

## **RANDOM REFLECTIONS: Finding Ways to Adapt?**

**By Kathryn Wishlow**

It is interesting and encouraging to watch so many people currently paying attention to the products they purchase and their origins. I hope this continues! Most of my friends and family have always been conscientious consumers whether for health reasons or just trying to be more environmentally aware. But then “birds of a feather, flock together” as the saying goes.

It often saddened me to see that not everyone tried their best to pay attention to those things that mattered so much to me and mine. I was raised to have strong passions and opinions and seek solutions to problems. However, I was also taught to try not to be too judgemental, since one cannot possibly know another person's background or knowledge level. Every single time I have shared something I knew for a fact about the benefits or the issues regarding anything, the person I informed, gained from the information. They were grateful that I had helped them become more aware. I guess that is the “teacher” in me, constantly gathering information and loving to share and network. Then I do come from the days of “no such thing as the internet or social media”... me and those dinosaurs!

So for many years I have sincerely tried to “Buy Canadian!” and support my local economies. I go to craft fairs and pick up local honey since the nectar comes from plants in the area which is supposed to

help prevent allergies. I do not know if that's true, but I do not have any problems with flowers or trees, only fresh cut lawns and hay. I wonder if that health benefit applies to local jams, apple butters and jellies? No? Oh well, I can always pretend!

I cannot pass buy anything handmade. My cupboards are full of quilts, afghans, goat's milk soaps, crocheted scarves, hats and mittens. All of my end tables sport doilies under the lamps to prevent scratching the antique, wooden surfaces. My house looks like my grandmother's used too ... oh right, I am a grandma! I marvel at the workmanship in knitted sweaters and have a variety of those as well. My friends and family have received gifts of stained glass lamps and nightlights and hand turned wooden bowls or pottery. I have no room left on my walls for paintings, photographs and other works of art. For me, these are all what I call “really buying Canadian” but also “supporting local artisans”.

However, my only consternation came from ... what to do about peanut butter! I loved my extra crunchy Jiff, but that is NOT Canadian. I shared my quandary with everyone I know for the last few months while the nonsense and insults were being hurled north of the 49th parallel. I had just about given up and decided that when my jar was empty, it would sadly never be replaced.

That is when I went to lunch with two girlfriends and shared my peanut chagrin. “We have peanuts grown in Canada,” one of them said. Turns out KERNAL PEANUTS was actually started in Southwestern Ontario by Ernie and Nancy Racz in the late 1970's as an alternative to growing tobacco. By the 1980's they had 150 acres and today they own the largest peanut growing business in Canada! Who knew? Now YOU do, and they are available in Bancroft!

I invite you to read about their business as they embrace sustainability issues. All of their farm buildings are heated by outdoor wood furnaces fuelled by peanut shells and wood which also dries the peanuts in kilns during harvest and supplies the farm with hot water. Any waste peanut oil is recycled and used to fuel their farm tractors. Imagine how that smells! Talk about adapting to changing circumstances ... from tobacco to peanuts ... kudos to them!

*(Kathryn Wishlow belongs to White Pine Writers Inc., a local group of likeminded authors who encourage & support all facets of writing and publishing literary efforts. Follow them on FaceBook or [www.whitepinewriters.ca](http://www.whitepinewriters.ca))*