



THE DUGOUT



FRED GIES BRANCH (ONT. 50)

KITCHENER

MAR/APR 2007

524 Belmont Ave W

Kitchener ON N2M 5E3

Tel: 519 745-5101

Fax: 519 745-0211

Office:

royalcanadianlegion1@bellnet.ca

Editor: dugout50@sympatico.ca

Office hours: M - F 11 - 3

PRESIDENT

Laurie Pollock 742-7888

1st VICE

Jim Meyer 576-1017

2nd VICE

David Davidson 896-6466

TREASURER

Jim Fraser 743-5164

SECRETARY

Vivian Peddle 746-2711

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS

Gord Ross 579-9029

PADRES

(Major) Ernie Reid 745-3351

(Father) Terry MacGuire 745-7855

CHIEF STEWARD

Bill Weido

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Comrades, the time has come again when the Editor gives me a deadline, for the Dugout, so here goes.

I like to think our Branch is doing quite well, sales are good, activities are going great guns and our expenses are met on time, each month. We do have some internal headaches. Our accountant was reconciling the bank statements and discovered we owed almost \$3,500 for employee deductions that were not submitted, going back to last summer. This and other problems come to light from time to time. Our office is just about ship shape now and we will be looking for a crew member to steer it.

You may have noticed the tub chairs that were by the windows are gone. We are to replace them with a more comfortable chair and have the tables raised to the standard height. The old tub chairs were not being utilized, people seem to prefer the lounge chairs. We have in the past months moved the tub chairs from place to place, in our Legion, shuffleboard side and the center of the club but alas nobody wanted to put their ass in 'em. So we sold them and I hope they will be replaced very soon, complete with the tables. As our membership is growing, each month, we will require the extra seating.

Tuesday, February 21st at 7:30 in the morning I put on my uniform and along with comrade Don Smith, we went to Wal-Mart to be presented with a cheque for \$615.00. They matched what was collected at their store on Fairway Road, during our last Poppy drive.

I will be attending a Zone meeting in Guelph on March 17th. In May month, I will be at a Provincial meeting in London. These two meetings should pretty well wind down the last of the Legion meetings, for me as President of this Branch. Other meetings I will be attending are the Poppy and Veteran Council meetings. These will be held in various service clubs in K-W. I have three Executive and three General meetings left to chair. In addition to this general business has to be attended to and the unpleasant duties of presiding over funerals. I can see the light at the end of the tunnel, for me.

As many of you know, we have acquired a Juke Box. This has been annoying to some of our members. The music, hits popular in the 50's and 60's and personally I enjoy them. When you put your quarter in, please respect, be fair and considerate to other members and don't have it blaring.

Yours in Comradeship,

Laurie Pollock

FROM THE 1ST VICE

Comrades, time for my bi-monthly diatribe, so here goes.

As most of you know, we have welcomed many new Members to the Branch over recent months; some active supporters of the Branch, some not as much so.

What we must always remember is that there are also many Veterans (70 from WWII alone), and other long-time Members who have earned and deserve our respect and consideration. These are the people who have been with the Branch during good times and bad. The people who come out for the Poppy Campaign year after year. The people who are proud to say "Royal Canadian Legion, Fred Gies Branch" rather than saying "Freddie's Royal Canadian Sports Bar". As the late Comrade Tom Cummings once said to me – "The Royal Canadian Legion is a Veterans' club first – the rest of you are here with our consent".

This is not to disparage those who work so very hard at our numerous events. Comradeship and fun, and the accompanying bar revenue, are what keep this Branch afloat, especially as we have no room for extra banquet facilities or catering. Please realise your efforts are sincerely appreciated, and very necessary.

But when a Branch with 600+ Members does not have a Poppy Chairman, and I still don't have someone for the relatively easy job of K-W Veterans' Council Secretary, and we have to beg to get a dozen Comrades out to a Legion Tribute to one of our own, then perhaps someone should be re-reading the "Purposes and Objects of the Legion". Now on to my report ...

Those of you who missed the February General meeting missed a good one. Three motions on the table were dealt with at the start of the session. In the midst of a debate over the controversial issue of rescinding By-law 306, Comrade Vince McQuabbie withdrew the motion in the interests of saving the attendees some time.

The matter of the second Pool table acquisition was much less controversial – this was carried by a clear majority.

