



Alberta

beautiful rolling hill country of Alberta. There were ponds and one smallish but well-known lake, Star Lake,

in our house. Nor was there power yet.

The farm had a broken-down old house, barn, and garage, all of which were pretty much in ruins. Think about that: in 1956-1959, the buildings on that property were in ruins, which means that they dated back to what? 1900? 1930? I wish I had paid more attention, but I was only 8 or 9 at the time.

My dad built two simple wood houses, one on the crest of a hill overlooking a beautiful pond, and the other on an upper hill above. He hired an Indian, Pat Callioux, and his family to live there and take care of things, since we'd only be there occasionally. Their two daughters were just the right age to play with us.

We had neighbors down the road who were Hungarian Czechs, per my mother

An Indian family in Duffield.



who was all-knowing about such things. I would ride our gentle horse Rum and Butter over to their house, where the mama was always cooking or baking something good. My sister, however, was more interested in their son. These people were simple, genuine, and honest folks right from the Old Country, making their living best they could in this beautiful but undeveloped countryside that didn't get power or modern conveniences until about 1960.

Another favorite memory was tobogganing on the snow, down a steep hill. There was a haystack near the top of one hill, even though we didn't grow crops. One winter, when the snow was plentiful, my dad started our toboggan at the top of the haystack. We slid down the haystack, across a flat area, and down a steep slope into a ravine. Talk about a thrill!

In 1959, when God called my dad to attend seminary in Indianapolis, Indiana, we locked the gate to that farm for the last time. Not only did we close that gate, but also shut the door on a chapter of my life that was pure happiness. I hope some of Heaven will look like our farm did.



Why do I write about this when there are burning issues all around us? Because. Because I'm tired of those burning issues, and tired of yelling about them. Unfortunately, escape doesn't help resolve those issues, but sometimes it's necessary just to be able to think of good things, and not always the evils of our current reality.

I am grateful to God in spades for my secure and stable upbringing, for my dad who came to know and follow God during those golden years in Canada, and who led me into God's paths.

P.S. Why can I remember that far-distant past so vividly, but I can't remember where I left my coffee cup 10 minutes ago??

Linda Gommel

Today I walked out of the office and into the breakroom, where someone had put a jar of red licorice onto the table marked "OK Staff". Since I'm a red licorice junkie, I helped myself, but I have exercised some restraint, instead of gobbling up the whole jar. You know those flat, blue-packaged boxes they have come in for many decades? I dare not buy one of those for fear of eating it all in one sitting. One of the great traumas of my life has been that American Licorice, the manufacturer, changed its name from red licorice to red vines, for the obvious reason that the red ones (and now the grape or strawberry or other flavors) are NOT licorice. Ah, well, ok then, red VINES.

What has this to do with anything? Not much. But it did bring back memories of my younger days (when life was simpler). I first discovered red licorice, er, vines when we lived in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. Fresh from Southern California, we had to move into a rental house while we found a house to buy. It was in March, 1956, and in Edmonton, March is wintry, frozen, and cold. The house we rented had to be thawed out before we could move in. The red, uh, vines were in a small store we stopped at as we walked to school. They were soooooo delicious.

Another of my favorites was Orange Crush. During the three+ years we lived in Edmonton, we also had a half-section "farm" 35 miles west of town, located in the

where a record catch of trout was made the year after we left, of course.

When we would drive out to the farm, we turned off the main highway at an Esso station. While my dad filled the car, we kids went into the station office where they had



one of those old soda machines that hung the bottles by their necks, and you'd slide them out after paying the dime, or quarter.



I'd buy Orange Crush and sometimes Hires Root Beer.

Crush virtually disappeared for decades, but then it began to appear as retro or classic sodas, and then Pepsi took it on and made it into a whole line of flavors and packages. Nothing can compete with that old Esso station and picking the bottle out of the cooler.



Like Coke, Orange Crush and Hires Root Beer had distinctive shapes.

We had to travel several miles to our farm on the dirt roads that turned into the worst muck when it rained. Being city slickers from California at the time, we had to learn that the hard way, after getting stuck with mud balled up on the tires. My dad somehow got a guy with a tractor to pull us out of the muck. As a young child, I paid little attention to such things, because Dad would take care of it as he always did.

There were two hamlets relatively nearby, Carvel and Duffield. Carvel had a tiny store and not much else. Duffield also had a store that was a little bigger, had wood floors and a variety of merchandise. In a box just sitting there were a mama cat with several kittens. The lady at the store gave us a black kitten with white paws and we named him Boots. Duffield was a center for the many Indians who lived in the area, making our '54 Ford stand out like an out-house in the fog next to their buckboards. I think I remember railroad tracks crossing the main, dusty street.

One of the funnier incidents happened when we couldn't find Boots or Kitchie, a long-haired tiger cat. My folks looked all over for them. Finally, they could hear faint meows and found them in the outhouse, where they had fallen, to our chagrin.

Ewww. You are correct in your brilliant conclusion that there was no indoor plumbing

NEIGHBORHOOD CLEAN UP

SAT, JULY 27, 2024
9 a.m. to 12 p.m.

AT Lucerne Valley Market & Hardware

32946 CA-18, Lucerne Valley

San Bernardino Code Enforcement and Solid Waste Management Divisions will be providing **BULKY TRASH collection containers for the FREE disposal of accumulated trash, e-waste, and tires.**

WE WILL ACCEPT:

Household trash, bulky items and vehicle tires, (we do not accept concrete.) Urban Conservation Corps will be present to accept electronics: (TV's, COMPUTER MONITORS, VCR's, STEREOS, CELL PHONES, MICRO-WAVES & MORE)

WE CANNOT ACCEPT HAZARDOUS WASTE.

This includes motor oil, and oil filters, anti-freeze, gasoline, drain cleaner, pesticides, fertilizers, fluorescent lights, wood preservatives, pool and hobby supplies, auto/furniture polish, paint thinners, paint products, medications or similar products.

For current information, please call the Household Hazardous Waste Program 1.800.OILY.CAT (1.800.645.9228)



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On The Lighter Side of Serious Stuff . . . from the Web

ARAB League

Arab Member Countries
22

Total Population
481 Million

Square Miles of Land
5.08 Million

JEWISH State

Jewish State
1

Jewish Population
7.2 Million

Square Miles of Land
0.00855 Million



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This is an orange.



If you see an apple then you are a radical Right-wing Conspiracy Theorist.



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Ever wonder what "MAGA" stands for?



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