

Bear Life Lived

Born February 22nd 1935 Died ????

Let's begin with the name, Ehor William Gauk. You wouldn't think you could do much with two four letter names. Ehor's mother Mary filled out the form for his birth certificate and it came back as Thor with her written cursive "l" mistaken for a "T". She promptly had this corrected and to make sure it wouldn't happen again, she changed the spelling to Ehor. The middle name was after his father Vasyl which in English becomes William and he was often called "Bill" or just Gauk. Ehor was a good student and soon his classmates began to call him "Eager" and because he was a bit nerdy it quickly turned to "Eager Dork" which wasn't half as bad as his brother Orest's fate. But here I can't elaborate for fear of offending him again. Ehor was born the second of three children born to Mary (nee Bayer) and William "Vasyl" Gauk. His brother Orest was four years older and his sister Gloria was three years younger. Many thought that Ehor was named after Eeyore the donkey character in Winnie the Pooh created by A.A. Milne in 1926. That Eeyore's fame didn't reach the prairies till much later.

There are about 50 million Ukrainians and half of those are male and about half of those of named Ihor. In Russia the name is Igor, because Russians have trouble with the "h" sound and similarly Ukrainians have trouble with the "g" sound. Hence Igor becomes Ihor in Ukraine and Gauk becomes Hauk. Helena becomes Galina in Russia and so on. Ehor actually met another Ihor Gauk in Ukraine when all the while he considered himself "the only one in captivity".

The name Gauk was a generational throwback from the days when Catherine the Great encouraged many Germans to move to Ukrainian lands and to this day, the name is not uncommon in Germany and even in Israel. The name was pronounced "Gowk" but spelled Gauk. In the Ukrainian language it became

a two syllable name “Gaw-ook” as it is often said in Ukrainian circles to this day. When Ehor went to study in Chicago, on the first day he was asked “what’s your name?” Ehor. “What’s your middle name?” William. “Hi Bill” and to this day he remains as Bill to his American friends. It didn’t end there. There came the age of nick names and to many he became known as Bear. “Teddy”, for many because of his friendly nature and “Grizzly” to others for his fierce disciplinarian moments. In China he was Gau Ke and the little children called him Gau Ke Ye Ye and Gau Ke Bo Bo which meant uncle or grandpa Gauk.



Ehor was born at the Anna Turnbull Geneva Mission Hospital on the shores of Wakaw Lake in Saskatchewan delivered by the Reverend Doctor Scott. All his life he thought how wonderful it was that the early prairie missionaries saw fit to build hospitals rather than churches. Few knew that Ehor was very religious and late in life he admitted to praying many times a day. At one point he even toyed with joining the clergy when he wasn’t sure he would gain entry into medical school. But he always maintained an

aversion to churches, even though his father was instrumental in building several Orthodox churches in Saskatchewan. He had a similar disdain for funerals and cemeteries. He loved to hear the nice things said about him before he died and he did. Funerals are meant to be supportive when often the ritual is very stressful for the family and cemeteries were a “waste of real estate”.



Ehor arrived in the last years of the depression. His father had built a tiny shack on skids that served as a dry goods store needed by the men working on a make-work project to build a rail line from Saskatoon to Melfort. As the rail road progressed he would hire horses to move the store to a village just ahead of the construction. He ended up in the tiny village of Yellow Creek only to discover that the homesteaders there were mostly Ukrainian immigrants and they persuaded him to stay. The land was poor in that area and the locals survived by trapping fur animals and cutting cordwood to sell as fuel in the cities. His business grew to include a hardware store, a Cockshutt farm implement dealership, a lumber yard, a chicken ranch and an apiary. He loved working with bees, whereas Ehor’s mother became dangerously allergic to bee bites. The village grew to three elevators, three times a week

passenger train service, and a two-room school with four grades in each room, a row for each grade. Grade ones could hear what the grade fours were learning. Ehor's father managed to buy a few quarter sections of land which he rented out to Mr. Buzikevich with whom he got along very well and eventually he bought the land.

Roads in the area were only passible in the summer months and only in dry weather. The first family car arrived when Ehor was five, a used Essex. It was a 50 km trip to the grandparent farm of Dmitro Bayer near Wakaw. Dark clouds would mean a cancelled trip or a quick retreat home with memorable episodes of being stuck in prairie gumbo. The car was up on wooden blocks for the long winter and horse drawn sleighs, often covered with a little shelter, the so-called cabooses were the way people got around. The caboose was designed more elegantly by some with tiny wood burning heaters and padded seating. It was impossible to see anything out of the very frosted small windows of the sled carriage. This usually wasn't a problem with the horses knowing the way home. Several settlers were burned to death when their caboose encountered a snow drift and rolled over. The train came three times a week and only if the line wasn't obstructed by snow drifts. Huge steam driven rotary snow blowers would come around to clear the lines. Telegraph service was available at the railway station. Electricity and indoor plumbing did not exist. About 100 people lived in the village with an Orthodox church and a Catholic church. There was very little communication between the members of each faith. Visiting clergy would come about once a month. On other Sundays parishioners gathered to pray and sing hymns. There was a tiny building behind the church to store bodies of those that died in the winter for funerals and burials when the soil thawed.



Ehor's father was an officer in the Austrian army for 7 years at a time when western Ukraine was part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. His training included extensive exposure to music with the need for military band leaders. He knew the basics of many instruments and gave Ehor his first piano lessons. He spoke German and Polish fluently, but Ukrainian was his mother tongue. The war went poorly for the Austrians and he was transferred to the Italian front near the Adige River. He sustained a wound to his left arm and was evacuated to Austria. Meanwhile the situation in western Ukraine was deteriorating with the advance of communist forces. He joined the Ukrainian army to push back the Russian forces and in the action his brother would die in his arms of typhus. To persuade his nation that they could administer and benefit from their own investments, cooperative businesses were being established. Ehor's father needed \$100 in cash to get ahead with any business. He decided to go to Canada in 1926 "to make \$100". He arrived, met Mary Bayer, married her in 1928, and only returned to visit Ukraine when he was 75 years old.



Ehor's mother Mary was conceived in Ukraine but born in Canada soon after the family arrived and settled on a homestead across the road from her uncle John Luciuk's farm. Her family spent their first winter in a dugout shelter. Brother John was the eldest and Mary was the eldest of the four sisters that followed. Four other siblings succumbed in early childhood.