Regarding my motion to send a candidate to the NWEPH board election, it was finally decided, after an amendment by Comrade Paul Linder, to throw all four nominees names into the ring. Comrades Louie Kuntz, Eric Johnson, Gloria McKibbin, and Don Madill will all be candidates to fill the vacant position on the board. Good luck to one and all!

If my little "editorial" offended anyone, I apologise. That was not my intention. If it was food for thought, good. That is its sole purpose.

Yours in Comradeship,

Jim Meyer

FROM THE FIREHALL

I went through the building with the "Fire safety" officer at 8:55 AM on Jan 15th. We passed the inspection despite five infractions to the "code" as follows –

1. The fire extinguisher cards are to be checked and inspected monthly
2. Doors are not to be propped open with door stops unless receiving deliveries
3. Water heater is to be kept free from obstruction
4. All electrical boxes and panels are to be kept free from obstructions (especially cardboard), and are to be accessible
5. The inspector was not pleased with the tables in front of the hydro panels (Keep in shed?)

Terry Kennedy

More on House & Building later on page five.

**Acting Chief Bar Steward,
Comrade Gerry DeVost reminds us -**

WE RECYCLE

Save the planet! Or at least save our trash bags.

Pop tabs buy wheelchairs, and tins can go in the blue box behind the bar.

FROM THE 2ND VICE

Each month we are initiating a large number of new members and realizing a fast growth rate in membership. This is very healthy for the Branch, and has given us additional Bar Sales which is up \$9,491.50 over the same period last year. In January alone the sales were up \$2575.50 over last year.

Average monthly sales over the past 5 months has been \$31,843.27 and I attribute this rise in sales to a fuller schedule of events which has been introduced during the last few months.

Both the Monday night pool and the Tuesday night "Bring your own steak BBQ / Karaoke" have been popular, as well as the monthly crib tournament on the first Saturday of the month. The first monthly pool tournament was held on the 24th of February and will become a monthly event on the fourth Saturday of the month.

Thanks to the members who make these events successful, and I invite those members who we haven't seen in awhile to join in the fun with us.

I have visited both of the Cadet Corp we sponsor and presented them each with a cheque for \$ 1000.00 from the K/W Poppy fund.

We have formed a Patio / BBQ committee which was approved at the general membership meeting on the 25th of February. I thank the following members for their participation and sprit of comradeship. Jerry Prince, Vince McQuabbie, Marge Gardiner. Peter Gardiner. Lee Ewart and Sandra Reinhart. It is the willing worker who always helps to make things happen, and helps make the Branch grow. Sitting back, criticizing and never doing anything only gets you recognition as a un-participating habitual complainer (#\$@!)

We had two patio heaters donated by a couple of good friends to keep the smokers warm while they grab a puff. The intent was that the propane be paid for though donations made by the people using the heater. Just a reminder when there are no donations and there is no propane to run the heaters, they shall runneth not.

That concludes my report

Dave Davidson CD

FROM THR SGT-AT-ARMS

Hello Comrades

Hope this note finds all in good health.

Our colour party is still waiting for our parades to start.

We would like to have more members our colour party.

Members attending general meetings must show membership cards or receipt for current year.

Any member that has not paid their dues by now is in arrears.

These members will not be allowed to attend meetings, participate in sport functions among other events that require you to have up to date membership.

Also remember our election is this year. if you plan to run for office let other members know your intention.

Until the next Dugout.

Happy Marching.

Gord Ross

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Kitchener, ON N2G 1X5

Tel: (519) 745-4053

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GLORIA MCKIBBIN
General Manager

64 Benton Street
Kitchener, ON N2G 4L9
Tel: (519) 745-1988
Fax: (519) 745-1844
gm.thepalisadeskitchener@rogers.com

www.retirementlifecommunities.com

This letter was forwarded by Mansfield residents Ruth and Gary Brown. It was written by their son Steve, who is a member of the Canadian forces fighting in Afghanistan. Thanks to Zone C2 PRO, Comrade Elaine Rice for its submission. jm

To All:

I apologize for the generic letter, but these days I don't have a lot of time to sit at a computer drafting specific words of thanks to all the people who have offered me overwhelming support. All of you mean the world to me and so your support is not only appreciated but quite honestly sustains me through some of the worst days of my life. Bar none this is an experience that I will never forget and has changed me in so many ways.

