*Ottawa Outlook, nee North Hero News and World Review ….…. Mostly stuff no one else would print.*

Thursday, January 19, 2012 c:/outlk11, 12wc02 (2011 Letter # 2)

 **Just Needed Milk**

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 The population of Ottawa is some 870,000. Sometimes this is hard to believe.

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 No milk in the house this morning. Normally bad enough in itself, but during abstinence, a situation which can not be tolerated. At a slack-time, around 2 P.M., off to the closest Market, a Metro, which is open 24/7. Before we got off the block, received and returned waves from two neighbors. Was in the store maybe 5 minutes when,

 *“Hi Ken, fancy meeting you here.”*  Daughter Linda. A short chat and we went our separate aisles. We were halfway down our aisle when,

 *“Hey, … where is your dog?”* A fellow early morning dog-walker. Don’t know his name, but think of him as ‘Stickman’ as he always has two walking sticks in hand as he goes at a fast clip along the river path.

 *“Same place your sticks are, at home. Stores too small for Bailey.”* This guy doesn’t know my name either. Bailey and I are probably, ‘The Slo-Pokes’ in his mind.

 Time for a checkout line Oh gee, one is almost open and the checker is a woman we haven’t seen in over a year. The checker looks over from her current customer’

 *“Hello Mr. Jefferson, good to see you.”*

The customer in front goes off. Another male customer comes up behind.

 *“Who’s Mr. Jefferson?”,* knowing he's not*.*

 *“This is Mr. Jefferson”,* Checker pointing at me, *“An old customer of mine”.*

 *“Hmmmn, … looks like an American Yank to me”.* (Ken is wearing his NYC toque.)

 *“That’s right, …I’m a real New York City kid.”*

Totaling done, bill paid. we exit,

 *“Well, have a good day all.”*

In addition to the milk we had also bought bags of salt to de-ice the situation at home, walks & steps etc. We are putting them in the trunk of the car. A large hefty man is slowly walking up and looking at me intently. He halts right by the trunk.

 *“Do you have someone who clears your snow?*

We return the intent look and slowly say,

 *“Yes … we do, … and I think, … it’s you Gilles.”.*

 *“HA! Thought I recognized you.”*

Well, Gilles is a very convivial plowman and we had a nice conversation in the parking lot. Driving home could not help but think, *“ Gee Whiz, … just like the A&B Market in Grande Isle, Vermont\*.. If people are this friendly with an old, reclusive, grouch like me, how are they towards normal people.”*

After exchanging waves with another dog walker en route home, mission “Get Milk” was accomplished and it would be milk in lieu of brandy with post dinner chocolate.

 From ‘Small Town Ottawa’

 Lucille, Bailey & Ken.

 \* Population Town of Grand Isle, Vermont:6970.

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