Her father Dimitro Bayer became a very successful and highly respected farmer who had a lot of class. He insisted that the family dressed well. The females of the house all wore hats and babushka kerchiefs were not allowed. The two story house on the crest of the hill was the finest in the area and the family car was a four door convertible. A peacock strutting in the yard completed the picture. Mary's mother Martha was as close to being a saint as ever there was such a person. She was soft spoken, loved the farm animals and always had a soothing word for whoever need it. She never went to school but taught herself to read by following the text in the book of the prayers she knew by heart. Ehor's mother had troubles with school until it was discovered she was severely myopic and needed glasses. She surged ahead in school and finished her

high-school in Saskatoon and her teaching certificate at the Normal School in Regina. She taught school in a country school west of Yellow Creek for a few years but stopped teaching to help her husband with his business ventures. Ehor's father was well versed in accounting, but always needed his mother's help with English. Ukrainian was spoken in the home and even the few non-Ukrainian settlers in the village also learned to speak Ukrainian. Ehor had his first real exposure to English when he entered Grade One.



Mother with the glasses, Katherine, Alexandra and Anne in the back seat with Dmitro Bayer at the wheel and his son John beside him

Ehor's parents finally concluded that Yellow Creek wasn't a suitable environment to raise their family. Orest went on to study law and practiced in Grande Prairie Alberta. He and his wife Roma (nee Worobets) had three sons. Orest's legal firm was highly regarded and he was named a Queen's Council in the company of Peter Laugheed who was honored with a QC on the same day. Gloria went to Normal School in Saskatoon and taught school near Melfort Saskatchewan and later in Vancouver. Gloria married her high-school sweetheart Wally Shoemay and they had two sons. Ehor's parents also accepted a 6 year old foster child by the name of John Calyn. He was a close family member until his teenage years when he went astray, fell in with bad company and spent some time in prison. Ehor's parents were very hurt by this experience. Johnny would surface now and then and seemed to be on the straight and level, only to disappear again.

The Yellow Creek businesses were all sold, except for the farms and the family moved to Prince Albert Saskatchewan in the spring of 1945. His father purchased the Gilmore Ice Company from an old widow

who could no longer cope with the management. The ice business was still flourishing and consisted of a huge insulated ice house. Ice was harvested from the Saskatchewan River and stored for the rest of the year. The land area of the business included 11 city lots with a large two story home at one end and a garage and barn on the other side of the ice house. The heavy work of pulling the 500 kg blocks of ice out of the river and into the ice house was done by two black Percheron horses, who were like large family pets. One was named Bud, the other Nigger which at the time was a very common and acceptable name for a black horse. There was a rail siding beside the icehouse and room for two large gardens. One garden was dedicated to potatoes and the other to various vegetables and hundreds of gladioli. The property also came with a private hand cranked gasoline tank. Ehor entered grade 5 at the Queen Mary School in the spring of 1945. The school was a huge two story brick structure, which sadly has since burned down. The war was over and he learned to sing "Land of Hope and Glory" and other victory songs. His teacher was Miss Webster and the principal was Mr. Loucks. He excelled in Grade 6 and 7 and one early December day while he was in Grade 7, he was called to Mr. Louck's office to be told that he would be advanced to Grade 8. He claimed that someday he would go back to Grade 7 to find out what he had missed. He never led his class again. Ehor loved reading, but he knew and accepted the fact that he was the world's slowest reader. All his life he was very much aware that he gained most of his knowledge through his ears rather than his eyes, and it wasn't until he retired that he realized that he was quite dyslexic. He credited Classic Comics for helping him through some of his English reading assignments. Grade 12 Latin was required for entry into med school, and Ehor managed a pass mark of 50%. High School in Prince Albert meant attending Prince Albert Collegiate Institute, PACI now over a century old, and Ehor's fame is currently featured on the school Honor Wall of famous grads including the tenor John Vickers, Olive Diefenbaker and children's story writer Douglas Hill. The high school was on the hill and the Gauk home was in the valley by the river but in the four years Ehor would come home for lunch every day except for a few days when the temperature dipped to -40C. Ehor would often meet Mr. Diefenbaker walking downhill to his office, while Ehor was plodding uphill to high school and invariably he was greeted with "good morning young man". He also delivered ice to the Diefenbaker home.



With the war ended, Ehor's father discovered that a number of his relatives were in refugee camps in Germany. Arrangement were quickly made for them to come to Canada and ultimately eleven of them arrived and all lived in the large but very crowded Gauk home until one by one they found employment and their own lodging. One of them, Irene Gauk, was an excellent photographer who had trained in the Agfa School of photography in Dresden. She shared her photographic skills with Ehor who went on to be the school photographer, the University newspaper cameraman and on weekends he shot weddings all over Saskatchewan. Irene is almost 100 years old and lives with her son in Port Alberni.

Music was always his love and the piano his instrument. Ehor may have had perfect pitch. He could not tolerate any instrument or voice not properly tuned to the degree that he acquired a piano tuning wrench to tune his piano. His children would tease him by playing guitar duets on intentionally out of tune instruments. His music teacher was Madame Carrier who spoke little English and who conducted her lessons entirely in French. Ehor knew enough French to understand her and got as far as Royal Conservatory Grade 9 exam. She arranged for him to study with the famous Lyle Gustin in Saskatoon when Ehor started pre-med in 1952 and his parents bought him a small piano to complete the picture. Mr. Gustin demanded a least 4 hours of daily practice. The photography work with the University newspaper The Sheaf was fun but also very time consuming. By mid-term Ehor marks suffered and he was summoned by the Dean asking him which two classes would he like to drop to save the year. Ehor informed the Dean that he had dropped music, and dropped photography, and that he wished to continue with all five classes. His wish was granted. He recalled that he never worked as hard in all his life as he did to rescue the year and his marks were much improved.

