10.00 couvre également l'année 2013 en entier.

LARSE, l'association des employés retraités des écoles est ouverte à tous les retraités des commissions scolaires et aussi des Cegeps. Larse offre une variété d'activités auxquelles vous pouvez participer, revoir vos anciens collègues et vous faire de nouveaux amis. Notre objectif est de créer des opportunités de participer et non des obligations.

Le bulletin de nouvelles vous renseigne sur toutes les activités disponibles à l'intérieur de notre association. Les suggestions de nos membres sont très appréciées. Si vous désirez nous donner de vos nouvelles ou des nouvelles de vos amis, s.v.p. veuillez les envoyer à notre éditrice Tricia Roet (tricia.roet@sympatico.ca)

Voici les membres de l'exécutif de Larse : Président sortant : Denis Daly; Président : Bryden Murray; Vice-président Chuck Merillees; Secrétaire : Jan Langelier; Trésorière : Mary Anne Bindner; Adhésion : Maureen Howlet; Editrice du bulletin de nouvelles : Tricia Roet; Comité de sélection et de nomination : Daniel Abergel, Denis Daly et Al Jared Membres de soutien : Wayne Clifford, Mickey Wernecke, Hanns Wernecke.

Nous nous rencontrons pour le lunch le dernier vendredi de chaque mois. L'horaire des repas et des petits déjeuners se trouve à la première page de ce bulletin. Notre réunion générale annuelle aura lieu pendant le lunch du mois de novembre et nous procéderons à l'élection de notre président, vice-président, secrétaire et trésorière. D'autres membres de l'exécutif peuvent également être élus selon les besoins. Si vous désirez faire partie de l'exécutif, veuillez contacter Daniel Abergel (abergeld@yahoo.com) ou Al Jared (aljared@videotron.ca) ou Denis Daly (denis.daly@videotron.ca)

J'espère vous voir nombreux à nos repas, petits déjeuners et autres activités dans les mois à venir.

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS: Please Contact:

Daniel Abergel at abergeld@yahoo.com
Denis Daly at denis.daly@videotron.ca
Al Jared at aljared@videotron.ca

Outstanding Seniors - 2012

We are looking for outstanding seniors who are making a positive impact on the West Island community. If you know of an extraordinary senior, write in and tell us about them.

Winners will be honoured at a Gala on October 5, 2012

www.jeunedecoeur.com

Sex at 79

I just took a leaflet out of my mailbox, informing me that I can have sex at 79.

I'm so happy, because I live at number 71.

So it's not too far to walk home afterwards. And it's the same side of the street. I don't have to cross the road!

INTEREST GROUPS

Interest Groups Editor: Bryden Murray

bryden.murray@sympatico.ca



Casual Bridge Group

The L'ARSE Casual Bridge Affinity Group has begun its third year. We meet the second and fourth Mondays of each month at 1:30 p.m. usually at the home of our wonderful hostess, Lorraine Pawlusiaik.

Membership has grown to over twenty-five. Some play nearly every time, others less frequently. Participation has varied between two and four tables. Our skill levels have a wide range. We use a format which changes partners and tables every four hands. If we have an odd number of players, we rotate in and out of play.

Beginners will sometimes opt to watch the first few times instead of playing. They will often pair up with an experienced player who will explain and teach. This year, when numbers allow, we may set up a beginners table to allow more a comfortable learning pace.

Our focus is to enjoy and to learn. We have a great bunch of people and we have a lot of fun! We'd love to have you join us! If you are interested, please contact Bryden Murray at bryden.murray@sympatico.ca

LINDSAY PLACE

is having its 50th Homecoming Reunion Thanksgiving Weekend October 5,6,7, 2012.

To register please go to lphsgrads.org or contact Tricia Roet aka Pat Shaw at tricia.roet@sympatico.ca

Staff are invited free of charge!

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Canasta



The Canasta Group meets every second Wednesday afternoon, alternating with the Bridge Group, at my home. We have several members who don't miss a game, but it is not necessary to play all the time. We make up the groups depending on who is coming on any given day and there is always room for more.

New players are welcome - no experience or knowledge of the game required. Anyone can learn it in an afternoon. Canasta is a fun social game with no pressure. Please contact me at rmnarsted@yahoo.com if you would like to join us or get further information.

