



# ST. ALBERT AND AREA RETIRED TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION BULLETIN

March 17, 2021

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and Marian Oberg ([mroberg@telusplanet.net](mailto:mroberg@telusplanet.net))

## ***Happy St. Patrick's Day!***

March, named to honour the Roman god of war, seems a study in contrasts with just a little added melodrama. There is a saying if it comes in like a lion it will go out like a lamb and if it comes in like a lamb it will go out like a lion. This is done without reference to whether or not the groundhog saw its shadow. In March there is the solemn, reflective Lenten season but this is contrasted with the jovial, good natured celebration of St. Patrick's Day. Then comes the Ides of March with all its drama. When someone theatrically stated, "Beware the Ides of March" it sounded worse than the average thing you were cautioned about. I guess I can think of one historical figure who might agree with that assessment. Then there is March 14 or Pi day. The notion of calling certain numbers such as Pi "irrational" in such a logical field as mathematics seems amusing. There are many sites you can visit with proofs of the irrational nature of Pi. I was surprised when I read that March 1<sup>st</sup> is considered the meteorological beginning of spring. My sister-in-law in Duncan thought that sounded about right for the start of spring. Location is not on our side when it comes to an early spring. The equinox later in the month is the astronomical beginning of spring. Our weather is usually fiercely clinging to winter well into March or April or longer. We hope you take in all of these contrasts and curious turns of events in March and stay safe and in good health while you await your vaccines.

***All the world's a stage and most of us are desperately unrehearsed.*** *Irish Proverb*

The rest of this month:

**March 16:** George Ohm's birthdate in 1789. George Ohm was a teacher, mathematician and physicist who was a pioneer in circuit theory. Show no resistance, Ohm's Law is shocking. You can pay homage to him by dimming the lights.

**March 17: St. Patrick's Day-** Celebrate by wearing something green and maybe eating something green and leafy, especially if you ate chips on the fourteenth.

perhaps I'll make boxty. My grandmother made it without referencing a recipe and it was delicious. I, however, will find and use a recipe. Partly a scone, partly a potato pancake, an

Irish rhyme declares, “Boxty on the griddle, boxty on the pan, if you can’t cook boxty you’ll never get your man.”

March 20: International Day of Happiness. Did you know Bhutan is the only country in the world that cares about GNH or Gross National Happiness? They consider four key factors in measuring GNH. These factors are; “good governance, sustainable development, preservation and promotion of culture and environmental conservation.”

March 22: The Canadian Army reached its greatest strength on this date in 1944 with 495,804 individuals.

March 22: Andrew Lloyd Webber was born in 1948. He has written many musicals. YouTube has many performances of songs he has written or you can find out more about him on Wikipedia. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Andrew\\_Lloyd\\_Webber](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Andrew_Lloyd_Webber)

March 26: STARTA event at 10:30 in the morning on Zoom. Topic: Gardening

March 30: Vincent Van Gogh was born in 1853. For a brief time he had been a Protestant missionary before he started painting. He painted for about 10 years. Although he did not make much money as an artist in his lifetime, his paintings are now amongst the most expensive in the world. See Van Gogh Museum virtual tours [here](#).

### ***All things Irish and all things green :***

**ALL THINGS GREEN:** (thanks to Mike, Jean, Cres, Mary-Pat, Valerie, Helen, Dave, Ardyth, Bill, Maurine, Janet, Andrew, Emilie, Mary, Peggy, Marian, Doug and Wendy)

a frog	the Great Gazoo	Greenland	beans
avocados	Green Eggs and Ham	greenhouse	pickles
Oscar the Grouch	the Incredible Hulk	greenhorn	peas
turtles	Yoda	golf greens	honeydew melon
grasshoppers	Kermit	green screen	parsley
alligators	Shrek	garden hose	grapes
gecko	Gumby	emeralds	jalapeño peppers
iguana	the Grinch	Jade	pears
anole	Puff the magic dragon	traffic lights	apples
mallard duck	Jolly Green Giant	Can. one-dollar bill	celery
envy	‘Good Luck’ Care Bear	American money	relish
Northern Lights	Ninja Turtles	August birthstone	asparagus
Pert shampoo	Mike from ‘Monsters Inc.’	a 4-leaf clover	seaweed
Irish Spring soap	Swamp <b>thing</b> ’ (comic)	Shopping baskets	broccoli
Cascade soap	Wicked Witch of the West	7-Up pop can	olives
Palmolive	Yoshi (super Mario)	Canada dry pop bottle	watermelon
the Green Party	Slimer (Ghostbusters)	Crème de menthe	basil
TD bank sign	Horton the Who	algae	spinach
John Deere tractors	the Green Lantern	moss	green peppers