Meanwhile in Prince Albert, the ice business quickly melted as iceboxes were replaced with electric refrigerators. Summer was a very busy time in the ice business. Both Orest and Ehor worked as "ice men" during their summer school breaks which meant early rising, preparing about 150 blocks of ice that came in scored slabs and when broken up would each make 15 to 20 kg cubes. Two cubes would fit in a heavy canvas ice bag slung over the shoulder and a third block was carried in ice tongs dripping all the way. Deliveries were done three times a week and each ice man would top up about 135 ice boxes by noon. Ice men expected the space for the ice to be available only for the ice, but many customers often kept their precious foods right on or near the ice surface. This would only slow down and frustrate the ice deliverer. Since deliveries started early in the morning, iceboxes were often conveniently kept on the front porch or close to the home entry. It was a common occurrence for ice men to find residents in various degrees of undress at that hour of the morning and much humor evolved from this experience. This work ensured a measure of physical fitness not to be found in modern gyms and Ukrainian dancing only enhanced his musculature. Later when Ehor was accepted to participate in a summer electroencephalography (EEG) research program, his father was not pleased because this meant the additional cost of hiring another ice-man. Here the family doctor, Dr. Savisky, prevailed and persuaded Mr. Gauk that this experience was essential to Ehor's professional development and it came to pass that EEGs were very much a part of his life's work.

As the ice business vanished, the fuel business flourished with the sale of coal and cord wood and later fuel oil when a small refinery was built next door to fuel the city power plant. Ehor's father negotiated a contract with the refinery to deliver all their fuel oil to customers within a 100 mile radius of Prince Albert. A small fleet of tanker trucks did the job and business was booming when the refinery officials decided to reduce the delivery price by half. Ehor's father refused to accept this arrangement and offered to sell the fleet of tanker trucks to whoever wanted to accept the lesser rate. A buyer emerged, but within months it was announced that a gas line would be coming to Prince Albert. The power plant

would switch to gas, all fuel oil furnaces were changed to gas and the refinery was dismantled. The new owner of the fleet of fuel tankers went bankrupt.

Medicine was always Ehor's ambition from the age of four when he was immunized by his family physician Dr. Micheal Savisky who became his hero and mentor. On weekends while in high school, Ehor would hold retractors while Dr. Savisky operated. He fainted during a caesarian section and Dr. Savisky had to hold him down with his foot when he came around to prevent him from contaminating the field. He applied to enter medical school at the University of Saskatchewan in 1954. He was delighted to hear from the U of S Dean of Medicine that he had been accepted but "you're too damn young and I need the room for the veteran applicants". The Dean suggested that Ehor take whatever courses were of interest to him, and regardless of his marks, he would be assured of a place the class starting in 1955. To begin with Ehor accepted this option with much joy. However after discussions with a few friends he felt that perhaps a year would be better applied to post-graduate studies, he made a late application to the University of Manitoba and was accepted. U of M was a much older institution that strived not only to teach medicine but also to develop a candidate's character. Ehor's four years in Winnipeg were stressful. He suffered with migraine and his psoriasis flared up, but he endured. His class held the record for one of highest attrition rates in the history of the school with about a quarter of the class failing or quitting. Ehor's approach to teaching medicine would be very different and his great mentor to attain this change was Dr. Harry Bain at the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto.

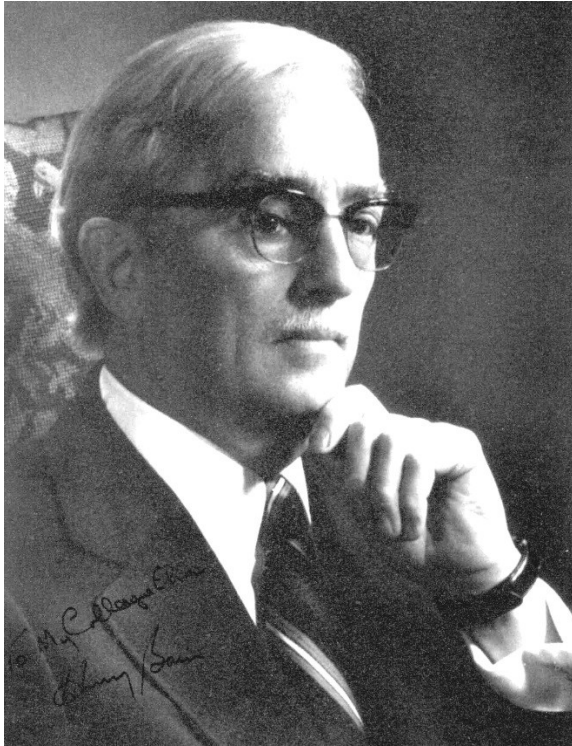
In 1958, straight out of med school and right after convocation, Ehor joined the first official Canadian student delegation to the Soviet Union. Walter Tarnapolsky was a Saskatchewan law school student who became president of the national university student body and the trip was his idea. He was the tour leader and later in life he became a dean of law and a prominent Ontario judge. There was a thaw in the icy relationship between USSR and the west and this trip was planned as a student exchange program with Russian students coming to Canada. A return Russian group never materialized. A second group of Canadians went in 1959 but this group was harassed severely and no other delegations followed. Initially 70 students were selected from Canadian universities but the whole plan collapsed when the air charter company that had been contracted to take the group had a terrible accident with the loss of all aboard a charter flight returning from Ireland. Only nine individuals were still prepared to go with Ehor being one of them. Additional government funding would become available if there were at least 10 in the group and if each individual would pay \$900. Ehor's father was anxious that Ehor should go primarily to restore contacts with his family, and Ehor managed to persuade a family friend, Audrey Remenda, with whom Ehor maintained contact all his life, and she made up the number ten. They flew to Montreal and from there to London, then to Copenhagen and finally to Helsinki Finland. From there the group took the train to Leningrad. This was an adventure that lasted 11 weeks and one that remained clearly etched in Ehor's memory. Included in that group of ten was a newly-minted engineer by the name of Peter Munk. All travel was by train and usually at night to save on accommodation costs. The group was warmly welcomed everywhere primarily as tourists with occasional exposure to soviet students. The tour took the group to Moscow, Kiev, Warsaw, a Mazurian Lake student camp in northern Poland, then to Krakow, and finally Prague with the group breaking up in Paris. Ehor managed to have a very emotional gathering with relatives in Ukraine including his father's brother and his paternal uncle Reverend Stephen Gauk who later came to Canada and served as a priest in the Oshawa area till the age of 100. Ehor went on to attend the World Fair in Brussels, then to London and home.