I have been ambushed, attacked, bombed, mortared, mined and RPG'd to the point that I honestly cannot wait to get home. I have showered only 7 times in the 4 months that I have been here, gone through 4 changes of clothes and have lived out of a small valise. I have only slept 6 nights having taken my boots off the whole tour. Every night I have slept under the stars (until recently when it started raining) and each night I have seen at minimum one shooting star in a truly impressive Afghan skyline.

Half of our company has been wounded and of 120 men the enemy has killed six. Of the wounded, some of the most severe have endured the loss of limbs, paralysis in parts of the body and in one case he is learning to read and write again. The enemy is real and a brutal enemy he is. Never have I believed more in a cause and each and everyday I believe in it more.

Our enemy uses children to fight its battles and as shields, it coerces, threatens, blackmails, steals, sells opium and represses women. It murders people such as elderly men simply because they associate with us and it corrupts a religion by holding it hostage. It is uneducated and illiterate but certainly not stupid. It places its mines strategically and wages a war of terror so that the locals live in fear. Most of the Taliban are foreign, and use the local population for their purpose but do not care for their well-being. They force the locals on missions with absolutely no chances of success and accuse them of being bad Muslims when they question it. They have no hesitation in causing massive civilian casualties if it results in even one coalition dead. As much as it is a sin to kill your fellow man, it would be a bigger sin to let the Taliban have freedom of action in a country that does not want its return.

Contrary to what the media believes, Afghans do support the coalition, and we must support them. There is no shortage of people who are willing to die for their cause but I am thankful that those people choose to fight us here, rather than in Toronto or Ottawa.

As for the development of this country, Canada and reporters in general have it wrong. The West will not rebuild this country; Afghans will and are doing it each day. The West can do well to facilitate the process, but it is becoming clearer that in the areas that we are operating, international agencies are reticent to help. My message to them is to get off their soapbox and take some risk. Regardless of the situation, progress and development are continuing particularly in parts of the country where there is no fighting. For a media that is focused on our particular area of operations, they forget about the progress occurring around the country.

The Taliban has massed around us and we are willing to take on that burden. I guess the purpose of this letter is two-fold. The first is to thank all of you for the overwhelming support that you have given me. From the cards to the care packages, it has a profound impact on what we do over here. Secondly, I also want you very much to believe in what Canada is doing here in Kandahar. Canada at an international level has stepped up and is taking a leadership role in NATO for the first time that I can remember. We are doing what is right, not what is easy. It is important that we carry the load at least until the end of our mandate, at which time we can let someone else take the lead. You have made this possible, and we should all be very proud to be Canadian right now.

Currently and for the foreseeable future we are committed to seeing the construction of a road, a simple road, but a road that has cost us seven soldiers including two from my Company, Sergeant Darcy Tedford and Private Blake Williamson. I am so proud to be with soldiers like these and am happy to report that they have represented us all so well. The rest of us will stand here on this road with our Afghan brothers, and this road will get finished.

Thank you all for all that you have done, each and every one of you have made me a better person and it is important that you know that. I have been raised as most other Canadians, with a sense of duty and fair play. That is directly related to the relationships that I have had with my family, my community and my country. Thanks for everything.

Pro Patria (For Country)

Captain Steve Brown, 1 R.C.R.'s (Charles Company)

HOUSE AND BUILDING REPORT

Regional Mechanical will be checking the roof unit to see why it is blowing the breaker and they have installed a proper wall thermostat.

They will also be checking the dishwasher and icemaker because neither is working properly. The Bar Stewards are having trouble with them.

Pool cue racks have been installed along with a small shelf unit for chalk.

The new sick and visiting board has been installed on the main entrance to the Branch, and the affected walls have been patched and painted.

When weather permits, the shed door has to be removed and cut off due to frost lifting the pavement, preventing the door from opening properly.

There is one more shuffleboard to be braced, and that should be done in the near future.

The leaky gasket behind the Mens' washroom wall has been replaced.

Yours in Comradeship.

Terry Kennedy

FROM MEMBERSHIP

January and February we initiated 41 new members. We hope that they will participate and enjoy Branch 50.

It was very much appreciated the help of Shirley McGuire, Carlie McKie, Dorothy Noel, Gwen Kirton, Anne Potter, Bob Westman, Jack Farthing, Jay Oswald and Judy Dennis who sorted out the 50/50 cards in the box, which now contain only paid members.

A special thank you to Joan Westman, Carlie McKie and Judy Dennis for supporting me with the membership duties.

