



March 2010 • Volume 45 | P.O. Box 656, Carstairs, Alberta T0M 0N0 | Phone 403-337-2800 | Fax 403-337-2418 | Email pat@pasu.com | www.pasu.com

A True Christmas Story

This year our children went away to their respective in-laws and we had a quiet Christmas day at home.

The morning started with Peaches objecting vociferously about our attempt to sleep in. In her world things are just not right if her humans have decided not to get up at the appointed hour which is between six and seven. Tucker joined in the protest with an incessant whine indicating that he was in dire need of a potty run outside.

Christmas being a special morning we decided to make pancakes of which Peaches and Tucker are inordinately fond. That bird can devour half a pancake with maple syrup in the time it takes me to eat one. The meal is followed by a gift exchange which is more of an event for the avian member of the family. We get toys from Value Village and wrap them up for her. She rips off the paper with the same frantic exuberance of any three year old leaping from one present to the other squealing and shrieking in excited delight.

Now, this is the part of the day I most enjoy. The bird is satiated and napping on her perch, Tucker is busy gnawing on his Christmas bone and Sue is trying to recapture the sleep that Peaches interrupted earlier on. I have the place to myself a good book, a comfortable chair in a sunny corner with a little libation. As the afternoon progresses one good libation deserves another until the head droops, the eyes close and the book slides gently to the floor.

That evening we were expected at my niece's home situated in Scenic Acres a suburb of Calgary. I prepared a basket of hot hors-d'oeuvres, duck terrine and two bottles of wine, doffed my Santa Clause hat and let Sue drive me to our destination.

Upon arrival at our destination, Sue dropped me off with the basket of goodies while she drove to the first convenient parking space. My niece's home is one of those modern two story homes in a new suburb of which every fifth house is an exact architectural replica.

Now, I am not one of those people who like to fling open the door and shout "Hello we're here!" I sort of lean towards the more dignified approach of ringing the doorbell and being greeted at the door. It is the moment I intuitively judge the evening's possibilities and the host's temperament by the sounds from within and the greeting. I reached for the doorbell, hesitated, feeling that on this occasion it just might be more appropriate to just barge in, thought again and rang the bell.

A charming young lady, not my niece, but possibly a girlfriend or spouse of someone I should know, answered the door and politely inquired if she could help me all the while eyeing the generous basket of goodies. Being the patriarch at this family gathering I was a little affronted by the lack of recognition and that absurd question, "Can I help you?"

Straightening my Santa's hat, which had slipped over one eye, and pulling myself up to better portray my dignified presence, I gave the young lady a look of mild righteous indignation and walked into the vestibule, muttered something like, "Thank you I can find my way to the kitchen!" thereby claiming that, if you don't know who I am, at least be informed that I am not a stranger and perfectly capable of finding my way around.

She looked at me rather quizzically as I proceeded to take off my shoes, a Canadian custom that annoys me intensely. She kept looking at me and it then occurred to me that, apart from being the doorman, she was probably sent to make sure that I did not fall, as my legs are in rough shape, or possibly to make sure that I removed offending footwear. I proceeded in my socks to the kitchen and the dining room which was all part of one big room and froze. I don't remember exactly how many people sat around the table, but three of them looked like large belligerent walruses and everyone else was silently staring at me as if I was a hyena disturbing a fresh lion kill. Several thoughts flashed through my brain as I silently mouthed the words, "Oh shit!" One, this was not my niece's house. Two, I have interrupted a serious Christmas celebration. Three, these people look a little hostile at a strangers intrusion.

"So sorry, wrong house." Was all I managed to blurt as I bolted for the door followed by the young lady who was grinning from ear to ear a little too smugly. I hurriedly grabbed my shoes repeating a litany of apologies. To her credit she remained quite gracious and courteous. I am quite sure I provided some lively conversation at that Christmas party.

When we did arrive at what was certainly my niece's house I was still too traumatized to make the initial approach and sent Sue to ascertain without doubt that we had indeed arrived at the right destination.

A Happy Belated New Year to you all.
From, Pat, Sue, Peaches and Tucker.

March at PaSu Farm Boutique

March is a time of renewal. Spring is just around the corner and soon the sun will set straight West and then begin creeping north. It is quite an exciting time as we get ready to plant the gardens' and prepare the barn for the lambing season in April.

Lambing will be a month earlier due to the perseverance of our ram. He jumped the fence in November and no matter how many times we removed him he still managed to make his way back to the ewes. So we let him have his way and we will be lambing a month earlier than usual.

To celebrate March the boutique offers:

Baby-care sheepskins for your precious little ones. 100% Canadian.

Padraig Slippers, colourful, 100% sheepskin and hand crocheted wool. Made in Canada. Children's sizes 5 to 12.

Lambie Jackets. Adorably fluffy. Back by popular demand. Who can resist an infant in one of these? Sizes 6 to 12 for infants 12 to 24 months.

Bearington Bears. All have their own characters and name.

