



An After Easter Letter -- May/ June 2017

Sorry, I was just too busy before Easter to write a newsy letter. But then it occurred to me that I could just as easily write an *After Easter* letter. The facts don't change just because they are written after a certain date, do they?

This past winter, though the weather was often mild for a week at a time, I was visited by a bout with Shingles. I think it came to the surface when my chiropractor vibrated the muscles in my back, because I had considerable muscle pain or cramp in my left shoulder blade. (He said I had a cracked rib!)

I felt better when I left, but that evening I had a growing itch in my left armpit. When I checked at bedtime, I saw it didn't look like hives, which I'd thought, but possibly shingles. I went to my clinic, though my Dr. was not available, so I had another doctor. He agreed that it was shingles and gave me a prescription for 7 days. Which I took, along with some painkillers, lasting 4-6 hours at a time.

However, I had already been thinking of Dad's 4-day case of shingles, and how aloe vera had helped, so I'd been drinking aloe vera juice and applying aloe vera gel compresses under my arm with some of Gra'ma's big handkerchiefs. I also read up on herbal teas once I learned that this is a nerve or neuralgia type of problem. I made a list and bought myself a bag of dried herbs that would specifically help with this problem. I started combining 2 or 3 of them at a time in a spice ball and making a pot of tea each day. About a quart worth, and drinking that.

In a week the itch cleared up, and the marks looked like nearly healed stitches. But then a deeper pain began. I researched that online and yes, it is a neuralgia that affects one in five who get shingles. It goes by the initials PHN. I visited my doctor to make sure this pain wasn't something else, and she agreed with my self-diagnosis. But when she asked if I wanted her to try to prescribe something, I said, "No thanks, I'll stick with the aloe vera and the teas."

After a couple of weeks that pain faded away too. But I did feel tired more easily during those weeks, so I took to allowing myself a nap just before or after supper. I tell you, those are refreshing. I find it much easier to stay up all evening and get in a good 4-5 hours of work. Now my body wants me to continue with those naps. <wink>

Another HELP that I discovered over that period was (through an internet friend) of Voxx socks. They were ordering them from Mississauga, in Ontario, Canada. When I read up on them and watched the testimonial videos I learned that these socks have special weaving in the soles and around the ankles that applies a gentle pressure at the points that any reflexologist knows are key nerve endings. When these are massaged, we have improvements in our energy, stability and various other benefits. Including neuralgia issues! Wow! Now there's a non-drug method that can help long-range. The testimonials come from people with diabetes, MS, super-sensitive nerves, etc., who feel much better from wearing the socks. Some even wear them in bed for the night and sleep much better!



I ordered a pair for \$30 and they were delivered by Fedex in 3 days. By that time my shingles were gone, so I don't attribute any miracle to the Voxx socks, but I do feel more energetic when I wear them. Maybe I could report bigger effects if I were on my feet much longer times each day. I sit a lot, y' know.

However, I can see where these socks practically sell themselves, so I've signed up to sell them too. I have two extra pair on hand right now, for

personal sales, but anyone can go online to this website and order socks, and I'll get a commission; <https://voxxlife.com/RuthFriesen/> (They only started up the business last July and already orders are pouring in thick and fast!)



See Kathy Cantwell's testimony, a reflexologist, whose migraines disappeared when she wore Voxx Socks; <https://vimeo.com/200612683> There are other videos there too.

On March 31st, we had our Annual Meeting at Impact Canada Ministries (formerly Western Tract Mission). We began with a potluck supper and then the meeting. This was a very special one as we were introducing our NEW Director, Michael Ruten, a young man with a lovely wife and three children under age 3. He has already shown strong leadership gifts on our Board, and agreed in February that he was ready to step up to the plate. Arnold Stobbe had been patiently mentoring him and waiting for this day for about five years now. So he was quite excited and emotional about introducing Michael as the new Director. He has been in a leadership role for the past 25 years, and quite ready to retire, as he turned 89 on May 8.

Well, he presented Michael with a handsomely framed certificate, with an emotional introduction.

Then Michael got up, thanked Arnold, who is his wife's grandpa, and presented him with a certificate too, a black jacket with the new logo embroidered on it, and a Tim's card so he can continue to take people out for coffee so he can witness to them, or encourage them in their Christian walk. I saw Arnold gasp when he looked at the card, so it must be for a good amount).

Next thing I know, I'm called up (I was taking Minutes at my laptop), and Michael presented me also with a framed certificate, a bouquet of flowers, and a beautiful, soft leather jacket in a rust red colour!



Why? Well, when Michael had asked me to provide him with a list of our Board members and how long they had served and when they were up for re-election, I had noted, that I had served as secretary of the Board for 15 years, - yes, even during the 5 years that I was a Missionary, and not technically a Board member, or allowed to vote/make motions – and I had never missed a Board meeting in all those 15 years from 2002 onward. Behind my back they had decided that this deserved some recognition too!