Robin Narsted



Book Club I

The first meeting of the LARSE BOOK CLUB will be held at 1:30 pm on Tues., Sept. 25, (the 4th Tues. of each month) at Cedar Park United Church, and the book under discussion will be *Alone in the Classroom*, by Elizabeth Hay. For Oct. we've chosen *Cutting for Stone*, by Abraham Verghese, and for November a work by one (TBA) of the authors to be presented at StoryFest in Hudson this fall. If you're not already familiar with this marvellous literary festival right on our doorstep, do check it out! At the Sept. meeting, we'll complete our list of titles for the rest of the year.

This fall we'll have twelve members, so we're unable to accept any more, but anyone who'd like to be number one on our waiting list is most welcome to contact me at susansomerville8@sympatico.ca

Susan Somerville



2012 has been a different year for the cycling group. We got an extremely early start March 20th, then encountered a lot of uncertain forecasts for Tuesdays. We had many gorgeous weekends and a hot, dry summer with minimal rainfall, however, it seemed that whatever rain was predestined for the week, would be in Tuesday's forecast. As I endeavour to send out an itinerary Sundays for Tuesday's cycling, weather uncertainty often necessitated provisional trips, close to home that could be planned last minute. I was forced to look for what retired meteorologist, Rick, in our group coined as "Wayne's Weather Window", a departure time when the chances of getting rained on were minimized. For most of the cycling season we ultimately managed to go on Tuesdays, with only a couple of rescheduled days or cancellations.

There has been some turnover in the composition of the group, a few regulars from previous years have come sparingly or stopped coming altogether, but the group was usually a very manageable size. Former MNA and MP Clifford Lincoln joined us as the only new member so far this year, and he provided fascinating insights to those who engaged in conversation with him. Many of our members travelled to interesting places, making for informative discussions upon their return. There is room for new joiners and the pace and distances are not overly demanding. We allow for different abilities with some people beginning or ending at alternate locations.

We are frequently reminded of the value of exercise. Cycling and cross-country skiing are among those exercises that contribute to a healthy lifestyle and both are facilitated in a social setting through LARSE. I was a jogger until 1999 when I sustained an injury which made it painful to walk or run (Plantar Fasciitis). That's when I began to increase the amount of cycling I did. For over a month this summer, I didn't use my car at all, to the extent that, when I did finally want to use it, I needed to charge the battery in my car! My bicycle has become my main source of transportation in the summer even with my twice weekly trips to the Y requiring the crossing of two major autoroutes, (20 & 40). Navigating with use of tunnels and sidewalks makes it doable. A number of us Cyclopaths will continue to lobby our politicians to provide more and safer cycling paths.

We do drive to more remote departure destinations with bikes on racks and carpooling to help share costs and conserve fuel. Our recent trip to Cornwall is an example. 20 participants arrived in 7 cars and biked westward to the entrance to Long Sault Parkway and back. After the car drivers gassed up for as little as \$1.24 a liter, we arrived back on the West Island to discover gas prices had risen to record high levels of \$1.53 per liter, another reason to use a car less and make a bike a source of transportation.

Contact me at wmclifford@gmail.com if you think you might be interested in giving it a try.
Wayne Clifford, Co-ordinator

If you stopped reading the newsletter on line because you had trouble opening it – TRY IT NOW. I have been using a new format which will open in any program. Let us know if you prefer to receive your copy of the newsletter by email in the future.

Book Club II

The second group of book lovers met several times over the first year of existence and had many interesting, thought-provoking discussions about the books we chose to read.



Some of the books we read were Ken Follett's Fall of Giants, Jung Chang's Wild Swans, Terry Fallis' Best Laid Plans and Suzanne Collins, 3 part series, The Hunger Games.

We are ready to start again and are meeting for the first time on Monday, Sept. 17 at 1:30PM at my house. At that meeting we will decide on a regular week of the month and day of the week to meet throughout the upcoming year.

Although I already have 12 members of LARSE who have indicated their interest in the group and would like to keep the group to a manageable size, if you are interested in joining us, please let me know so that I can organize accordingly.

Submitted by Jan Langelier

I can be reached by e-mail at langelier.jan@videotron.ca

Cross-Country Skiing

Hello cross-country skiers,



The new XC skiing season is fast approaching. Therefore, I will take this opportunity to invite all past skiers and, of course new skiers to join us this season.