British Racing Green  
Sask. Curling team  
Edmonton Eskimos  
Sask. Roughriders  
Regina Rams  
the Huskies  
Packards

seasick person  
reusable grocery bags  
garbage truck  
**painter's** tape  
St Albert compost cart  
**Emilie's** eyes  
Christmas tree/wreath

leaves  
wheat field  
shamrock shake  
evergreens  
mint ice cream  
Green tea  
peppermints

Lime jello  
cucumber  
Bok Choy  
brussel sprouts  
green onions  
pistachio pudding  
green beer

### *Memories of Ireland*

**From Mary:** I have so many wonderful memories of numerous trips to Ireland. Both my in-laws, John and Nora O'Neill, were from County Armagh, Northern Ireland, whereas my parent's, 2nd generation, Pat Mulligan and Margaret Cahill were from Southern Ireland.

Several years' ago, on a trip to Ireland, my sister-in-law and I drove and visited every County in both North and South Ireland. One day in particular, while in Southern Ireland, after checking in to our B & B, we went to the nearest pub for a refreshing drink and to listen to music. We were rudely advised by the Manager, that ladies were not allowed until a much later time in the evening. We quickly departed and went elsewhere for supper. Much later to the surprise of the Manager, we returned to the pub for a night cap.

**"It's not easy being green..."**

**An Irish Saying**

*From Leo:* We visited Ireland in 2019, while on a choir tour with the St. Albert Singers Guild.



*Statue of Charlie Chaplin the Irish Countryside  
(Charlie liked to come to Ireland every year for a holiday!)*



*Adare, the prettiest village  
in Ireland.*

*From Joyce:* My Ireland visit story. I was 26. I had been reading a lot of Irish history and wanted to visit the places I'd read about. I also wanted to visit Kilkenny where there was a weaving place. I ended up buying a beautiful hand woven bedspread there which I used for many years until I outgrew the colours: magenta, pink and purple. It now resides in my linen closet.



A **cottage near Glenbeigh**

***“It’s green, they say, on the far side of the hill!” Irish quote***

*From Emilie:* Discovering Family Connections in Ireland: My husband’s heritage is mostly Irish with immediate family here in Alberta and many relatives in New Brunswick. In July 2000, Gerry and I decided to explore his Irish heritage by travelling to Ireland where we rented a car in Belfast and explored Ireland for two weeks, staying in bed and breakfasts and totally submerging ourselves in the Irish culture. Ireland is a beautiful country with amazing scenery that display more shades of green than we could ever had imagined! As we toured the Irish coastline, we were also struck by the changing physical characteristics of the people from one region to the next. In some regions, the people were predominantly blond with blue eyes, while in the next regions, they might have dark hair with brown eyes, and in the next region, they might have red hair with blue or green eyes. When we asked a tour guide why this was, he answered by telling us simply that “it depended on who had invaded them in the past”. The Vikings were blond with blue eyes and their invasion of Ireland resulted in generations of offspring with those physical traits while invasions from the English resulted in different physical traits, etc.

We enjoyed meeting the Irish people and spending time with them. This was easy to do there as there were no restaurants as we have here in Canada. Instead, the people would go to pubs to eat and to socialize. Pubs were remarkably busy and lively places, full of loud music and people of all ages socializing and dancing. Upon entering a pub, we would be directed to a table with space for us, and generally with other people sharing the table. Such was the case when we visited a pub in the city of Limerick. As we chatted with the people who were sharing our table, we were shocked to discover that one of the gals at our table also carried my husband’s surname of “Keane”. We also learned that this was a common surname in southern Ireland, especially in County Claire and that there were three distinct clans of “Keane’s” in Ireland, each clan with a distinctive way of pronouncing their name. As we later drove through several communities in County Claire, we saw numerous commercial signs depicting local businesses and their owners: Keane Barristers, Keane Butchers, Keane Crafters, Keane Library, etc. The surname of “Keane” was attached to almost every kind of business in the communities. In Dublin, we actually found a wallpaper and drapery business that proudly displayed its name on a large sign over their door: **“Gerry Keane Wallpaper and Drapery”!** Our trip to Ireland had added to our knowledge and appreciation of the Irish culture and traditions, but, most importantly, had provided my husband with a deeper connection to his Irish heritage.