Membership is \$45.00/year. Or 87 cents /week. Or 12 cents/day
You can't buy anything at the dollar store for 87 cents, and have so much FUN!

Marguerite McNeelands

SICK & VISITING

We would like to wish our Comrades who are shut in or are in the hospital a speedy recovery.

Dorothy Hipkins, Carmen Farthing and Ross Hahn are in Freeport Hospital. They have been in since Christmas.

Our thoughts and prayers are with them and with their families.

Let us know if you know of any members that are in the hospital.

Yours in Comradeship,

Carolyn Harvey

ENTERTAINMENT

I would like to say a special thank you to everyone who has donated goodies and snacks to all the events that are going on at the Legion.

You are a very special group of comrades to help on our Mondays, Tuesdays and on our entertainment days.

Laurie and I appreciate this and thank you very much.

Your Comrades,

Carol & Laurie

**OPEN MON - SAT AT NOON
SUNDAYS AT 1**

FROM HONOURS AND AWARDS

I wrote this resignation at the request of our President, in time for the last General Meeting. He unfortunately did not read it, so I am submitting it as my last report.

The pettiness, immaturity and vindictiveness, of a few or our members has necessitated my resignation as Honours and Awards Chairperson, effective immediately.

At the time I wrote this resignation I felt that the financial and administrative operations of the Branch were, in my opinion, more important than a place at the Executive table. Now I am not executing duties for either of these positions which should make the aforementioned members ecstatic.

When I was first asked to help out for a couple of days, I agreed....not being aware of the horrible state the office was in, nor of how badly I would be treated by some of our "comrades"...that term I use loosely. Some of the Executive members were of the opinion that I no longer had a say, outside the office...helping out in the office didn't cause me to lose my common sense or voice box. Out of respect for my partner, and your 1st Vice, I will not go into any further detail. For the sake of my sanity and health, I made the choice not to continue to perform the office duties....rest assured all accounts payables and payroll are completed for the next two weeks. I would not wish the same havoc I walked into on anyone.

Your 1st Vice worked tirelessly to get the new system up and running, designed and installed a new Membership Program which has much more information and will be easier to retrieve data when required and kept the system "virus free".

Charlie McKie devoutly arrived at the Branch every Wednesday and any other day requested, completing any task that needed her attention. The members of Branch 50 should extend the hand of thanks the next time you encounter these two comrades.

Yours in Comradeship,

Judy Dennis

Congrats to our athletes, who came up with some great results at the Provincial T & F in February -

Nicole Pauli Br.50 Laurel Creek T.C.
Long Jump 4.34 7th place
Triple Jump 9.75 8th place

Tegan Stairs Br.50 Laurel Creek T.C.
800m 2.22.03 3rd place

Marvin Muschette Br.50 Laurel Creek T.C.
50m hurdles 8.11 1st place

Phil O'Donnell Br.50 Laurel Creek T.C.
50m hurdles 8.53 15th place
200m 25.19 12th place

**FROM WAYS & MEANS/
TRACK & FIELD**

Thanks to all the people that are volunteering to help me out with the meat draws, they are doing great.

Anyone wishing to help out in the track meets, please let me know.

Raymonde Hachey

FROM THE TREASURER

Here I am putting my article together at the last minute, causing great anxiety for our Editor – Jim Meyer (who is doing a fantastic job despite the problems of no show by most of his Editorial staff – including me).

This is Monday, following our February General meeting, at which I am continuously amazed at the number of members attending, demonstrating the growth of our membership.

As you are well aware, the dues paid by each and everyone does little to sustain a Legion Branch and it is up to the members to create a viable club through activities and participation.

Since about September we are seeing a financial growth after our decline in the 2006 months of May to August, likely due to the influence of the smoking laws. However, since September the use of the patio has improved and so have the number of activities occurring at the Branch.

We must sustain this growth and I challenge each and every member who is not infirmed, to make it a point to drop in at least once a month and say “Hello” to some faces you may not have seen for sometime.