We will hope to get an early start, but of course it will all depend on the winter that is to come. We have started as early as the beginning of December, but usually we don't really round into form until the beginning of January.

Our activity is open to anyone who wishes to join us. We are a mixed group of all ages and skill levels. We tend to ski locally (e.g. Bois de Liesse, Ile Bizard, Cap St, Jacques), but we do go up North on occasion. Indeed, we may need to venture North more often this year, if we have a winter like last year.

We ski for about 2 hours or so, and we take a break midway through to refresh ourselves. So, if you wish to join us, or if you simply want to be kept informed about the group, just send me an email at legaultcj@yahoo.ca and I will add you to the list. Past members don't need to send me an email, as I will already have your addresses.

Bon ski,
Colin



Internet Users Group

Again this year, we don't have an instructor for the year offering us sessions to help us learn more about computers and the internet. Last year, we relied upon the goodwill of members and former colleagues to teach us areas that they felt comfortable helping us with. Hopefully, they may consider returning along with some possible new people to direct us. At our final session last year, the group was unanimous in expressing a desire for the group to continue, even if it would be to share what limited knowledge we had among us. There is a body of loyal folks who turn out in the hope of learning something new and others have joined us in the computer lab at the LBPSB HQ in Dorval.

As a continuation of the iPad sessions he initiated last year, Peter Tellier has indicated a willingness to do a session on "APPS". He may opt for a different location, one of the schools with an ample supply of iPads upon which to practice, depending on demonstrations of interest. Some LARSE members may be at the stage of considering whether they should buy a desktop computer, laptop or tablet format in their future initial or replacement purchase. Peter has demonstrated the iPad, but there are other tablets out there too. With this in mind, I have set up a session in a store that sells them all, Future Shop in Pointe Claire on a Wednesday afternoon. If you would like to attend such a session with no obligation, contact me. A tentative session would start around 1:30 p.m. October 3 at Future Shop.

We have requested the use of the Board's computer lab for the following tentative dates: October 22nd, November 26th, January 28th, February 18th, March 26th, April 29th, and May 27th. Sessions usually begin at 12:30 p.m. and continue to around 2p.m. Please contact me if you feel you would like to attend the computer lab sessions, the Future Shop demonstration, or the iPad "APPS" session.

Wayne Clifford , wmclifford@gmail.com

TRAVEL GROUP

The Travel Talk Group meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 17th, at 2h00 PM upstairs at:

The Restaurant Sequoia,
4337 St John's Boulevard.

One of our L'Arse members, Leona Kemp, will talk to us about her trip to Turkey.

More details and a reminder will be sent by mail shortly before the meeting.

If you are interested in attending, please email Mickey Wernecke at hbwernecke@aol.com or Daniel Abergel at abergeld@yahoo.com

In the January, 2013 Edition of L'arsEncore we will be featuring the Writers of L'ARSE

If you're interested in being featured, please contact Tricia Roet or Bryden Murray



The L'ARSE Golf group meets to play on the second and fourth Monday of each month. Our membership tops forty and is growing. . We play a variety of courses and this year our venues have included St. Rafael, Golf Dorval, Caughnawaga, Valleyfield, Deux Montagne, La Cite and Cardinal.

One of our season highlights is, "The School is Open Open", held on the first day of classes. This August's edition at Golf Dorval featured 36 golfers who drank a toast to the new school year, led by event originator and spiritual guide, Nick Barker, before hitting the links. Some 45 players and guests attended the post- game Bar-B-Q at the home of Janice and Bryden Murray. The weather Gods were generous and a fine time was had by all.

Our goal is to create an opportunity to play rather than an obligation. Some of our members play virtually all games; some play more sporadically. Most members play eighteen holes but we try to provide a nine-hole option for those who would prefer it. A week or so in advance of each game, we send out an e-mail to our members asking who would like to play. Based on response, we book starting times to accommodate all who have replied positively. Once the set of slots has been filled, individuals deciding later to join in must book their own tee times.

We usually play well into November weather, of course, permitting. We have even had a few brave souls last into early December, generally bolstered by a nip of Raffaele D'Abramo's fine home- made grappa!

Our skill levels vary considerably. We have in common an enjoyment of the game, the exercise and the company, not necessarily in that order! If you think you might be interested in trying this out, we'd welcome you with open arms!