Eavan Boland: "The Lost Land: Poems"  
This is what language is:  
a habitual grief. A turn of speech  
for the everyday and ordinary abrasion  
of losses such as this:  
which hurts  
just enough to be a scar  
And heals just enough to be a nation.  
*Irish poetry*

*From Janet:* **Green and Greener Still**

I enjoyed our travels in Ireland and revelled in how verdant it is. In my family tree there is an Irish lady, a great, great grandparent. The expression of her DNA was very evident in me when I was six or seven years old. As much as possible I sought out green to wear at that age. I had to tolerate brown boots and oxfords, tragically beige tights and bland white underpinnings. I wore so much green that gradually even the depressing beige and white items took on a mottled faintly green shade. Chartreuse as I recall; there was a lot of iron in the household water. It was as if these items had been touched by the magic of an Irish fairy. For my birthday the cake had to be green and so did the icing. My mother was startled. She knew the birthday cake had to be angel food - but green angel food? Birthday cakes were always angel food, we loved them and they were nearly always followed by act two, an extra post birthday treat, chiffon cake. The birthday cake made my little seven-year-old heart sing, it was green, with green icing; it was huge. Angel food made from scratch always seemed to have more substance than its sad offspring made from a cake mix. The day after my birthday our minister made a visit to the house. There was leftover birthday cake. I was sure my parents would offer him some of that exquisitely beautiful green cake. In a surprising turn of events, they didn't. They served him some of the rather ordinary looking chiffon cake. I thought that this was because the angel food cake was decidedly a birthday cake and at that time in our household birthdays were family only events. I cannot imagine any other viable reason for failing to serve the minister the far superior green cake that day. Can you?

*A March STARTA EVENT! MARCH 26,2021 at 10:30 a.m.*

### ***GARDENING 101, 102 & 103...with Charlie Schroder***

As promised, a live discussion with master gardener, Charles Schroder. He will answer all your previously submitted questions! (please submit by March 23, 2021!)

Charlie has some great ideas! He has recently written numerous articles for the Gazette, and has his own website about gardening! He has been gardening since he was knee high, but radically changed



his gardening style after he retired. Do you have any gardening questions? Think about bedding plants, starting plants indoors, transplanting, seeds, pots and sizes, deck and balcony plants, greenhouses, raised beds, weed control, bugs, soil, in ground gardens, crop rotation and harvesting. Ask away! Submit your questions by **March 23rd** to [mikedickinsonab@yahoo.ca](mailto:mikedickinsonab@yahoo.ca)

STARTA Program: Gardening on **March 26**, 2021 10:30 AM Mountain Time

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/91765474698?pwd=R1R3Y0IBdTF1VzRCUE9WdjJzRGMwQT09>

Meeting ID: 917 6547 4698

Passcode: 905501

To Join by phone: contact [mroberg@telusplanet.net](mailto:mroberg@telusplanet.net)