Ehor and Peter Munk in the Tatra mountains of Poland 1958

His internship was supposed to start on July 1st and the only hospital that would accept a two month late arriving intern was the University Hospital in Edmonton. This turned out very convenient because his brother was beginning his law practice in Edmonton at the same time. Starting on September 1st meant that he had to forfeit his holidays for the next four years to get back to the traditional July 1st startup date used in most post graduate medical training programs. A year of a general exposure to medicine gave Ehor a great interest in neurology and in pediatrics. His neurology interested started in medical school and he spent several summers doing research with Dr. Michael Saunders in the area of electroencephalography, EEGs, which earned him a B.Sc. in Medicine. Dr. Saunders was a neurophysiologist with a degree in electrical engineering. He was a pioneer in computer science and the founder of the cybernetics department at the U of M. He also served as a consultant to NASA, the American space agency. Ehor loved the orderly approach that is the basis of neurology, but he was troubled that most of the patients were ancient souls with strokes. Similarly he loved working with children, but again he wasn't thrilled with all the coughing and diarrhea. If somehow he could combine the two disciplines he would be happy and he managed to do this at a time when the subspecialty of pediatric-neurology was at its very infancy. There were no recognized training programs and both neurologists and pediatricians scoffed at the idea. Ehor joined the Air Force reserve while an intern. It was the only acceptable way to moonlight and make a little money as a physician with the Search and Rescue Squadron based in Cold Lake. He could earn more money in a day than he did all month as an intern. He rose in rank to being a Wing Commander although he never went to officer school, never owned a uniform and never knew who or how to salute. But he did enjoy his time with the various survival exercises and he managed to have the Air Force arrange for his flight to study in England. Ehor persisted and this ambition took him to the Children's Memorial Hospital in Chicago, the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto, and the National Hospital at Queen Square in London England and back to Sick Kids in Toronto. A four year journey and in the midst of all this he married Doreen Ronaghan and became father to his son Stephen who joined the family in England when he was only two weeks old. At the time in Canada there were two levels of medical specialists, the certified and the Fellow of the Royal

Society, the FRCP(C). Ehor passed his certification exams in pediatrics as well as his American Board of Pediatrics in USA which allowed him to practice as a pediatric specialist in both countries. The FRCP was a much more difficult quiz and passing it would open the doors to an academic career. Ehor did not consider himself prepared to take this route, but he was persuaded to do so by his mentor Dr. Harry Bain who treated Ehor like as a son.



Ehor earned his FRCP in 1964 but it didn't open any doors. The subspecialty of pediatric neurology was not recognized and he could only practice as a pediatrician. Dr. Walter McKenzie, the Dean of Medicine at the U of A told Ehor "make up your mind and be a pediatrician or a neurologist". He would have to do an additional three years of training to obtain his neurology fellowship. He was asked to join the Baker Clinic in Edmonton, a group of 28 specialist including three pediatricians all of whom were only too ready to unload any of their patients with neurological problems. Ehor's appointment book was full the day he started practicing at the Baker clinic in July of 1964, the same month his daughter Rachel was born. He became busier by the day as the first pediatric neurologist in the prairies at a time when there were five others in the country, two in Toronto, two in Montreal and one in Vancouver. This was before other subspecialties such as infections disease or genetics evolved. He attended all the cases of meningitis, all the inherited disorders such as muscular dystrophy and while he was writing thousands of consultations he was also teaching as an unpaid volunteer with the medical school. Gradually pediatric neurology became recognized by the Royal College as a subspecialty and Ehor was grandfathered in as one of the founders of the movement and later he became president of the Canadian Association of Child Neurologists. He was also accepted as a member of the American Association of Child Neurologists. Now there are about a few dozen pediatric neurologists in the city and a few hundred in the country. In 1973 Dr. Ernest McCoy the chairman of the department of pediatrics approached Ehor to join the Faculty of Medicine on the condition that he would serve as the attending physician to the

almost 100 severely disabled bed-ridden children at the newly established Cormack Centre housed in what earlier had been one wing of the original Misericordia Hospital. Earlier these were children who were residents of an overcrowded facility in Red Deer. Ehor accepted this offer and left the Baker Clinic after a nine years of a very harmonious partnership. Ehor was comfortable with caring for these kids many of whom had been his patients earlier. But whenever he had to be away, he found it almost impossible to find anyone who would cover for him. With time Ehor discovered that McCoy was receiving more money from the government for Ehor's services than Ehor was receiving as his academic salary. After eight years of virtually continuous medical care of the Cormack kids, McCoy transferred this responsibility to two newly appointed professors. Gradually Ehor rose in academic rank to becoming a full professor which required local, national and international citations for approval. Wailing kids were hard on Ehor's nerves and he did everything in his power to keep his patients happy and quiet. He rarely wore a white medical lab coat. He festooned his office with dozens of teddy bears, and parted with them freely. He learned the "Smarties trick" from Dr. Paul Sandifer, the first pediatric neurologist in Britain, with whom Ehor worked the year he spent in London. Ehor always kept a small box of Smarties in his open medical bag immediately visible to any kid who entered his office. With time and concern about sugar, calories, obesity and dental health forced him to abandon this calming strategy. But he always boasted that there wasn't a kid he couldn't examine.



Home life in the Gauk household could be at best described as hectic. Music was a very large part of the picture and at one point the children had as many as eleven music lessons in a week. All played classical guitar (tuned by their father) and piano and all sang and took voice lessons. Flute, oboe and recorder lessons were also part of the mix. All three children were accomplished musicians. With time Stephen let

his music lapse, and became a senior bureaucrat in the Alberta government. Stephen and his Spanish former wife had three children all fluent in Spanish and French and all bright and very athletic. Rachel went on to be a world famous classical guitarist playing concerts world-wide and producing eight CDs and playing the Concerto d'Aranjuez with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra in Roy Thomson Hall. Rachel later switched careers to produce documentaries. She lives in Canmore and is married to the famous mountain guide Doug Latimer and they have a bright mountain climbing biathlon athlete son. Catherine was a beautiful recorder player and now works as an occupational therapist in Vancouver with expertise in the fitting of special wheelchairs. She's married to an Ironman athlete and banker Mark Husken and they have a pair of very non-identical bright twin daughters who are also very athletic skiers, rock-climbers, and swimmers. Swimming, figure skating, hiking, camping, skiing were all very much part of the picture in the Gauk household. Ehor loved kayaking and owned two German two-seater Klepper kayaks. He paddled the upper reaches of both the Athabaska and Saskatchewan rivers many times and each of the children went with him. One year he went so far as to fly his Klepper to kayak in Kauai. His favorite kayak trip was to the Broken Islands on the west coast of Vancouver Island.