Please contact Russ Kelly at rkelly@lbpearson.qc.ca.



L'ARSE Theatre Group

Last year, this group of LARSE members enjoyed plays by the Lakeshore Players, an operetta by the Lakeshore Light Opera as well as several plays at the Hudson Village Theatre.

I keep a list of people who wish to be informed of upcoming plays and I send e-mails asking who would like to join us. Usually, the group meets somewhere for supper before the evening shows or goes somewhere for an after show bite to eat. The socializing is wonderful and the theatre is fun and entertaining.

Once again this year, I will be booking a series of tickets for the Lakeshore Players shows which will include "The Burglar Did It" by Tim Kelly in November, "The Cat's Meow" by Steven Peros in January and "And Then There Were None" by Agatha Christie in May. We will also be looking at the Fall shows at the Hudson Theatre as well as Lakeshore Light Opera or any other possible local talent groups.

I purchase blocks of tickets thus benefiting from a group and seniors' rate wherever possible. However, I need to feel confident that I will sell all of the tickets so as not to be out of pocket for their purchase, so I would appreciate those who are interested getting back to me as soon as possible after I send out the e-mail for each show to reserve their place. If you would like to be included on the Theatre Group e-mail list for the upcoming season, please contact me by e-mail at langelier.jan@videotron.ca

Picture Perfect



PHOTOGRAPHERS IN OUR MIDST

Pat Machin: Pat's first camera was a Nikormat with a macro lens. For years she took pictures of flowers. The macro did the work. And then she retired and although her beloved Nikormat still worked, her eyes didn't. So she borrowed a camera and took pictures of Mont St. Michel. Africa is not really the place for a macro lens. There was a sign at their compound: Caution: Wild Animals are dangerous. Please do not wander from the Pathways. So she used a Fuji digital from the safety of an SUV. In Manning Park she swapped the Fuji for an Olympus. How can one go wrong with snow-capped mountains, fir trees, ravens and Alpine meadows? She carried a bear bell. In France she learned about skies. In Newfoundland she learned about horizons...although the lupines were irresistible. Recently she bought a CannonS100, a camera she could tuck in her pocket. Pat misses her Nikormat!

Bruce Corbett: Sometimes retired School Counsellor, an avid L'ARSE Cyclopath , made his first serious foray into photography one summer in the seventies when Rod Heather was not available to teach a Summer School interest course at BHS. From fellow Counsellor, Bernie Buckley, he learned how to use a dark room. He went on to run the Photo Club at Mac High for fifteen years. Bruce bought his first digital camera in 2003. He now works as a freelance stock photographer specializing in pictures of wild life and landscapes, and selling via eight photo agencies. Bruce, who is also the author of eight historical e-novels, has a web site www.brucecorbett.ca where his work can be viewed.

Jan Langelier: L'ARSE Secretary, Jan Langelier, had always been interested in photography but found herself intimidated by late husband, Claude's knowledge, skill and vast array of equipment. Her family eased the way with the gift of the more automatic pentax and then a retirement gift of a better, digital model which lets her use tripods and do time-lapse photography. A perusal of Jan's collection would reveal a fascination with doors and windows and with close-ups of flowers, often hosting bugs. Jan now uses her photos as background for calendars which she creates each year as Christmas presents. Jan took a photography course at John Abbott last spring which she highly recommends as a way to, "Get to know your camera."

Photo Safari

Last year the Provincial Retired Teacher Group, QPARSE, offered an activity called Photo Safari in which a group of camera buffs with the guidance of an accomplished colleague went to a Montreal park, took pictures and compared and analyzed their results and techniques. Jan Langelier participated and found it a terrific experience. She would happily organize such an activity for L'ARSE members if there is sufficient interest. You can contact her at langelier.jan@videotron.ca

Joke Time

DOCTOR, DOCTOR

Two best friends graduated from medical school at the same time and decided that, in spite of two different specialities, they would open a practice together to share office space and personnel.

Dr. Smith was the psychiatrist and Dr. Jones was the proctologist; they put up a sign reading: "Dr. Smith and Dr. Jones: Hysterias and Posteriors".

The town council was livid and insisted they change it. So, the docs changed it to read "Schizoids and Hemorrhoids". This was also not acceptable, so they again changed the sign. "Catatonics and High Colonics" - No go.