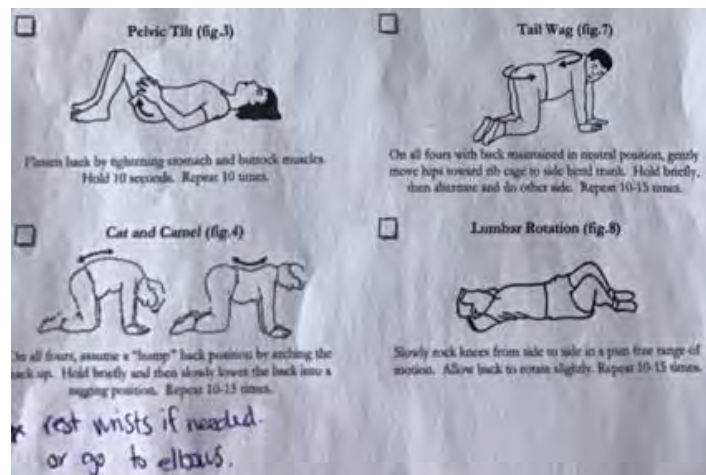
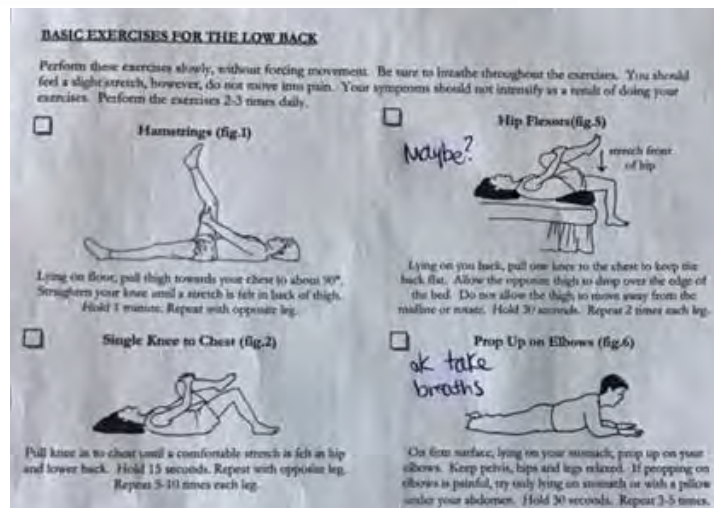
## A REVIEW of our Feb. 26<sup>th</sup> Zoom EVENT: STRETCH or EXERCISE ...

On **Feb 26**, we watched two demonstration videos produced by Hailey Dame, wellness and exercise specialist, from Servus Place. During this time of Covid, we are spending time at home indoors and do need to move our bodies and bones a bit more. We thank Hailey for showing us all these ways to get moving a bit more and working our muscles.

*Mike*

One of our members sent in a copy of a set of stretches that she has found **very helpful**...these can be done right on your bed instead of on the floor.

To REGISTER for ongoing and new exercise programs at Servus Place, call 780-418-6088 Monday through Friday or go to the Servus website.  
Mike



### *ARTA Fitness Challenge :*

Please look on the ARTA website for information about the upcoming wellness challenge. As things stand right now ARTA will directly manage the challenge due to the pandemic. When you get to the website click on “wellness” at the bottom of the page.

<https://www.arta.net/>

### **April 2021: ARTA**

ARTA will not only manage ARTA membership, but will also administer the Retiree Benefits Plan. On the ARTA website is a copy of the CBC interview of ARTA President Lorna McIlroy and ATA President Jason Schilling regarding the transfer of our pensions to AIMCo.

As well, there is a link to the letter that President Lorna sent Minister Towes about the imposed agreement with AIMCo.

<https://www.arta.net/advocacy/advocacyresources/alberta-legislation/#1576537232435-654ed363-1dfc>

*Mary*

**Do not resent growing old. Many are denied the privilege.**

*An Irish Proverb*

### **UPCOMING APRIL EVENT:**

Our next **STARTA Coffee & Chat: April 15 , 2021 at 10:30 a.m.**

Grab your veggies, snacks and maybe a cold drink. Join us for a short visit, and maybe a laugh or two!

STARTA Zoom Coffee & Chat: April 15, 2021 at 10:30 AM

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/95249308666?pwd=SGtTcEVpRVY2QnpYeWZMU2NjZUN6QT09>

Meeting ID: 952 4930 8666

Passcode: 168136

To join by phone: contact [mroberg@telusplanet.net](mailto:mroberg@telusplanet.net)

### **March 11th Zoom Coffee and Chat In Review:**

A good natured and convivial chat took place on March 11th. Topics ranged from vaccines and booking vaccines, connecting with others during the pandemic, pandemics in the past and a brief discussion of politics. There were exhortations to send gardening questions to Mike Dickinson in the next few days and calls to submit items for the news bulletin. Ideas for STARTA meetings in the future were considered but uncertainty about the future still exists especially with misinformation threatening the achievement of herd immunity. The topic of Harry and Megan’s interview came up and almost immediately led to a discussion of rights being balanced by the needs of others and needs of the group. Emil Guzik has written

a letter to the editor of the “ St. Albert Gazette” on this very topic. It can be read in the “Letters to the Editor” and is called, “Freedom is Not Harming Others”. The group consensus was this was a well written letter on an important topic. Congratulations Emil on the publication of your letter.