The bouquet of flowers lasted in my home for 3 weeks, and I love wearing this jacket. It is so warm and comfortable! Now, when it is getting really hot in the summer-time I'm giving it a break. :)

One Saturday morning in April, and the following Tuesday morning I saw these strange mirages about

2 inches from my face. A watery or jello-like oval with a border of jagged broken glass pieces that shimmered and vibrated. I had no pain, but because of the number of people in our clan who have macular degeneration I've been warned to watch out for strange lights or curtains coming down. So on the Tues. I called my Eye Specialist and got an apt. for the next day. He didn't think it was anything serious.

The next day I got a package in the mail from his office. In January Dr. Ravi had put my name on a waiting list for cataract surgery. He said it could happen between July and October. Also, that if my sight got any worse at my next exam, he would have to take my drivers away. Whoa!! Now I have a firm date; June 16, at 10 am. He does the other eye 30 days later.

I'm actually looking forward to this. I've heard many positive reports from friends who see much better now. But it may take a bit of adjustment for I've had poor vision and astigmatism since I was 10.

I have made some good progress on the WTM/ICM history book. I have finished the Elliott Era, the Rice Era, the Anhorn and the Aney Eras. I'm on the last one; the Stobbe Era. It starts in 1996, and I came into the story in 1999, when I was asked to go work on a website for the mission.

I'm looking forward to finishing this Era, and wrapping up the book, but I see that one of the main problems now will be how to decide which of my photos to use and which to leave out.

With the prospect of some down-time after each cataract surgery, I was beginning to hope I could have the greatest part of the book done by June 16. Now I see that isn't going to happen. Oh well, I'll plod on, no matter what. I'm committed to seeing this project through!

Our Board is now planning a big event in October to celebrate our 76th anniversary and to present the book to the world!

By the way I had a Wee Little Yard Sale again, on May 6. (Something I do every 2 or 3 years to clean up stuff I'm ready to let go). I had perfect weather, and met some interesting people. In particular two young girls that hung around most of the morning and returned over and over again. Also an artist-school teacher who bought my January painting and said he planned to use it in his painting classes via Youtube. More details about that day, including some photos are on my blog online here;

<http://blogs.ruthes-secretroses.com/my-wee-yard-sale-results/>



The following week I was focused on preparing my garden for seeding. I needed to find someone to rototill the garden first. I was almost tempted to buy one – but I have no place to store it. So I put it in the Lord's hands and asked Him to find someone who would be willing to do it for me. I was prepared to pay for it. That same evening, talking to my neighbours over the fence, I asked if one of the sons of their church leader from whom Joe used to borrow a tiller would be old enough to do it. A day or two later they called to say, 'yes, their red-headed son would do it.' He called me the following week and we arranged that he



would come Wed. at 3 pm. He did, and he did a fine job! So I got half the garden seeded the Saturday of the long weekend, and most of the other half on Monday. Then we had some rainy days, and I had other things to attend to, but I got the rest done by the end of the week.

Now I'm gradually getting to my flower beds, and other nooks and crannies where I can get some flowers started. I also bought a hanging basket of pink begonias, but I still need help to get some brackets screwed onto the outside of the house.

Ah, and the fly – or bug - in the ointment is that I have an infestation of tent caterpillars in the two big American elms behind my house. They are crawling over everything! A good downpour of rain washed a lot of them into the ground, but it is still icky to put my hand on a spade or hoe, only to find I've put my hand on a bunch of those squishy bugs. They seem to leave alone most of the flowers and perennial plants, but the trees are looking quite naked already.

The gardening helps but I'm trying to get more walking exercise in too. I've tightened up my morning schedule to make more time for it, but it is still hard to build new habits again. Hopefully I can lose some of this extra weight while I'm at it.

One Tuesday, I was walking with this neighbour, Rita, and she told me the solution to those tent caterpillars was to spray them with a mix of strong vinegar and detergent. As soon as I got home I put together such a mix and went out to spray them on my house, lawn chairs, everywhere. It was fun to watch them curl up and die! I did it twice that day, and once more each day after. By Saturday I only found 2 to spray. So I think I've decimated their population on my yard! My two elm trees look fairly denuded though!

Well, my toner cartridges for the colour printer arrived. I have just installed a new system, LEAP 42.2 on this computer, and lo, now the printer works. I can get this letter polished off and ready to send out.

If you don't hear from me over the summer, remember I'm getting used to my new eyes after the cataract surgeries in June and July. Hopefully, I'll have great news to share after that!

Blessings & Thanks,

Ruth Marlene Friesen