If you have not taken the time to read previous DugOuts, you may not be aware of the number of activities taking place. For example, Monday evenings there is open Pool, Tuesday evening – bring your supper (steak, hamburger – whatever) to the Legion for the Barbeque and Karaoke. Friday night is drop-in Darts and Saturday’s are either our meat draw or the Pony Races. Sunday entertainment is occurring more often and we urge you to read your Bulletin or e-mail to realize the fine entertainment your Branch is providing. But that’s not all – Tuesday afternoon Shuffleboard and Thursday afternoon Euchre are extremely popular and gives you a good excuse to avoid some less pleasant chores at home. But wait – I’m not finished – the 1st Saturday of each month is the Open Cribbage Tournament and the fourth Saturday is Open Pool, so there are many reasons for you to drop in, besides seeing your old Comrades (some are young like me).

I am sure I have missed something and I will be reminded. I note with interest, as many others are, that our Daily Attendance Draw is closing in on \$1,500.00 (as of February 25th) and if that is not a good enough excuse to get out, I don’t know what is.

In closing, an active Legion Branch is a successful Branch, so if you have an idea or suggestion to provide more activities just let us know, but be careful in your suggestions as you might just become more active handling the proposed activity.

LET’S SEE YOU OUT THIS MONTH !!!

Jim Fraser

SENIORS’ CLUB

Upcoming Senior’s meetings –
Sunday, March 11th 2 PM

Nominations

Sunday, April 15th 2 PM

Elections

Come out and support your club.

Thank You,
Era Kaufman
Chairperson

PS – Thanks to our Members for filling my spot while I was on the sick list!

Our Chairperson, Era Kaufman, has been off sick for sometime now, but the good news is that she is on the mend, and hopefully will be back with us come the March Meeting.

We had a very successful Christmas Party, and a good St. Valentine’s potluck supper. I think everyone enjoyed the Horse Races.

Our club has expanded to approximately 62 members from the 42 we had at the September meeting.

Our social director, Sandra Reinhart, is now busy getting information on the bus trips to come in the near future.

Regarding the nominations at the March 11th meeting – please ensure the person you wish to nominate is going to accept if elected.

Dorothy Noel
Secretary

RECIPE CORNER**" CHICKEN AND BROCCOLI DIVAN"**

3 CUPS OF COOKED BROCCOLI
2 CUPS OF CUBED COOKED CHICKEN.
1 CAN OF CONDENSED CREAM OF BROCCOLI SOUP
1/3 CUP OF MILK
1/2 CUP SHREDDED CHEDDAR CHEESE.
3 TBSPS. DRY BREADCRUMBS.
1 Tbsp MARG.OR BUTTER MELTED'

ARRANGE BROCCOLI AND CHICKEN IN 9" PIE PLATE OR A SHALLOW BAKING DISH.
COMBINE SOUP AND MILK; POUR OVER BROCCOLI AND CHICKEN. **SPRINKLE MIXTURE**
WITH CHEESE. **MIX BREADCRUMBS WITH MARG. OR BUTTER. AND **SPRINKLE** OVER**
CHEESE LAYER.

BAKE AT 450 FOR 20 MINS. OR UNTIL HEATED THROUGH.

CAN BE SERVED WITH STEAMED RICE IF DESIRED.

Viv Graham

ARROWROOT CAKE**CAKE**

7 eggs
2 Tbsps water
1 tbsp vinegar
10 tbsps sugar
10 tbsps flour

FILLING

350 g Arrowroot cookies (2pk)
1 ¼ cup prepared orange juice
½ lb. unsalted margarine or butter
½ cup icing sugar
½ cup chopped walnuts

TOPPING:: 500 ml whipping cream and 1 pkg Whip It stabilizer for whipping cream

METHOD FOR CAKE In a large bowl put eggs, vinegar and water. **Beat** on high speed till light and fluffy and bowl is full. **Add** sugar tablespoon by tablespoon...**beat** until sugar is completely dissolved. **At low speed add** flour tablespoon by tablespoon until it is all mixed. Pour into 9 x 12 pan lined with parchment paper. Bake 20 minutes at 350 degrees or until done. **Cool** out of pan.

FILLING: Crush arrowroot cookies with a rolling pin and soak the crumbs with 1 1/4cup prepared orange juice. **Beat** ½ lb of butter or margarine with ½ cup icing sugar till creamy, add to soaked crumbs. Add ½ cup walnuts chopped and spread over cake. **Top** with whipping cream. **Garnish** with chocolate shavings.

Enjoy

Lynn Moore

EDITOR'S NOTE: I can't swear to it Comrades, but I seriously think these Ladies think we're too skinny. *jm*

FROM VETERANS SERVICE OFFICER

The Provincial Service Officer will be at the Branch Thursday, April 19th 2007, starting at 11 AM.

