

SENIOR SCAPE: Walk For Health...

Walk for Health, Happiness and Fun!

By Sylvia Dickens

All my life, I've loved to walk, especially in gardens, forests and natural settings of all kinds. My parents frequently took us to flower gardens in England where my brother and I played hide-and-seek. One of my favorite activities was when we went out into the country and walked through stone-lined pathways in farmers' fields to find the perfect spot for a picnic.

This constant exposure to nature and flowers left quite an impression as they have played a major part in my life ever since. For instance, there was a forest behind our public school where my girlfriend and I spent many hours relaxing and enjoying nature.

In the '70s, my sister introduced me to bird watching and wildflowers, most of which I had no idea existed. Let's see, there were dandelions, trilliums, blue cornflowers (those are those tall blue flowers you see growing beside country roads), sparrows, chickadees, robins, blue jays, cardinals, and that was about it. Then, I discovered over 280 species of birds and a whack of wildflowers. Suddenly, those walks became far more interesting, educational and fun.

My favorite birds are the warblers which come in designs that you wouldn't think would be that attractive, like the black-and-white warbler. Sounds boring, doesn't it? Color would be nice. And then I saw one. It was gorgeous. One day I spotted a red-headed woodpecker, which was quite exciting. It's an event I'll long remember because none have been revealed to me since.

Until I made these discoveries, a walk in the woods was just a place to feel the peace and serenity that is non-existent in our concrete-laden neighborhoods. All those hard, cold surfaces do absolutely nothing to please the senses. Nature, on the other hand, is a virtual healing ground.

Winter puts a damper on those excursions, but spring is back. Snowdrops and crocus are in bloom. Daffodils and tulips are preparing to bloom. The forests will soon display trilliums and a variety of colorful flowers. The birds are already well into their migrations.

Did you know that this area is under their flight path? They rest here before heading to cottage country. Most warblers don't stay long, but if you happen to be out there at the right time, you will catch a small bunch flitting around the bushes. Look around fir trees as they like the cones. At a glance, you might think they are just gray or brown birds, but they do have lots of color, but you have to look close.

Get yourself a pair of binoculars and don a pair of good walking shoes any Wednesday morning and join the walkers. They venture into those natural wonderlands which are sure to bring some spring surprises. The group heads out around 9:30 a.m. to a local area to walk among the trees and fields.

They return around 11 a.m. This next month is the perfect time to get a first-hand look at your first migrants and early wildflowers.

Bring a camera, too!

Computers and Cameras

Once you have some pictures, you'll probably want to find a way to show them to your family and friends. Short courses to help you create slide shows or learn more about how to use your camera are often held in the computer room. This one might be a bit late for this column announcement, but it gives you an idea what's offered.

On April 30, learn how to build an effective Slide Show using available Microsoft software.

Bob Woodrow will show you how easy it is!

Silver Stars Musical

The Silver Stars Drama Club will be presenting, "Let Us Entertain You" on May 10 at 7 p.m. It features songs from the Wizard of

Oz, a Hawaiian dance, singers (soloists, duets and groups), musicians (guitarists, pianists, harpist and a harmonica player). A dance routine by the Alley Cats, a song "A Place in the Choir" with musical accompaniment, and lots of comedy! Tickets are \$5.00 which includes refreshments. Get yours at the Centre and bring the whole family.

How interesting is Bingo?

Actually, organizers try hard to mix it up and make it interesting. If you enjoy bingo, you'll know these games. If you're like me, you probably won't, but it'll be fun finding out. Try to imagine how you'd play Little Joe, Big Joe, Letter E, Sandwich, Clover leaf, and Sputnik.

Each Friday afternoon they play 10 interesting games including those above. And, of course, they finish with a Jackpot!

The games start at 1 p.m. and finish at 3.30 p.m. every Friday. Don't expect to win a mint, but you will be sure to have fun.

Love history?

If you love history, you'll be glad to know that the Whitchurch-Stouffville Museum is offering free admission on May 18, which is International Museums' Day. Discover life as it was in this region through displays and artifacts. For this day only, you can grab a discounted copy of Whitchurch Township History Book for \$20.

The museum is located at 14732 Woodbine Ave., Gormley. For more information, call 905-727-8954 or 1-888-290-0337. It is open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

For more information on the Aurora Seniors' Centre and all it has to offer, drop by 90 John West Way, visit the web site www.auroraseniors.ca, email auroraseniors@rogers.com or call 905-726-4767 between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. Monday to Friday.