Ehor had an eye for art. Jaycox Gallery was an art shop near the Baker Clinic that was about to go out of business in 1968. A large snow scene by William Kurelek was for sale for the huge sum of \$1500 which at the time was more than what Ehor's budget could bear. Ehor fell in love with the night scene of children digging tunnels in a large snow bank, much as he had done in his childhood. The painting was in the Gallery on consignment from Isaac's Gallery in Toronto and it would cost \$300 to ship it back if it wasn't sold. Finally Ehor acquired the painting for \$1200 and years later he sold it to Ken Thomson for a sum with many more zeros and Thomson in turn donated it to the Art Gallery of Ontario. Ehor went on to buy more Kurelek art often to the dismay of friends and relatives who were not fond of his work. The works of Dorothy Knowles and Jim Vest found their way into the Gauk home. Ehor got to know William Kurelek well, visited him several times at his Toronto Beaches home and Bill came to dinner at Ehor's home when his works were featured at the Edmonton Art Gallery. Kurelek would personally autograph many of his art books for Ehor. Ehor contributed to the publication costs of Kurelek's Passion of Christ collection and the Christmas cards that we sold to raise funds in his fight against abortion. Similarly Ehor maintained a close relationship with Jim Vest who did a beautiful painting of Ehor's back yard. Ehor knew he would eventually sell his house, but he would always have his back yard.

Understandably while Ehor was so busy and adored by his patients and staff, the home situation suffered and this led to his divorce from Doreen. Ehor credits Doreen for her superb mothering skills and her giving all three children a great love of reading. This was a traumatic time for Ehor. He kept the house, the pool, the greenhouse and all the work this involved while becoming a full-time professor, teaching and running a very busy consulting practice. His life was made easier by the support of his family and a very loyal secretary Myrna Wisdom who did his letters, his appointments, his banking, and his annual reports for 28 years and always remained a close loyal friend. With the help of his sister Gloria and others, Ehor was introduced to an attractive, artistic and wealthy widow who lived in Calgary. She had no children, an elegant home in Calgary and she was of Ukrainian heritage. What could be better? Except they forgot to mention her psychiatric problems thinking that Ehor would be the cure. It was not to be. Ehor was fond of her but found that he was only making her symptoms worse and after a few years that relationship fell apart.

Attending medical conferences was critical to Ehor's ability to keep up with the rapid advances in his field and Ehor travelled world-wide not only to learn which he did best by hearing papers being presented, but also to meet the famous authors of new breakthroughs. Later he would find funds to

invite these individuals to come to lecture at the UofA Medical School. It was not unusual for some of the invitees to be very surprised that there was a university in Edmonton let alone a Medical School. Ehor's own reputation grew as the author of a paper that explained the mechanism of the seizures that occur in children who hold their breath. This was work done at Sick Kids with the encouragement of Dr. John Stobo Prichard, the first pediatric neurologist to work at this children's hospital. Stobo was even more dyslexic than Ehor and also severely dysgraphic. He kept up with the recent literature by having weekly seminars with all his residents and leading vigorous discussions on various medical syndromes that would last for hours. In effect, his residents read and wrote for him and all including Ehor gained from this interaction. Soon after landing in Toronto, former neuro residents would ask Ehor how he was doing with the "breath holders". Apparently Dr. Prichard would reassign this project to each new candidate arriving in the department. In a great stroke of luck, one of Ehor's first patients in the out-patient clinic was Jody Carter. Jody had a breath holding spell in Ehor's full view which almost frightened him to death. He had read much about the condition, but never realized how terrifying the event was. Jody's mother had seen so many of these episodes that she was not upset at all and was willing to contribute to science. She knew how to induce these episodes at will. At the same time Ehor met a newly arrived Irish resident, Dr. Langford Kidd, working with Dr. John Keith, the world famous pediatric cardiologist. Langford managed to get after hours cardiac lab time and both Ehor and Langford managed to record the sequence of events that would make Jody so blue and become unconscious. Until then there were only four types of hypoxia or blueness. Asphyxic, ischemic, hypoxic hypoxia and cytotoxic hypoxia. Langford and Ehor came upon a fifth type to be known as consumptive hypoxia. What hadn't been realized was that little children burned oxygen at a rate many times faster than adults and a short period of not breathing would make kids turn blue and pass out. This was just another one of many examples that revealed that children were not just small adults. Years later Ehor would joke that it was the only paper he ever wrote, but it gave him good "mileage" and prestige in that it was published in the New England Journal of Medicine long recognized as the foremost medical journal in the world. Patients and teaching medical students used up most of Ehor's available time and to relax he tended his collection of orchids which grew to about 1000 plants acquired from different tropical climates. Ehor had no horticultural interests, but his father persuaded him to attach a lean-to greenhouse to a small building he was erecting to house his pool equipment and a shower, sauna and bathroom. That greenhouse was empty until Ehor met Oscar Kirsch a famous Honolulu orchid breeder and grower. Ehor was walking past Oscar's property when he was caught in a sudden rainstorm and Oscar saved him from a soaking. Ehor was sold on orchids before the rain ceased and made arrangements to purchase plants that would be shipped to Edmonton. That was in 1971 and some of those plants continue to thrive in his nephew Dan's greenhouse. Ehor's original greenhouse became too small and was replaced with a much larger glass structure in 1977. Ehor excavated the needed area by hand, and erected the new greenhouse himself with the help of his engineer cousin George Ochrym. Before the era of the cordless phones, Ehor had 8 phones strategically wired all over the house and greenhouse, and his phone rarely rang more than twice. In the summer he swam every morning before breakfast and every evening at bed time and usually in the buff. He was addicted to his hot tub in the middle of the greenhouse, which he claimed was his substitute for Valium.

