

# WINTER WONDERLAND



It takes a particular kind of hardiness to survive the long cold winters in Northern Ontario. The snow came early this year; by mid-November the ski trails were open. Since, shortly after Christmas, we've been in a deep freeze, and the snow has continued to accumulate. Despite some predictions of an early spring, most of us in Schumacher are prepared for a late one.



Top Right: A snow-dusted statue of Frederick W. Schumacher tips his hat to those strolling past Laham's Hill. (Photograph used with permission from Mark & Lynn Clement. Visit their website at [www.facebook.com/PhotographyByMarkLynnClement](http://www.facebook.com/PhotographyByMarkLynnClement).) Top Left: The snow has formed tall peaks on roofs, garages and play structures throughout the community. Bottom Left: Down at the McIntyre Park, the snow is as deep as the bench seats and the playground is covered in a thick blanket of snow. Bottom Right: Snowmobilers and winter hikers continue to use the covered picnic tables at the McIntyre Park. (Photos courtesy of Vera Romanowski.)

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# FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Moving to Schumacher in the summer of 1968 was a blur. I was 7 years old and my parents were building a house near "the Ponderosa". You know, that stretch of 4th Ave that turned towards 3rd (now Croatia) where the Marchiori's, the Eckhart's, the McCrae's, Short & Bess Malkin, the Commisso's and Mac & Beryl Cochrane lived. Or maybe you remember it as the last bus stop before you got to Gold Centre.

As a skinny new kid from South Porcupine, I might as well have been from Mars. However, before I knew it, I fell in with the likes of Bill McCrae, Mark Delich and Gord Critchley, among others. These guys were established Schumacher boys, even in grade 2. Our class attendance read like an archive of ancient Schumacher family names: Salamone, Delost, Saarela, Buchar, Katic, Mesic, Vukobratich, and so on. What were these strange names? So many ending in "itch". I was still getting used to the Finnish and Italian names from South Porcupine: Haukijoja, Harjupanula, leurlullo, so it was a lot to digest.

Fortunately, Schumacher was as friendly and accommodating as it was ethnically diverse. In no time I felt completely assimilated. The key ingredient was food ... everyone else's food! Between my own friends and those of my parents, I was introduced to the world's bread basket. Notwithstanding my own mother's exemplary culinary skills, some of the best Italian food was to be found at Pete & Lena Flora's on Poplar (now Vipond Rd.) featuring rabbit and polenta; Finnish bread at the Saarela's on 2nd Ave (now Dwyer); cookies from Joy Critchley's kitchen on 1st Ave (now Father Costello). Ask anyone from Schumacher and they'll tell you about somebody's mom's food. The standout food, however, has to be a Croatian-style barbeque.

I recall the first time I ate a barbequed lamb. It was at Nino Marchiori's home sometime in the early 70's. The scene was a summer BBQ. Lots of friends, neighbors, drinks and food, everyone having a good time. Someone handed me a chunk of meat dripping in fat served on a piece of white bread. What an experience! Not your standard peanut butter and jam sandwich. I'm told that what I had just experienced was Croatian toast at its best. Little did I know then that it would be the first of many.

Years later at a back yard reception celebrating Mark & Sue Chenier's wedding, the guest of honour was a lamb that had been roasted over coals for several hours by Joe Ivancic. Biting into my white bread sandwich of delicious grease and meat took me right back to the Ponderosa. Of course, the neighborhood on 4th Ave near Schumacher Public was littered with highly skilled and experienced BBQ chefs including Mark's mom (Zora Maletich), her brother George, Bronco Vicevic, and Bud Mangotich to name a few.

Mark revealed to me that his grandfather would send him to fetch lamb from the Croatian picnic grounds on weekends where there was usually a lamb being cooked. He was an early day lamb-runner. The picnic grounds were located at present day Porcupine Ski Runners, which would have been a short excursion on bicycle. I recall that there was another picnic spot behind 4th Ave near the current radio tower. I remember hiking up there with Mark to sample the fresh spring water coming from a pipe in the ground. Good times.

Forty-seven years after moving to Schumacher, dozens of which I spent living elsewhere in the Porcupine Camp, and I'm still thinking about what I ate as a kid. You know, that's not a bad thing.

