

## In memory of those good hockey times.

I played hockey in the seventies in a church league from the age of 16 to when I got married at 20. I had never played organized hockey before, just shinny on the canal behind our school in the Holland Marsh. The requirement for being part of this church league team was that you had to be single and you needed an affiliation with one of the four churches which had a team, namely Alliston Christian Reformed Church (CRC), Barrie CRC, Springdale CRC and Holland Marsh CRC. We played every Tuesday evening at the Schomberg arena at either 7:00 pm or 9:00 pm. We practiced Thursday evenings at Alliston Memorial Arena at midnight. The play was rough. If you turned the other cheek you got plastered up against the boards.

The Alliston team was named the Spud Diggers as we were sponsored by the Vander Zaags of local potato growing fame. No one on our team would play goal and so I volunteered. The job came with goalie leg pads, a belly protector and, a trapper and blocker. I removed the front third of my old skull cap hockey helmet and bolted the metal face cage to the remaining two thirds. I recycled my shoulder and elbow pads from when I was 9 years old. The first year I used my regular skates in goal. I can still feel the zingers that went off the inside of my foot, when I tried to make a save (half of them from warmup). I was not a good goalie but I was all we had. My goal stick bottom turned into slivers as I used to practice with my late brother Bill on the concrete floor of our bank barn. He would shoot pucks at me for hours. During one game my stick broke and since I didn't have a spare, the opposing team lent me an extra one of theirs. In another game the refs made me tape up the slivers.

My biggest bane was that my glasses would always fog up. I couldn't play without them because I was quite myopic. Some would say when my glasses were clean it didn't make any difference. A few of the players on the other teams were quite a bit older and better than us. Some were nearing 30 but because they weren't married they could play. James DeJong from Holland Marsh had a wicked slap shot and one time he shot it right through the webbing of my trapper. It was rumoured he could shoot 100 mph.

In the four years and some 50 games I played goal, we won one game and tied two. I never did get picked up by a scout. What a perseverance and character builder. Nonetheless, we sure had fun.

**In memory of those good times**, I would like to throw out a friendly invitation to my former team mates and community members to donate to the Capital Campaign. For every donation of \$1,500 or more made on behalf of them and their partner to the Because of you, we can Campaign, I will contribute an additional \$100.

Listed below I think are most of us: Harry Byl, Klaas Dekker (Klaas), Richard Dekker, Klaas Dekker (Hendrik), John Dekker, Harry Dekker, Clarence Winters, John Winters, Henry Winters, the late Brian Kouri, Steve Cunningham, Pat Burnie, Cornell Van Ryn, Jack Van Ryn, Peter Rutters, Andrew Rutters, Jan Scheurwater, Dr. Peter Vander Zaag (Anne), the late John Vander Zaag, Peter Vander Zaag (Harke), John Valk, Hans Colyn, Walter Colyn, Harry Hollema, Henry Zondervan, Gary Zondervan, Rev. Dirk Miedema, Rock St. Laurent, Noel St. Laurent, Nick Nyenhuis, Ted Vandevs, and the late Bill Vandevs. We were skillfully coached by the present Rev. Dirk Miedema Emeritus and the late George Zondervan.

**If all of us give \$1,500, we will have raised over \$37,000 toward a very good cause.** Pretend it is warmup in hockey. I'm in net. Try to deek me out...Maybe it will turn good memories into better ones and make us a winning team forty-five years later. It is going to take the entire community to win this!

Between April 19<sup>th</sup> and April 25<sup>th</sup>, 2021, 57 donors have contributed \$33,917 to improving access to health care for all in our community.

*Thank you to all who have contributed: Anonymous, Sharnjit Basi, Mr. Allan Binning, Peter and Karen Harvey, Fatima Mahdi, Bonnie McKellar, Mrs. Patricia Middlebrook, Mr. Barry Mitchell, Sandi Nemenyi, Mr. Jim Nicholson, James Pardy, Ms. Doreen Roberts, Colin Smith, Ms. Ann Turnbull, Caroline Yule.*

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