For years the Americans have had a Citizen-Ambassador program that encouraged people in similar professions but in different countries to meet each other. Ehor caught wind of this program connecting America and China and in the spring of 1990 he signed on to participate. Unbeknownst to him, a former student and colleague Dr. Julianna Nagy had also signed up to go. Julianna was a rehabilitation specialist at the Glenrose Hospital. Hotel space was at a premium and participants were asked to team up and share accommodation. Ehor and Julianna did not know any of the others in the group and decided to join up. They have shared accommodations ever since.

Ehor was to serve as a visiting professor to Harbin in the fall of that year and he ended up making two trips to China that year and to circumnavigate the earth he came home on the Trans-Siberian railway at a time when the Soviet Union was disintegrating in the post-Gorbachev era. Harbin is the sister city of Edmonton. In Harbin, his host was Dr. Ge who saw to it that Ehor was very well cared for. Dr. Ge had been a visiting professor in Edmonton and one by one all of his children settled in North America. His interpreter in Harbin was Dr. Gao Jing and later she became a leading Chinese authority in the area of Alzheimer's Disease and was based in Beijing. Being Gao Jing she suspected she might be related to Ehor who was Gao Ke. She was a close friend and visited Ehor and Julie in Edmonton and kept in touch by email.

One of Dr. Gauk's former residents, Dr. Clare Moisey, was a very much beloved pediatrician in the Canadian arctic although he was famous for his disagreements with the northern health care administrators. After several years in the north, he quit and moved to Smithers, BC. When Chernobyl exploded on April 26, 1986, one of the first Canadian agencies to come on the scene was the Green Peace group, although it was several years before they arrived in Kyiv. Dr. Moisey was hired by Green Peace to attend to the children of Chernobyl. Dr. Moisey in turn asked his former chief and friend, Dr. Ernest McCoy, to come to Kyiv as a consultant. The children's hospital facilities in Kyiv were dreadful. It so happened that Barbara McDougall, the Canadian Minister of External Affairs at the time, was also in Kyiv when McCoy was there, and together they toured Hospital Number 1. The Minister was very shaken by the experience and pleaded with McCoy to "do something to help these children, Ernie!" McDougall returned to Ottawa and asked for proposals to be submitted to help the Chernobyl kids. A number of proposals came forward, but McCoy's proposal was quickly approved with an annual budget of over a million dollars in November of 1991. McCoy made a series of short trips to Kyiv to launch the project and encountered impossible obstacles. In April of 1992 McCoy pleaded with Ehor to help him with his efforts in Ukraine and Gauk and McCoy flew to Kyiv, an experience that Ehor recalled with near horror. Everything was in total disarray and nothing was accomplished after six months of funding. Ehor decided he wanted no part of the project, but McCoy persuaded him to reconsider. Ehor agreed but only if McCoy would relinquish the chairmanship of the project and give him that authority. McCoy agreed. Ehor assembled an advisory board that included his brother, a retired lawyer and Bill Dymianiw, a retired school principal and they met regularly in Ehor's greenhouse. The finances were tidied up and the staff and accommodations in Kyiv were assembled. The project goals were to attend to the illness of children in Ukraine by having Canadian consultants deliver western health measures to Ukraine. In the 10 year life of the project 103 Canadian child care experts from every medical school in Canada visited in Ukraine a total of over 300 times. None were paid. Each was committed to at least two weeks of participation. Volunteers were easy to find and many went several times and many made close friends in Ukraine. Flight, accommodation, transportation and interpretation was all covered by the project with a staff of 6 in Kyiv and a staff of one in Edmonton. Ukrainian child care physicians began to come to Canada to study for 4 month periods. Candidates had to have a good knowledge of English and these were difficult to find. They came in groups of 8 to 10 and 88 came in the life of the project. A medical laboratory was established and two Canadian technicians were hired to live in Ukraine and teach Ukrainian techs the necessary skills. They were on site for four years. The National Medical library was supported with texts, journals and digital access to medical information. This library has been chaired by the very dedicated Raisa Pavlenko who had worked there for 5 decades and who had been to Canada five times to become more and more familiar with western methods of sharing medical information. Raisa became a close family friend and an ardent supporter of the Canadian project. With time the project expanded to include maternal as well as children's health issues. Dr. David Reid chaired the maternal section of the project and obstetricians as well as pediatricians participated in what became Medical Project Osvita. The word "osvita" in Ukrainian means education or enlightenment. For every

dollar that came from government funding, another dollar came from the Ukrainian diaspora, which was incredibly helpful in expanding the project beyond what was defined in the contribution agreement with CIDA and the federal government. Ottawa on the other hand could not understand how certain accomplishments were funded and demanded frequent explanations. To CIDA it was unheard of to have additional donated funds contributed on any of their international projects. Quarterly reports were mandatory with many answers demanded after each 3 month period. When Ehor proceeded to report monthly Ottawa retorted that they didn't have the capacity to cope with 12 reports a year. Ehor countered by asking CIDA to assemble 3 reports at 3 month intervals and read them all at once. Needless to say the rapport between Osvita and CIDA was not the best and there was often much anxiety about the extension of project funding. At one point although the embassy assured us funding would be renewed, this wasn't official until days before the expiry of grant. The staff in Edmonton and Kyiv were very tense about their livelihood and Ehor had tallied up over \$30 000 on his AmEx card for airline tickets. All this while maintaining his consulting practice and fulfilling his teaching responsibilities. He ended up making over 20 missions to Ukraine in the life of the project. There was a gradual withdrawal from Kyiv although many contacts persisted and the project alumni made great strides to improve child and maternal care in Ukraine. The project continues to exist but mostly on paper on the premise that it's easier to maintain a nucleus than starting from scratch if other opportunities surface to help the people of Ukraine. Ehor received the Meritorious Service Medal for his work in Ukraine as well as a presidential medal from Ukraine and the Shevchenko medal. The Ukraine project would have been impossible without Julie's help, encouragement and tolerance. Ehor and Julie were married in Ukraine on August 8th, 1992 while both were working in Ukraine as project volunteers. Julianna made seven teaching missions with Osvita to assist with the management of handicapped children.