Next, they tried "Manic Depressives and Anal Retentives" - thumbs down again.. Then came "Minds and Behinds" - still no good. Another attempt resulted in "Lost Souls and Butt Holes" - unacceptable again!

So they tried "Analysis and Anal Cysts" - not a chance. "Nuts and Butts" - no way. "Freaks and Cheeks" - still no good. "Loons and Moons" - forget it. All most at their wit's end, the docs finally came up with: "Dr. Smith and Dr. Jones - Specializing in Odds and Ends".

Everyone loved it.

ONLY A GRANDMOTHER WOULD KNOW...

~A Cup of Tea ~

One day my Gramma was out, and my Grampa was in charge of me.

I was maybe 2 1/2 years old. Someone had given me a little 'tea set' as a gift, and it was one of my favourite toys.

Grampa was in the living room engrossed in the evening news when I brought him a little cup of 'tea', which was just water. After several cups of tea and lots of praise for such yummy tea, my Gramma came home.

My Grampa made her wait in the living room to watch me bring him a cup of tea, because it was 'just the cutest thing!'

Gramma waited, and sure enough, here I came down the hall with a cup of tea for Grampa, and she watched him drink it up. Hmm ??!

Then she said, (as only a gramma would know), "'Did it ever occur to you that the only place she can reach to get water is the toilet?'"

CLEARED FOR TAKEOFF

Larse member since 2005 LaSalle Community Comprehensive High School retiree Bob Chartrand had his bucket list for retirement. Among other ventures the one that stood out most was to become a pilot. That came to be on April 25 of this year. Spending his winters in Florida Bob attended American Flyers Flight school over the last two winters and studied and trained in aircraft to become a Pilot. While it is difficult at any age it is quite difficult at age 62. "You have to have a certain amount of courage, confidence and say lots of prayers", Bob says, and "when the instructor announced one day while getting out after a landing ' go fly solo' " you know that you have reached your goal. From then on you fly solo, only having an instructor along for evaluation flights." "The amount of knowledge required to fly gives me complete respect and admiration for all pilots". **And Bob did it. He is a PILOT. ASEL rating. CONGRATULATIONS BOB!**

Louise Chalmers: Retirement Ambition

I fell under the lure of retirement very early in my teaching career. Blame my colleague Murray Clark. I watched and listened in awe as he considered his post-teaching life.

First, he and Carmen Bradley planned to cycle across Canada. They trained quite vigorously their last year and that fall they crossed the country on their bicycles. My cycling in retirement is a bit less ambitious. On a good day, I will cycle 60 kilometres. I still dream of getting to Granby some day.

Murray's second plan was to buy and operate a farm. He enrolled in courses at McGill's Agricultural College and shared his knowledge of raspberry cultivation whenever we sat down for a conversation. Although I had often dreamed of living a quiet life on the farm (particularly on those days when the kids were boisterous), I knew it was unlikely that I could convince my partner to give up our digs on the shores of Lac St-Louis for the sight of endless fields in the country. So my farming aspirations are restricted to my back yard. And my learning about gardening comes from the Dorval Horticultural and Ecological Society. What a find! It may not be a university, but it certainly provides lots of learning opportunities in good company at practically no cost (non-resident fees are \$20 a year). There are monthly lectures throughout the fall and winter on such topics as invasive species and what to plant instead, half-day workshops on useful topics like pruning and propagating, garden visits both near (members' gardens) and far (like the delightful back yards of a street of townhouses in Ville d'Anjou), plant sales, dinners, and one of the finest Christmas wine-and-cheese parties around. My enthusiasm for the organization has landed me another learning opportunity. I now sit on the executive as the public relations officer.

I saw Murray last year at an English Department luncheon. He no longer has his farm and he is still writing up the journal of his cross-country bicycle tour.

From Scratch

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Once upon a time, many years ago (early 1960's) a Westmount lad found himself sauntering through the nether regions of a smallish but well-stocked second-hand bookstore in Victoria, BC. Rummaging through stacks of ancient publications, he came upon a volume which, judging by its cover, style of binding, etc. he surmised was published (the book, not him) between 1895 to 1915. Upon removing the accumulated layers of dust & cobwebs, he discovered to his great joy that it was a vintage cookbook which just happened to include - at the back where one would normally locate the "index" - a multitude of pages describing in detail the elements and preparation instructions (formulae for those scientifically minded) of varied and many libations : ancient, obscure & otherwise. The lad's return east with his treasured volume was greeted with enthusiasm: to the point where several friends retired to a large room in the basement of the apartment building in which they were domiciled, cleared a suitable workspace, and proceeded to 're-create' the potions described in the above-mentioned volume - with varying degrees of success, I might add.