*Janet*

## **Women’s History Month:**

*researched by Janet*

March is Women’s History Month in the US, UK and Australia. We have decided to crash their party in honour of this event with a look at some Women’s History.

Health and Early Cookbooks : At first literate women kept recipes for a variety of things in a common place book which would contain family records and accounts as well. Illiterate women passed on recipes by word of mouth. The Smithsonian credits Lady Jang Gye-Hyang with writing the first cookbook. It was written in Korean in 1670. Early recipe books had recipes for food, personal hygiene products, cleaning products, medicines, beers and even instructions for care of the household and for minor surgery. Physicians were rare and were mostly trained in Christian Theology and balancing the four “humours”. Physicians of the day also considered body odour and sin to be significant causes of disease. The physicians’ treatments were very drastic and sometimes more threatening than the original malady. Nevertheless they derided the practices of women health practitioners of the era. Both Thomas Hobbes and Francis Bacon preferred women’s health practices. Francis Bacon said, “...old women more happy in their cures than learned physicians.” Most people never saw a physician, relying on the women in their family for care. Sometimes noble women would make large batches of curative potions to help their community in times of widespread disease. Most of these recipes were refined by trial, error and observation, a rough predecessor to science.

<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/part-being-domestic-goddess-17th-century-europe-was-making-medicines-180977080/>

Padraic Colum: "An Old Woman Of The Roads"

O, To have a little house!

To own the hearth and stool and all!

The heaped up sods upon the fire,

The pile of turf against the wall!

*Irish poetry*

A few women of note:

Katerina Tekakwitha: North America’s first First Nations saint. CA

Wáng Zhènyì : 1768-1797: Chinese astronomer and advocate for women in the sciences. A crater on Venus is named in her honour.



Ada Lovelace: 1815-1852: The Enchantress of Numbers and Lord Byron's daughter, Ada Lovelace worked with Charles Babbage who is often recognized as the "father of computers". She is noted by some historians as the first computer programmer. She saw the value of these "analytic" machines as being useful for by far more than mathematical calculations. Her ideas were so advanced that they were not used until the 1940s.

<https://history.howstuffworks.com/historical-figures/this-enchantedress-numbers-was-worlds-first-computer-programmer.htm>

Mary Shadd Cary: 1823-1893: First Black woman editor in North America.

Elsie McGill, Queen of the Hurricanes: 1905-1980: she was the first female engineering graduate from the University of Toronto. In WW2 she turned the Canadian Car and Foundry (boxcar makers) into a producer of Hurricane Fighter Planes. By war's end one out of every 10 Hurricanes had been built at her factory. She became the subject of a comic book.

Mary Two-Axe Earley: 1911-1992: She challenged laws discriminating against First Nations women.

Canadian Nursing Sisters In WW1: 1914-1918: Nurses in WW1 were known as nursing sisters. Canadian nurses were the only ones within the allied Forces of WW1 to hold the rank of officers and because of this the Canadian Army pushed for their nurses to officially receive honours for valour. The British were initially very reluctant to award any woman for valour even though nurses were extremely close to the front lines.

Hedy Lamarr: 1914-2000: Although she is more widely known as a screen star, she pioneered work in WW2 for WiFi and GPS. Her ideas were not used until twenty years after the war because they were considered far-fetched in the 40s.

<https://science.howstuffworks.com/innovation/famous-inventors/hedy-lamarr.htm>

Kenojuak Ashevak: 1927-2013: Noted Inuit artist. <https://www.artsy.net/artist/kenojuak-ashevak>

Jinko Tabei: 1939-2016: A Japanese mountaineer who became, in 1975, the first woman to reach the top of Mount Everest.

Saadie Muzzaffar: In 2012 she founded TechGirls Canada, a hub for Canadian women in science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

In an article from the Reader's Digest of 1922 called "Whatever is New for Women is Wrong" the author discusses how innovations and changes affecting the lives of women have

often been met with fear that this would be detrimental to society and, in particular, to women.. Some examples include:

- Fears that the first kindergartens would destroy the home and morality.
- Concern that perambulators would cause mothers to wander from home for most of the day. (1850)
- On the worry about women entering the professions, an 1870 publication stated "It is certainly time to condemn every step taken towards the individualization of women lest their children become gamins of the gutters."
- There was horror over lady acrobats in 1870, women ushers in 1874 and the publication of women's faces in the Harper's Bazaar magazines of the 1860s.