Kiev August 8th 1992

In 2001 Ehor was asked to work with a Rotary Club supported project in Mbarara, Uganda. He went there for a month to introduce the school to the basics of pediatric neurology. The medical school there was established by the Cubans on the outskirts of a small city of Mbarara, at high altitude and near the equator and on the main road to central Africa and all the unstable regions to the west. Mid-day it was screaming hot at night it was very cool. The guest house was shared with three other volunteers who took turns shopping for provisions at the local markets and cooking. The medical students were remarkably attentive, polite, well dressed and keen to learn. Ehor brought a lap top with him to donate to the faculty and managed to secure a land-line internet connection. A small unpainted wooden shack stood out in the center of the medical school property. Ehor was told that this building was the Ebola isolation unit. Ehor had numerous requests to return to Uganda, but he felt it would be more useful for younger pediatricians to be involved and he persuaded others to volunteer.

Cycling was another of Ehor's passions, especially the cycling tours organized by Butterfield and Robinson. He did seven of these in France, Italy, Spain, Austria, Hungary and Morocco. It was the only kind of vacation Julianna would let Ehor go alone and he always come home more fit and weighing less.

Cooking was also his love be it on the barbeque, or his Komado, in the kitchen or in his outdoor pizza oven which he designed himself. His grandchildren rated his pizzas as the best ever. He preferred to cook for large gatherings and always with generous leftovers.



Ehor was a member of the Glenrose Hospital board of directors for 12 years. Hospital board members were never paid until late in his tenure, but each board member elected to donate their participation pay to the hospital research foundation. The board chairman, Mr. Lloyd Wilson cheerfully collected the endorsed checks as each meeting ended. The lasting accomplishment of this board was the construction of what is one of the finest rehabilitation facility on earth. Ehor's love of music led to his appointment to the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra board. His love of flowers led to his seat on the Fort Edmonton Historical board where he was closely associated with the Ramsay Greenhouse project, said to be the only historical greenhouse in any historical park. He was a founding member of the Edmonton Children's Hospital foundation. He even did a stint as a hospital surveyor with the Canadian Council for Health Services Accreditation.

Retirement was mandatory at the age of 65 and Ehor accepted this willingly. He read EEGs and followed his Spina Bifida kids for another ten years, but finally quit when medicine was interfering with his love of tennis and travel. His travels included a visit to Antarctica with his brother. Ehor was addicted to gadgetry of all types. In his practice he managed to find funding for a CAT, a computer of average transients, a device that could measure hearing even with unconscious patients or newborn children.

This was the first instrument of its kind in Canada and located in the Glenrose Audiology Department. Ehor flew to St. Louis Missouri to learn all about this technique from the inventor and famous physiologist Dr. Hallowell Davis. The device although effective, proved cumbersome and very time consuming. New versions of this instrument are now small, portable and used routinely in many neonatal units and elsewhere. Gadgets ruled his greenhouse with a reverse osmosis system, retractable shading, misters, proportioners, sensors, timers and it was the same in his home and his van. He always drove vans so he could carry more people and materials for his greenhouse. He was also hooked on good wine and when all was said and done Zinfandel won the day and Gnarly Head was the house wine.

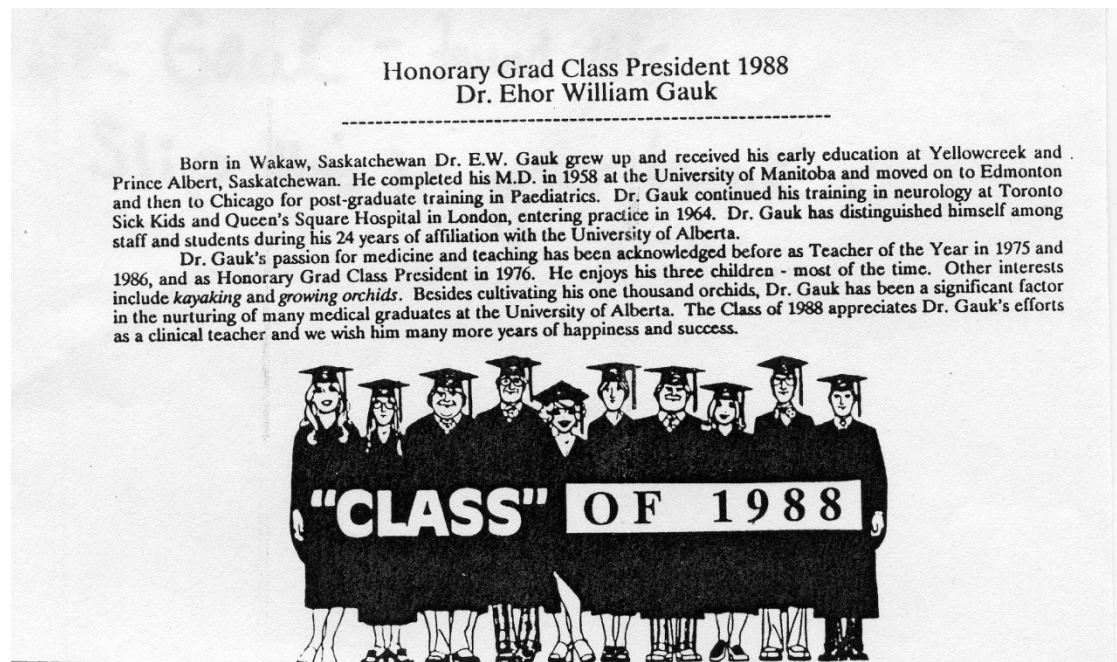
After 50 years of living in the same home as an original owner and as host to hundreds of guests, Ehor sold the home to move into a small elegant penthouse not far from where he lived all these years. Ehor and Julie also had a home in Parksville on Vancouver Island. Kauai was their home every February.

