

LIVES WE LEAD - MEG STICKL (our Exercise teacher)

Compiled by Judith Coulter - February 2013



On a bright sunny day in the merry, merry month of May, Margaret (Meg) Elizabeth Stickl was born in the Riverside Hospital. She has brightened the days of everyone around her ever since. Brother Mark arrived two years after Meg and then, "last, but not least", Martin joined the family five years after Mark. However Meg always enjoyed the "status" of being the eldest and the only girl.

Her parents, Joe and Betty, had met at Ryerson University in Toronto. They moved to Ottawa shortly after they graduated--her father to join the RCMP as a Civilian Member and her mother to work in Early Childhood Education. Meg was home-schooled for grades one to five and remembers that as a very positive experience. Betty had joined an organization for home-school teachers and their children. Thus there were plenty of opportunities for social occasions and fun educational and sporting outings. Meg took swim instruction and fencing lessons during the day when there were much smaller classes (and less frazzled adults).

Meg's family always loved the outdoors. They went on many camping trips and spent hours putting up the tent, enjoying water sports, gathering firewood, and singing around a campfire. Once there was a near-tragic event when a sudden strong wind burst came up and a huge tree branch fell on the tent where two-year-old Martin was napping. The tent collapsed and the family went running to his rescue fearing the worst. Martin was fine but the terrifying experience brought the family even closer together. They treasured each other even more.

For middle school Meg attended the private Life Christian Academy. There were only Meg and four other girls in the graduating grade six class and all five have remained best friends ever since. She then went on to Hillcrest High School. In grade nine the music teacher sent Meg ahead to the practice room to try out instruments for the school band. Meg eagerly chose the flute to play and, like everything else, confronted this task with

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her signature vim and vigour. The result was that she became extremely light-headed and almost passed out. When the teacher finally arrived she noticed Meg's extreme pallor and suggested she switch to the trumpet!!

After high school Meg went on to Ottawa University where she majored in psychology and minored in gerontology. Her favourite courses were the Sleep and Dreams class and Abnormal Psychology. A particular highlight was when she did a three-month international internship for the NGO, Stepping Stones International, in Botswana. Another memorable trip included a bus tour of London, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, Belgium, and Monaco--a whirlwind eight countries in twenty-one days!! She also volunteered for hurricane clean-up in New Orleans after Katrina devastated that city in 2005.

After university graduation Meg obtained the position of Recreation Manager at the Promenade Retirement Residence in Orleans. She had always been an avid volunteer at Pine Grove Bible Church where she instigated and attended many Youth Group activities. She has recently added even more volunteer hours to her busy schedule, organizing charitable fundraising events for Roger's House and the Canadian Cancer Society.

Meg is a dynamo of activity; she is a captain of the Ottawa Sports and Social Club where weekly sports activities rotate among soccer, floor hockey, volley ball, and dodge ball. Her family continues to remain close and she often goes on holiday trips to Toronto and Hamilton to visit extended family. One grandmother has recently moved to Calgary so no doubt she will be heading west very soon to check out Alberta.

Meg has been teaching Tuesday and Thursday Exercise Classes at GSAC for three years. She encourages us to move at our comfort level and to add more challenges when we feel ready. We exercise to music and attendees are welcome to bring in their favourite CDs. There are always lots of jokes and much laughter. So please come out and join us.