ALL THESE ITEMS 10% OFF IN MARCH



Shop Hours:

Tuesday to Saturday: 10 am – 5 pm MST

Sunday 12 pm – 5 pm MST

Closed Mondays

Restaurant Hours:

Tuesday to Sunday: 12 pm – 4 pm MST

Closed Mondays

Saturday Evening Fine Dining

Reservations Essential

Phone Toll Free: 1-800-679-7999

RESTAURANT NEWS

Carousel Productions

presents

THE NIGHT THAT PADDY MURPHY DIED

Due to popular demand this INTERACTIVE DINNER THEATRE experience is back! The mayhem begins when Paddy's pals decide to steal him in his coffin and bring him to his favourite watering hole to say their proper goodbyes.

You are invited to this Irish/Newfie funeral wake as friends and family gather to pay their respects to the dearly departed. Enjoy a fun-filled evening complete with traditional Irish food, toe-tapping live Celtic music and great comedy.

Arrive no later than 6pm.. Entertainment starts at 6.30

Cost per person is \$65

and includes service and GST on meal and entertainment.

Menu

Potato leek soup

Soda bread

Irish beef stew

Braised lamb ribs

Assorted vegetables

Apple cobbler pie with ice-cream

Tea and coffee after the meal.

TICKET PURCHASE ESSENTIAL

Fun Evenings at the Restaurant

CURRY NIGHT

Saturday, April 10 @ 7:00pm

\$45.00 per person

South African BBQ

Our South African Barbeques have become very popular and some Saturdays have already been booked for private functions. Reservations are essential. Arrive at 6pm, enjoy our pre-dinner snacks and refreshing drink on the patio enjoying a spectacular view of the Rocky Mountains. We start barbequing at 6.30pm. The fare consists of Sirloin steak, lamb ribs, Tandoori chicken and Boerewors (a special S. African sausage), accompanied by salads, various hot dishes, freshly cooked corn bread and traditional S. African desserts. This is a wonderful way of entertaining guests especially those from out of province.

\$40.00 per person

I left my heart in Manyberries,

*Where I was high on a plate of fries,
And did dream of strange things and fairies.*

In late September we decided to take our camper and explore Eastern Alberta. Our destination was the Cypress Hills.

We have newly acquired a modest sized camper with a slide out that comfortably accommodates the two of us, Peaches the Cockatoo and Tucker our Black Lab. The camper was duly loaded with every conceivable gourmet consumable, a respectable wine assortment and a selection of fine malts to sip in front of the campfire.

The trip was going just fine until I took the wrong exit after Medicine Hat. I took the 41A instead of travelling on a little further and taking exit 41. Sue had made a trip to the Cypress Hills on her own a few years previously and started expressing her doubts about the route we had taken. The occasional expressions of doubts had changed pitch into a muttering litany of, "I don't think this is the right road. I don't remember any of this. We should go back."

On and on the litany went. It was getting late and I was tired. By now it was too late to turn back and a reference to the map confirmed we were indeed heading in a Southwest direction to Lethbridge. The only course was to take the first road turning east and make our way through back roads to the Cypress Hills.

Sue was vindicated and the litanies of "I told you so!" replaced the former mantras. According to the map the route we selected had a long un-inhabited stretch for about 120Km before arriving at a little town marked as Orion. About 40Km beyond that was the town of Manyberries. The logic was that there would be a campsite along the way or in one of these two towns.

By now it was about six o'clock. We had been traveling through farming country with irrigation canals and a farm house every half mile or so. As we travelled down this road there were fewer and fewer signs of habitation and farms. Trees disappeared and it was just hills and bald prairie. Eventually farms disappeared altogether except where there was a coulee in a dip where the sparse water would support a homestead and a few trees and bushes.

Sue was tired and had changed her mantra to 'We are lost. We should have turned around and gone back to Medicine Hat.' The parrot, sensing the anxiety in Sue's voice, started adding her comments and occasional shriek of disapproval. To add insult to injury Tucker, who had been sedated with Gravol so as not to throw-up, had decided to gasify the contents of his stomach and matched the rapprochements of Sue and Peaches by filling the Jeep with the odd deadly fart.

Up ahead was a sign that said *Tourist Destination, Red Rocks Nature Reserve*. This had the possibility of being a campsite. Not so. Red Rocks is a little diversion of the main trail that leads to knoll overlooking a valley filled with giant round red rocks. Although it did not have

sign saying, NO CAMPING, it did not have to, as this strange place had the most inhospitable energy about it that would have sent the willies up the ass of the most hardened red neck cowboy. There was no other recourse but to press on to Orion about another 40Km.

There was definitely tension in the Jeep. Although Sue had stopped competing volubly with the parrot, Tucker had intensified his odiferous emissions to the point that that Peaches, who shared the back of the vehicle with Tucker, was convinced she was being gassed was now giving Tucker a beak lashing.

At last the sign said 1Km to Orion and I was pacifying Sue that this would all soon be over. The people who make up these maps should be more specific about putting a black dot with a circle around it. Carstairs for example is signified by that dot. It has restaurants, three gas stations and all sorts of amenities. Orion has less than ten houses and half of them uninhabited. So we had to forge on to Manyberries. Logic dictated that if there had not been any amenities in the last 160Km there would be some basics there to serve the few people who lived in this forgotten stretch of Alberta.