A friend of Ehor's was a friend for life. Dr. George Eddy was one of these close associates. He was a brilliant pediatrician who worked with Ehor at the Baker clinic and later became chief of pediatric services at the Glenrose Hospital. George was a superb administrator and an excellent teacher who worked because he loved his work, not because he had to. George was independently wealthy and at times wildly eccentric. His language was colorful and he did not suffer fools regardless of their rank. Ehor and George were like brothers and after George died there was rarely a day that he wasn't remembered. His widow Jackie, remained a life-long friend of the family. Many of Ehor's former students and friends maintained long term friendships. He was the honorary chairman of the medical graduating classes of 1976 and 1988. One of his patients, Wayne Keys phoned Ehor several times a week well into his retirement and Ehor was always happy to hear from him. One of his favorite associates was Dr. Volodymyr Kharytonov a pediatric neurologist in Kyiv worked with Ehor as part of the Osvita Project. He knew his neurology, his English was almost perfect and he had a glorious sense of humor. Volodya had trouble getting ahead in Ukraine and Ehor offered to sponsor his move to Canada. Volodya concluded that immigrating to Canada would be too big a disruption for his family. He slowly gained fame and prominence in his country and maintained years of contact with Ehor. He visited Ehor in Canada three times, once with his wife and daughter in 2015 and again with his younger daughter Maria in 2018. Ehor had a similar warm relationship with Dr. Sergey Pyanykh in Moscow. The list of other associations is long. He would meet his former secretaries and EEG technicians for lunch every Christmas for years after he retired. His musical friends would do a regular pool-side recital in the summer time. He had a warm relationship with the Derrick Golf Club that was his southern neighbor after he was induced to buy a membership when the club was on the verge of bankruptcy. Broken greenhouse glass due to golf balls was never an issue. Ehor built the greenhouse himself and he many extra panes of glass. He never golfed at the Derrick and eventually he sold his membership to his good friend Dr. John, Tkatchyk.

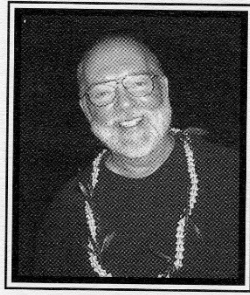
Ehor and Julie's life would not be complete without their Havanese pup Amiga who was affection on four feet. Amy was their dear border collie who died of old age. Ehor's aortic valve was replaced in 2013. He was home four days after the surgery. In medical school his class mates would listen to his heart murmur which was said to be "innocent" but later turned out to be an anomalous valve that needed correcting many years later. He had to miss his 55th class reunion because of the surgery but he insisted he would attend his 60 year reunion. His classmates wrote back "don't bother, you'll be the only one there". As it happened, he did attend his 60 year class reunion in 2018 and 6 of the surviving 16 classmates attended. Tennis was his favorite sport from the days of wooden racquets and white tennis balls. He played into his 80's and achieved his "hole in one" of tennis when he spun a drop shot so well

that it returned back over the net unassisted. Tennis and the news was all he ever watched on television.

Of course there will be no funeral. But there will be a cheerful wake at the Derrick Club, where some might sing “vichnaya pamyat” and Gnarly Head Zin will be the order of the day. His body goes to the Anatomy Department and later his ashes will be close to his Julie and to his family, his pets and three favorite rivers, the Saskatchewan, the Athabaska and the Dnieper. His legacy remains in two scholarships to support candidates studying behavioral and neurological disorders of children. Perhaps his biggest legacy is with all those breath holding kids who will not be labeled epileptic.



The article below comes from the Winnipeg CMA meeting August 17-20 Installation Ceremonies and



Ehor W. Gauk

Ehor Gauk was a consulting paediatric neurologist for eight years in Edmonton's Baker Clinic, during which he taught with the University of Alberta. He joined the faculty full-time in 1972, rising quickly to the status of Professor in paediatrics and neurology. During his tenure, he collected two awards as Outstanding Teacher of the Year. He retired in 2000, named an Emeritus Professor.

Dr. Gauk has ventured far afield in Canada and internationally. He worked as an Arctic and northern consultant in Canada, and also as a Citizen Ambassador to the People's Republic of China as part of a delegation on childhood disability. He has returned to China, to Harbin, several times as a visiting professor. Most recently, after retirement, he spent a month as a visiting professor at the University of Mbarara, Uganda. Dr. Gauk first went to Ukraine in 1958, as part of Canada's first student delegation to the USSR. He returned 16 times. He chaired the Chernobyl Children's Project for the OSVITA Medical Project. The project, formerly a Canadian government-sponsored teaching program to train Ukrainian physicians, involved faculty from every medical school and focused on diseases of mothers and children. It is now a donor-sponsored project. His efforts earned the Governor-General's Meritorious Service Medal. Dr. Gauk's wife, Julianna, a rehabilitation specialist, has also worked with him in Ukraine. Ehor Gauk has three children and three grandchildren. Given a spare minute, he tends his orchid collection in a greenhouse that often serves as a gathering place for friends.

Neurologue-conseil en pédiatrie pendant huit ans à la Clinique Baker d'Edmonton, Ehor Gauk a aussi enseigné à l'Université de l'Alberta pendant cette période. Il est passé à l'enseignement à plein temps en 1972, et est rapidement devenu professeur titulaire de pédiatrie et de neurologie. Pendant sa carrière, il s'est mérité deux prix d'Enseignant exceptionnel de l'année. Il a pris sa retraite en 2000 après avoir été nommé professeur émérite.

Le Dr Gauk s'est aventuré très loin, tant au Canada qu'à l'étranger. Il a travaillé comme conseiller médical dans l'Arctique et le Nord du Canada et il a aussi été citoyen ambassadeur auprès de la République populaire de Chine, comme membre d'une délégation sur l'invalidité chez les enfants. Il est retourné à plusieurs reprises à Harbin, en Chine, comme professeur visiteur. Récemment, après avoir pris sa retraite, il a passé un mois comme professeur visiteur à l'Université de Mbarara, en Ouganda. Le Dr Gauk s'est rendu en Ukraine pour la première fois en 1958, comme membre de la première délégation étudiante du Canada en URSS. Il y est retourné à 16 reprises. Il a présidé le Projet des enfants de Tchernobyl pour le Projet médical OSVITA. Auparavant programme de formation de médecins ukrainiens parrainé par le gouvernement du Canada, ce projet qui mettait à contribution des enseignants de toutes les facultés de médecine portait avant tout sur les maladies de la mère et de l'enfant. Le projet est maintenant parrainé par des donateurs. Ses efforts lui ont valu la Médaille de service méritoire du gouverneur général. Spécialiste de la réadaptation, l'épouse du Dr Gauk, Julianna, a aussi travaillé avec lui en Ukraine. Ehor Gauk a trois enfants et trois petits enfants. Dans ses temps libres, il s'occupe de sa collection d'orchidées dans une serre où se réunissent souvent ses amis.