Rob Knox,  
SOS Contributor





# SCHUMACHER EATS

So many edible treats bring back fond memories of Schumacher. Here are just a few that SOS readers including Gloria (Stimac) Zagrodnik, Harry Orszynowicz, Susan Chenier, Robin (Pupich) St. Aubin, and Vera (Pupich) Romanowski shared:

- Vinegar drenched fries, hot dogs with a bark, and huge hot turkey or hot beef sandwiches slathered in gravy from the McIntyre Coffee Shop.
- Chocolate sprinkles on your vanilla ice cream cone from Johnny's.
- A chuck wagon sandwich and pitcher of cold draft from the Grand View Hotel.
- Homemade wine from the Pupichs, Vukelichs, Kolichs, Vukovichs, etc.
- Tomato juice and crackers in Miss Murphy's Kindergarten class at SPS.
- The huge array of candies at Laham's. For 5 cents you could fill a small paper bag. You hand picked them with never a thought for hygiene.
- The little bags of fudge and sponge candy prepared at home by the high school girls and sold at the football games at the McIntyre Park.

Best known for the numerous drinking establishments along First Avenue / Father Costello Drive, Schumacher has also been home to a number of restaurants over the years. From ethnic cuisine to roadhouse meals and diner fare, Schumacher has seen it all. A few establishments, like the McIntyre Coffee Shop, have stood the test of time. Some were only in existence for a short time. Others evolved as they were taken over by new owners with differing tastes. Do you remember enjoying the food at:

- Laham's
- Goodies Take Out / Big D's
- A&W/Benjamin's/Greek Village/Olympus Grill
- Chatterbox / McIntyre Coffee Shop
- Ponderosa / Casey's Bar & Grill
- Robin's Donuts
- Tisdale Hotel Restaurant
- Johnny's/Sagan's Grill/Sargent's Table/Dickie Poo Inn
- Guy's Place
- The Daffodil Grill
- Beamish's Snack Bar
- College Inn Chinese Restaurant
- Mugs
- Kava House
- Shangri-la
- Hazel's Grill
- Schumacher Hotel Fondue Restaurant



Served with a cold beer, bread, green onions and tomatoes, barbequed lamb has always been the hallmark of Croatian summer gatherings in Schumacher. Photo: Vera Romanowski



The Orszynowicz and Zajac Families share a meal of perogies and cabbage rolls between Christmas and New Years circa 1960. Photo: Harry Orszynowicz



# THE LIGHTHOUSE KEEPER

Daniel "Tixie" Hannigan is a hockey man through and through. He is a true unsung hero of the game. A skate sharpener and hockey coach for fifty years, he has lived out his hockey dream happily and humbly behind the scenes. What is so special about him is that his own hockey dream revolves around dreaming big for others. He takes the time to notice the promise that exists in young people who, for a myriad of reasons, may not see their own potential. He articulates the hockey dream to them: the next level of league play, the rehabilitation after a sports injury, a spot on a varsity team, the NHL. If scouts are watching, he reminds players to showcase only their best. When scouts aren't watching, he motivates players to get good enough to get noticed. In the end, though, he models and fosters a sheer love of the game. In countless little ways, Tixie Hannigan inspires others to have big dreams, to believe in them, and to work hard to achieve them.

Picture a hockey arena at 5:45 in the morning. It is still dark. It is very cold outside. It is very cold inside. Wherever you are, you can see your breath. The air inside is palpable with a lingering smell of leather and sweat. Tixie flicks on the lights in the iconic McIntyre Arena in Schumacher, Ontario. He is like the lighthouse keeper of this place; and he knows it better than anybody. He

could tell you its secrets, its glories, and its ghost stories. Tixie opens the well-worn door to his skate sharpening shop, grabs his beaten leather skates, his whistle, and a few pucks. He shoots the pucks down to the middle of the ice to prepare for the group of young hockey players who are on the ice at 6:30 a.m. sharp, two mornings a week. He is waiting for them. He has high expectations of them. They know this, and soon they will be gearing up.

On the ice, Coach Hannigan will pay close attention to the players' technique, point out flaws, give tips, and applaud progress when earned. When the players translate their skills into successful play in their own games and tournaments, he celebrates with them, albeit discreetly. Most of the time, he simply shows his support by watching them play and ruminating about how he can perfect their stride or backhand, or simply improve their own leadership during a game. On other occasions, he will approach a player and give him a firm slap on the back of the helmet without words, as none are needed. Sometimes players come to him long after the fact with the grand news of their hockey achievements, or he reads about them in the paper and sits back with a quiet, satisfied air. Such moments are an ethereal highlight of the evolving hockey dream.