Fortunately Manyberries was only another 15Km ahead and it was now only about 30 minutes to sunset. At last around a tight corner was the town.

Yes, you guessed it. It had no gas station, post office or convenience store but it did have a saloon called the Southern Alberta's Ranchman Saloon and about 15 houses half of which had no inhabitants. That's right. In the middle of nowhere the basic amenity for the inhabitants for 100Km in any direction was a saloon and it was open for business.

We had no option but to find a place in this little hamlet where we could spend the night. There was not a vehicle in sight and the saloon appeared empty. Fortunately it was inhabited by two women who very kindly informed me that we could park in the open lot next to the saloon. This we did and whilst I prepared a modest supper Sue went back to the saloon to see if she could get some French Fries. She came back with a huge portion of fries and gravy that were particularly delicious.

Having eaten, peace was restored to the menage a quatre and it was not long thereafter that we were all fast asleep. In my exhausted sleep I was beset by the weirdest dreams that I can ever recall having had in this lifetime. Not only were they in colour, but in the most brilliant Technicolour imaginable.

In one vignette I was dressed like Ali Baba in the Forty Thieves sporting wild hot pink pantaloons, a flimsy bright orange Arabian blouse and turquoise slippers with upturned toes with a bell attached to the end whilst on my head was a turban crossed with a court jesters hat and encrusted with jewels. I turned to my friend, who had procured this weird accoutrement to replace damaged clothing, and inquired in a panic how I was going to get on the plane dressed like a Gong Show.

"No problem" he said, "we are in Canada and they are tolerant of all ethnic cultures and their peculiar forms of dress. You should fit in just fine."

The rest of the night I was entertained by recurring bizarre themes, some of which were definitely X rated. Let me put it this way: It is certainly something you would think twice about before discussing it with your psychologist.

I mention this because there was undoubtedly something strange in that gravy. But that's not all.

I was entertaining some friends to a dinner party when I brought up the name Manyberries. Before I could get into the story, one of our guests enthusiastically exclaimed that he had been to Manyberries and that at the saloon they made the best French Fries and gravy and another guest at that table collaborated that story.

What other Alberta secrets have I still to learn?

Well what can I say, except to advise the lost traveler in South Eastern Alberta that although there is no Alice in Wonderland rabbit hole to fall down, there may be a saloon that offers you the same trip.

RESTAURANT NEWS

*During the week
We are open Tuesdays to Saturdays for lunch and afternoon tea. The grill is on from 12 to 2. From 2 to 4 we serve light lunches and afternoon tea.*

*On Sunday
We will serve our Carvery Buffet or Plate Service if there are fewer than 15 reservations. This meal seats from 12 to 1. Sunday afternoon from 2 to 4 we serve tea, coffee and dessert.*

PLEASE REMEMBER
*That we book up very quickly for
Easter
Mothers Day & Fathers Day*

*Also
Reservations are essential for the
Restaurant on Sundays and for
special events and recommended
during the week.*

*Let us host your
Private Function
or Wedding*

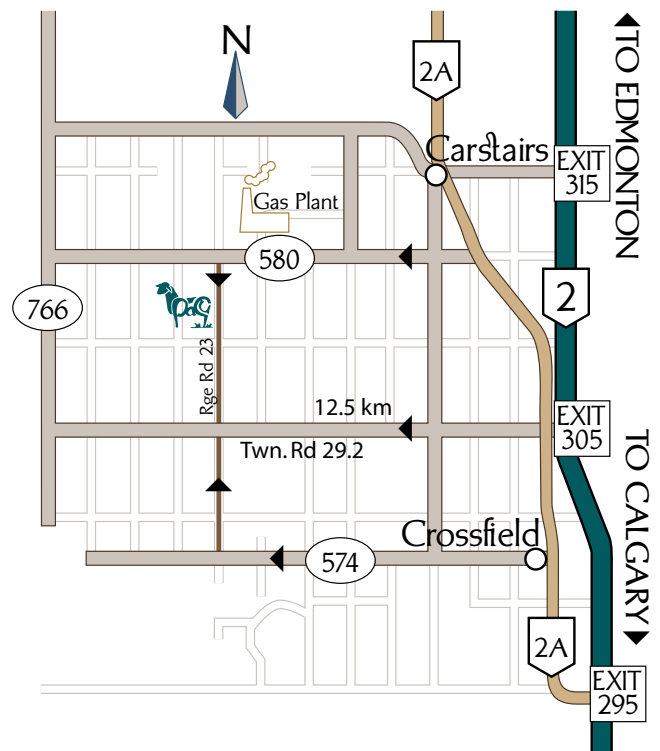


Sheep Manure

Dress your spring garden with Sheep Manure, ready for the spring and have a few bags in the potting shed for a great mix with potting soil. Phone first to make sure that bags are available or that there is a tractor operator if you are buying by the truck load.

**Price \$5.00 per bag
6 bags for \$25.00**

*Never been to PaSu Farm?
Need directions?*



Keep our map handy for your next trip down QE2. We're easy to find, and would enjoy seeing you here!