A quiet celebratory dinner (in the apartment immediately above the "concoction chamber" was suddenly and forcefully disturbed by what could easily be mistaken for a set of July fireworks, combined with the soundtrack for the recreation of the Battles of Queenston Heights or the Plains of Abraham. We had experienced mixed results with the recreation of burgundy-coloured potions but the six cases of Viking Mead took particular issue with either the ingredients used, their proportion, temperature or our corking/bottling' processes.

When we eventually ventured down (several days later) to our 'chamber of horrors', we discovered a room which possessed an aroma that might politely be described as "interestingly aromatic" and whose walls & ceiling closely resembled the aftermath of a frantic Paintball War crossed with a Riopelle canvas. One vintage which DID survive the experimental process and has been timed-tested over the ensuing decades is Tia Maria. There exist several versions of this formulae, using a variety of different substances - but the version listed here is the one found in that ancient document, with a minor change to accommodate one's personal taste - that is the "proof" of the alcohol used: over-proof will create the sharp edgy taste found in commercially made Tia Maria. I (and the many who sample my brew) prefer the "smoother on the tongue" variety created by using 'regular-proof' alcohol. The true challenge is NOT "taste-testing" your vintage before it has had a chance to 'blend'. Enjoy!!!

TIA MARIA (from the cellars of 'Chez MacMillan')

Ingredients: 25 oz. Alcohol

2 cups white sugar
1 ½ cups water
2 tablespoons Chicory Camp Coffee
1 teaspoon vanilla

In a crockery bowl dissolve sugar in boiling water.

Allow to cool (naturally) to room temperature.

Stir in Alcohol.

Stir in Camp Coffee.

Stir in Vanilla.

Mix (stir) well - do NOT use wooden utensils.

Let stand (covered) for a few hours (mixing, on occasion).

Bottle, date label, let it age a few weeks(?).

Enjoy with pleasant company.

FROM SCATCH cont'd

Raffaele D'Abramo's Sausages:

L'ARSE golfer of home-made wine and grappa renown, Raffaele also makes his own sausages from scratch. Raff begins with a visit to the butcher to buy a pork shoulder which he minces. For lean sausage he buys pork shoulder and pork butt. For less lean, one can have a mixture of pork butt and loin, or shoulder and loin. . He then mixes the meat with paprika, fennel, pepper, and chili pepper. The mixture is then put in casing and is ready to cook. Or...it can be cured...by hanging it for a couple of weeks at fifty to fifty five degrees Fahrenheit and either store it in a jar of canola oil or seal it in a vacuum pack. The cured sausage can be stored as is or, as his son prefers, cooked to a crispy state. Raffaele says that the sausage goes well with a nice Merlot or Cabernet...preferably of his own making. He usually makes the sausages to cure after the Christmas holidays. The temperature is cold enough to cure in a cold room or a garage. If one makes the sausage during the summer, you must eat it right away (fry or BBQ it) or freeze it for a later date.

Raffaele challenges you to create a sausage that the Golf Group could try out, in a panini after a round of golf!

Black Testicles

A male patient is lying in bed in the hospital, wearing an oxygen mask over his mouth and nose, still heavily sedated from a difficult four hour surgical procedure. A young female student nurse appears to give him a partial sponge bath. Nurse,' he mumbles, from behind the mask 'Are my testicles black?'

Embarrassed, the young nurse replies 'I don't know, Sir. I'm only here to wash your upper body.'

He struggles to ask again, 'Nurse, are my testicles black?' Concerned that he may elevate his vitals from worry about his testicles, she overcomes her embarrassment and sheepishly pulls back the covers. She raises his gown, holds his penis in one hand and his testicles in the other, lifting and moving them around and around gently.

Then, she takes a close look and says, 'No sir, they aren't and I assure you, there's nothing wrong with them, Sir !!'

The man pulls off his oxygen mask, smiles at her and says very slowly, 'Thank you very much. That was wonderful, but listen very, very closely.....

'A re - m y - t e s t - r e s u l t s - b a c k?'

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