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A self-proclaimed “rink rat”, Tixie, now 72 years old, always takes time to discuss hockey past and present. The McIntyre is his second home; he grew up there alongside his hockey-loving friends, brother and cousins, most of whom went on to play in the NHL. He passed on his love of hockey to the next generation of Hannigans by coaching and raising his two sons at the Mac.

Tixie has worked at the McIntyre Arena and other arenas, in different capacities, since he was five years old. His work has sometimes been behind the scenes and sometimes out in front. In his younger days, he groomed the ice with brooms and oil barrels, taking care to clean and polish the surface until it shone. As he grew up, he studied the game both as a player and a spectator. He, himself, was a tailored defence player, perfecting the art of the hip check (as some old timers would rumour), and playing as far as Junior B. He began coaching at age 22 and hasn't stopped. He has coached voluntarily at every level of league play and for a local high school team. In the process, he has touched the lives of numerous young people in the community.

When it comes to his trade as a skate sharpener, Mr. Hannigan has an intuitive work ethic that is rare by today's standards. Everyone counts on his expertise with the cut of a skate because they know he takes skate sharpening very seriously. The cut of a skate is everything in a game of hockey. The lack of technique in sharpening a pair of skates can make the difference in a player's proficiency and career. There is a reason why, at the height of his skate sharpening business, Hannigan was turning out well over a hundred

pairs a day. Even when he is sharpening the rival team's skates, he follows the time-honoured, golden rule of sportsmanship. One time, while coaching his team in a semi-final game, he skillfully sharpened the opposing team's skates ... all except one pair. During the first period, he left the bench and sharpened that last pair. In the end, his own team lost 2-1. After the game, some of the players from the other team asked him to sharpen their skates again even though they didn't really need sharpening. They just wanted to thank him. And, of course, he sharpened their skates perfectly for their gold medal game.

It is not the type of work one does, but how one does it that matters. Even more importantly, it is who one is that really counts. Tixie's legacy is his sense of humour and his “old school” values of honesty, generosity, dedication, and fairness. One cannot grow up in Schumacher and not joke around, know everyone's business, and care earnestly for one's fellow man. If anyone roots for the underdog, in any sense of the word, it's him. Being a fixture at the “Mac”, the hub of hockey in the north, Tixie is certainly both “in the know” and well-known.

Years after they have graduated from Hannigan's morning hockey school and moved on to greater heights in the hockey world, or followed other paths, the youth of this mighty northern mining town remember Tixie Hannigan, the unsung hero, and how he helped them live the hockey dream.

Laura Kelly with assistance from  
Jay, Lee, and Taurie Hannigan  
SOS Contributors



Tixie Hannigan's second home is his skate shop inside the McIntyre Arena. He has been a fixture in the local hockey community for over 50 years.

A condensed version of this article was submitted as an entry in the 2014 Kraft Canada Top 100 Unsung Hockey Heroes Contest. Mr. Hannigan was awarded a secondary prize in the contest. He will receive a plaque in his name to honour his contributions to hockey in his community; a \$2000 donation to women's hockey was also made on his behalf by Kraft Canada.





## NEW FIRE CHIEF ELECTED



Lifelong Schumacher resident Don Hartling has been elected District Chief of the Schumacher Volunteer Fire Department. Don, who is retired from Ontario Hydro, spent 31 years as a power-line maintainer. He has been a volunteer firefighter for the past 37 years; he joined the Schumacher brigade in December of 1978. He has served the community under the leadership of District Chief Brundy Deflice and District Chief George Delich. Don was elected as a Schumacher Volunteer Fire Department Captain in 1986 and as District Deputy Chief in January of 1992.

In addition to District Chief Hartling, the Schumacher Volunteer Fire Department leadership staff is comprised of District Deputy Chief Mark Delich, Captain Marty Delich, Captain Mark Johnston, and Captain Joey Komesarovic. In addition to responding to emergency calls, members of the Schumacher Volunteer Fire Department organize the annual Mr. Schumacher Gift Exchange, participate in community food drives, and assist at community events.



Don Hartling, a lifelong Schumacher resident who has been a volunteer firefighter for the past 37 years, has been elected District Chief of the Schumacher Volunteer Fire Department.

### VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTER POSITIONS OPEN

The Schumacher Volunteer Fire Department is currently short of its allotted membership.

Individuals interested in applying can obtain applications from Timmins City Hall.

