

Some Stories from Judi Yourk Leemhuis 3310 Caen Street—1955 to 1964



Melanie, Eudora, Judi and Eddie Yourk showing the rabbits they raised, 1959.

Between the Newman home and yard (3303 Caen Street) and the church (at the corner of Rockingham Avenue and Merritt Street) there was forest. One day we were all so excited and interested to see that there was a porcupine in a tree there. We all ran over to take a careful look and there it was up in the tree. Later we learned that the Short's German Shepherd - Smoky - got quills in its nose from the porcupine. It was quite an education for all of us. (The Short family lived at 3314 Caen Street.)

Halloween time was fun in Montgomery Place. The weather didn't always cooperate but we would go out anyways. It was usually cold and that was good because the mud would be frozen. We would go door to door calling, "Halloween Apples" or "Trick or Treat" with our pillow slips to fill with as many treats as we could manage to get. My mom would make popcorn balls to hand out. Some people gave out apples. Later in the night the older teenagers would make mischief by building street barricades and they were big ones!! The grownups always had something to say about that "the police should do something about those delinquents!!"

I can remember the tiny trees along the right hand side of the lot that Dad planted. He brought a whole bunch of little fir trees from one of his fishing trips up north and planted them along the property line on both sides of the house. One year someone cut one down for a Christmas tree (I suppose). We only noticed in the spring after the snow had gone. We always had a skating rink in the back yard. Eddie always wanted to practise hockey and me figure skating.

Grandma Yourk's rheumatism cure:

My Ukrainian Granny used to come to our home in Montgomery Place on the bus with her paper shopping bags full of ingredients to make perogies (pierogis or varenyky) and borscht. She was known for giving the bus drivers Life Savers candies. She loved our huge garden and insisted on taking care of it whenever we went away on holidays. On one of her visits to our home she brought gloves and went to the forest across from our home on 3310 Caen Street. She was looking for poison ivy and there was lots there. She donned the gloves and picked bags full of the vegetation, brought it back to our home and, much to my mom's surprise and annoyance, boiled it in big pots, then poured it in the bath tub and took a bath in the herbal remedy. I don't know if it did any good but I just remember distinctly my mom being quite annoyed with the whole activity. But really, what damage did it do....none. She really was a very sweet lady, peculiar but sweet.

I can't believe that I lived in a time when the milk was delivered by a horse drawn milk truck. The delivery man would jump down with the milk in a wire basket and put it in a compartment in the wall by the door. If you didn't get to it for a few hours in the winter the cream would pop up the lid and the cream would push out as it froze.

Mr. Al Matheson and my Dad Bill Yourk ran free gymnastic classes in the school gym. We were so fortunate to have such an opportunity for healthy activity with good coaches.

Skating at the outdoor rink. Just think, all we had to do was walk down a little and across the street then into the warm shack we would go, sit on the benches around the room and put on our skates. That would also be a place to meet

friends. Outside it was so cold but having that warm-up shack allowed us to skate around and around to that wonderful music and then hurry into the shack to get warm. The warm-up shack was also used with the paddling pool in the summer.

Karen Eckland lived at the end of our block on Caen Street. I remember her Mom taking in foster babies and seeing one of them who had been so neglected that it could only lay on its back and arch backward to look around. I felt so sorry for the little baby and I was so impressed and in awe at Mrs. Eckland who would do such an important work.

I just have to share one more story. I remember while in Montgomery School being very annoyed with John Seib who kept chasing the girls and trying to kiss them. I was so annoyed that I asked my Dad, who was a judge for amateur wrestling and who had wrestled as a young man, if he would teach me a few moves so I could challenge this young Romeo and “force” him to stop chasing us girls. Well, I learned a few moves and practised them with Dad. In a few days I got up the courage and challenged John to a fight after school! He met me outside the school and I reached for him to get him on the ground and he met my move and I ended up losing the fight. That was the end of my wrestling career! And, probably, John kept chasing the girls! I wonder if he still is...Ha Ha.



Clearing snow from the Yourk's backyard rink at 3310 Caen Street, 1958.