Please call the Branch to book an appointment if you wish to see him.

Don't forget he is only coming three times a year now.

Mike Fenton

FROM YOUTH - ED

Our public speaking contest was held on February 4th at the Legion with many excellent participants - thanks to those who supported the youth in the city. One of our young ladies (Hannah Kelly) placed first in the Grade 7-9 at the Zone competition and will be competing in District at the end of March.

A reminder that the Bursary forms need to be received before the last Friday of March for those in need of financial assistance to further their education. Details can had by calling the Branch or leaving a message so that I can get back to you.

Reg Bielaski

NOTICE FROM DOMINION COMMAND

Dame Vera Lynn will be celebrating her 90th birthday on 20 March, 2007. The Dominion President will be sending an appropriate letter to her with the congratulations of The Royal Canadian Legion to mark this special occasion. Canadian WW2 veterans who remember her program Sincerely Yours from those days, and her appearance at the Edmonton Dominion Convention in 1986, can also send her greetings to show that they care about the beloved songstress who inspired our war-weary troops many years ago. Messages, letters or cards from the Veterans who remember are being set up as a surprise for Dame Vera who still looks upon all of them as her boys, and may be sent to Dame Vera Lynn, C/O Virginia Jones, Bramble Cottage, Common Lane, Ditchling, England, BN6 8TJ. Please send them so they will arrive by March 15, 2007. They will all be delivered to her on her birthday as a surprise.

FROM ZONE P.R.O., Comrade Elaine Rice

I just wanted to let you know about a documentary which will be airing on The History Channel on March 26th at 8:00 pm (ET/PT) and repeated on April 8th at 6:00 pm.

It is entitled "*Vimy Ridge: Heaven to Hell*" and is on three Goderich men who served at Vimy Ridge - Dudley Holmes, Percy James and Jack Carter. Yap Films in Toronto is producing the documentary (they are the ones who did last year's "Finding the Fallen - The Trench Detectives").



John Schlee

Burt Knapp

FROM THE STAR.COM

John Clemett remembers having a peek at the faded and tattered uniform neatly laid out in his dad's trunk. It was back in the '60s when his father Victor (Lloyd) Clemett invited him into the basement where the old chest had been tucked away for decades. "By the time I saw the uniform, it was pretty worn out," said the younger Clemett. "And I remember his beat-up old bugle. We used to blow it on New Year's Eve."

The veteran's niece, Merle Kaczanowski, also remembers the precious relics of the past. It impressed her that her uncle held onto them, despite the fact that they remained grim reminders of a darker history in foreign lands. And while he kept mementoes tucked away, "he wore his medals - two service medals, the Queen's Jubilee medal and French Legion of Honour - proudly," Kaczanowski said.

One of three surviving Canadian veterans of the Great War, Clemett died late Wednesday in the veterans' residence at Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre. He was 107. "As a nation, we honour his service and mourn his passing," Prime Minister Stephen Harper said in a statement.

"... With the passing of Mr. Clemett, another link to Canada's proud military history has been severed. All Canadians, no matter where they live, must continue to remember that the sacrifices of Mr. Clemett and his comrades helped shape (the) strong, prosperous and democratic nation we enjoy today."

Donations in honour of Clemett can be made to The Veterans Comfort Fund at Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre, 2075 Bayview Ave., Room KGE39, Toronto, ON, M4N 3M5.

FROM THE EDITOR

Comrades, no matter how big I make this newsletter, I always seem to run out of space, and I have done so again.

I do hope you have enjoyed reading this issue of the DUGOUT as much as I have enjoyed putting it together for you. Thanks to all the Committee Chairmen who got their reports to me for press time, and my apologies for any that I missed.

I am constantly reviewing the mailing list, and if I know that you are a frequent attendee at the Branch, I may have taken your name off the mailing list and moved it to the "pickup at Branch list". Also, if I have your email address, I will send your DUGOUT that way. If you still get a mailed copy as well as an electronic copy, or if you wish to pickup your DUGOUT at the Branch, please leave a note at the bar with your name and current mailing address to that effect to my attention.

Again I remind you, this is *your* newsletter, and (signed) submissions are always welcome. I will do my best to accommodate.

If you are moving, or if you received more than one DUGOUT at your household, please let me know directly. And I shall try to sort things out.

Jim Meyer

With the tumultuous assistance of *Judy Dennis*