A police check, driver's abstract, high school diploma, and valid driver's license are required.



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## EDITORIAL

Happy New Year! It's been a cold start to 2015, but the year is shaping up to be good one for the Spirit of Schumacher newsletter. More and more readers are coming forward to share their stories and memories and for that I am truly grateful!

The culinary delights of Schumacher are abundant and varied. Some of my childhood favourites included "swamp water" pop from the Mac, "grease sandwiches" (I've never called it Croatian toast), and, of course, my Babi's baking.

Although I've never played organized hockey, Tixie Hannigan has sharpened my skates since I was a little girl. Hannigan's Sports used to be located at Bob & Danica Pupich's place on First Avenue. The impending arrival of my little sister, Jen, apparently prompted its relocation next to the old CIBC bank. (My parents' growing family required an apartment extension into Tixie's existing shop.) Congratulations are extended to District Chief Hartling and the leadership staff at the Schumacher Volunteer Fire Department.

Each SOS reader has a unique take on our shared history and present reality, and I encourage all of you to share you anecdotes, memories, and photos with the SOS community! Drop me an email (schumachergirl@gmail.com) or send me a letter (PO Box 13, Schumacher, P0N 1G0).

Until next time,  
*Lisa Romanowski,*  
SOS Editor

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# MAY READER POLL

**Please share how your life has been positively influenced by individuals with ties to Schumacher.**

Photos welcome!  
Responses will be shared in the May edition!

Email your response to [schumachergirl@gmail.com](mailto:schumachergirl@gmail.com) or send it by regular post to **PO Box 13, Schumacher, ON, P0N 1G0**



## UPCOMING EVENTS

### McIntyre Curling Club

**March 8 & 9, 2015**

Little Rock Bonspiel

**March 12 to 15, 2015**

Brokerlink Northern Ontario Curling Association  
Mixed Provincials

**March 21, 2015**

Closing Banquet

**March 24 to 26, 2015**

Joe Gubbels Bonspiel (New Horizons Club)

**March 27 to 29, 2015**

Fisherman's Bonspiel (Men)  
Ladies Closing Spiel

### Porcupine Ski Runners

**February 22, 2015**

35th annual PSR Loppet

<http://porcupineskirunners.com/loppet>

**February 28 to March 1, 2015**

Ontario Cup Race #4 - Provincial Competition.

Trails will be closed to the public.

Come and cheer on our local racers!

**Ongoing PSR Events**

**Ladies' Night: Tuesdays (6:30 PM)**

Get out, have fun, stay fit.

Beginners to experts welcome.

Contact Christine Dorion: [christine@nconn.com](mailto:christine@nconn.com)

**Ski Lessons Wednesdays (1:00 PM)**

Expert classic technique instruction from Lorne Luhta.

Cost is \$20 for a one hour lesson.

Call PSR at 705-360-1444 for info or to register.

### McIntyre Arena

**February 20 to 22, 2015**

Mushkegowuk Challenge Cup

**February 27 to March 1, 2015**

NOHA Tournament of Champions





# SACHA INFORMATION & UPDATES

## SACHA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Businesses are invited to purchase business card ads in upcoming issues of the newsletter. Cast is \$25 / issue or \$90 / year.

It is estimated that 5000 people read each newsletter in either its print or online form. Contact us for more information.

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\* Additional Contribution

## CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Readers are invited to submit announcements, stories, photos, and songs/poems celebrating the past, present, or future of Schumacher for consideration in future editions. Please include the creator's full name and the full names of anyone pictured. Submissions can be sent by email or regular post.

## SOS NEWSLETTER

The Spirit of Schumacher community newsletter is published quarterly (February, May, August, November) by the Schumacher Arts, Culture & Heritage Association, a not-for-profit organization. Printed newsletters are distributed free to all postal boxes in Schumacher.

To receive free PDF versions of the SOS Newsletter, email: [subscribe@spiritofschumacher.ca](mailto:subscribe@spiritofschumacher.ca)

## CONTACT US

### SOS Newsletter Inquiries

[schumachergirl@gmail.com](mailto:schumachergirl@gmail.com)  
 PO Box 13, Schumacher, ON, P0N 1G0

### General SACHA Inquiries:

[info@spiritofschumacher.ca](mailto:info@spiritofschumacher.ca)

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### Online Content Inquires:

[kylIELaughren@gmail.com](mailto:kylIELaughren@gmail.com)



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