**The older the fiddle, the sweeter the tune. *Irish Proverb***

### ***Another few words on 'The Spanish Flu' from Marian:***

Recently, a webinar from the U of A Alumni featuring the Spanish Flu in Edmonton and at the U of A (particularly in the fall of 1918) was available. It is now on the Alumni website On Demand.

[On Demand | Alumni \(ualberta.ca\)](#)

Two books recommended by the presenters are:

*The Last Plague: Spanish Influenza and the Politics of Public Health in Canada* by Mark Osborne Humphries

*The Great Influenza: The Story of the Deadliest Pandemic in History* by John M. Barry

### **FROM THE COMMUNITY:**

#### ***A request from a current teacher:***

I am a grade 4 online teacher that is looking for a way to connect my students with safe and trustworthy seniors as a service project. My hope is to find 8 - 16 seniors that would be willing to join our Google Meet once or twice a month to visit with the kids in breakout rooms. The kids would also conduct interviews as a part of a research project to learn about what life in Alberta was like in the past. If you are interested in joining me and my students, please contact me on my cell phone at 780-221-3209. Thank you for your consideration.

Corina Plaum, Gr. 4 Teacher in Edmonton Public Schools

#### ***A Cooking Demonstration Invitation from Kelsey Baron, Manager of Merit Travel.***

On [Wednesday March 24](#) at 1:00 pm., Merit Travel is hosting a very small and intimate virtual cooking demonstration with a Chef from Trinidad and Tobago. She will be teaching us how to make an easy, traditional dish in under an hour. We created this event as a way to engage with our clients and have some fun. Below is the link to sign up if you are interested! I hope to see you there!

Here is the link: <https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/merit-travel-exclusive-event-cooking-demonstration-tickets-144694943471>

**Password: Merit Insider**

PS: Please note: Group size is limited for this event so register as soon as possible.

***May misfortune follow you the rest of your life, and never catch up.***

### **STARTA Members Projects (HOMEWORK!)**

March marks one year of pandemic restrictions, so next month, to celebrate our survival we will showcase the talents of STARTA members. We have members who have kept busy during 'stay-at-home' time with art work, dance, music, paper crafts, sewing, painting, knitting, crocheting, baking, woodworking and wine-making among other things. Maybe you learned a new language or how to code, juggle, beat box or rap. Let us know about your pandemic projects. Send in a photo of the project and/or a brief write up about the project. We have been delighted with contributions from our members. Help enrich the news bulletin and let other STARTA members read about your exploits. Send any contributions to [pbergmann@shaw.ca](mailto:pbergmann@shaw.ca) before April 12<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

**Just a REMINDER: Mark your calendar**

**March 26, 2021: STARTA ZOOM Event on Gardening at 10:30 a.m.**

**April 15, 2021: Chat with STARTA members at 10:30 a.m. (Zoom)**

Thank you to each of you who contributed to this News Bulletin! Keep those interesting articles and pictures coming!

Peggy B.

### **It's Not Easy Being Green by Joe Raposo**

(Kermit's Song from Sesame Street)

It's not that easy being green;

Having to spend each day the color of the leaves.

When I think it could be nicer being red, or yellow or gold-  
or something much more colorful like that.

It's not easy being green.

It seems you blend in with so many other ordinary things.

And people tend to pass you over 'cause you're not standing out

like flashy sparkles in the water-

or stars in the sky.

But green's the color of Spring.  
And green can be cool and friendly-like.  
And green can be big like the ocean,  
or important like a mountain, or tall like a tree.  
When green is all there is to be  
It could make you wonder why,  
but why wonder?  
Why Wonder,  
I am green and it'll do fine,  
it's beautiful!  
And I think it's what I want to be.

And... An Irish Blessing      May the road rise up to meet you,  
May the wind be always at your back,  
May you sun shine warm upon your face.  
The rain fall soft upon your fields.  
And, until we meet again,  
May God hold you in the palm of His hand.