

Reader's digest

MOST READ
MOST TRUSTED
JULY 2015

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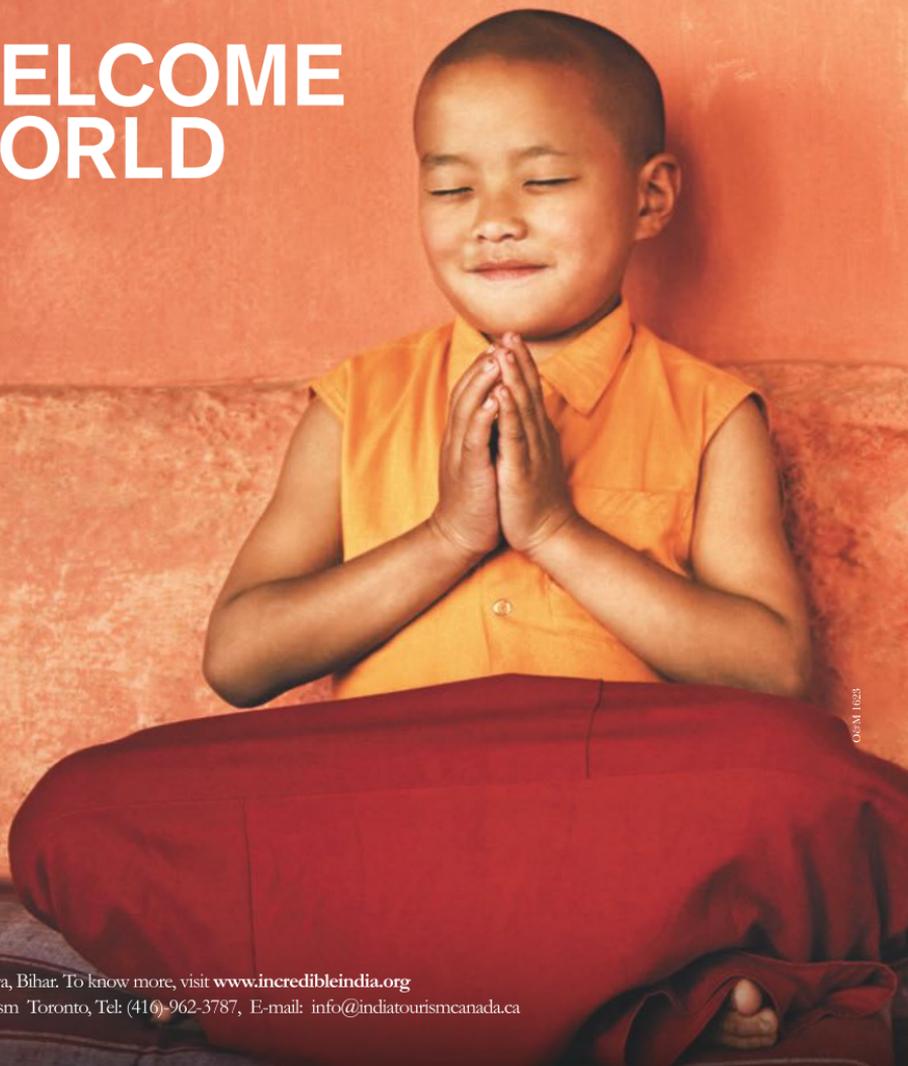
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Editor's Letter

Sweet Summer Memories



WHEN I WAS A CHILD, once the school year had ended, my dad would drop my mom, sister, brother and me at our cottage, where we'd stay until Labour Day (he'd join us for weekends). I don't think we went indoors except to have our evening meals and to sleep. We kids were free to roam the fields, organize picnics by lakes and mountains, and follow the streams for hours fishing for river trout.

Meanwhile, many of my city pals went to camps. They'd tell me about the friendships they'd formed (and often kept for life), learning to get along with others and a growing sense of accomplishment. Recently, one such buddy almost burst into tears while talking about Pierre Claude Nolin, the senator who died in April, whom he'd met and grown close to at camp almost 50 years prior.

One summer, my youngest son insisted on going to camp. He returned from his two-week stay with stars in his eyes, and tales about the animals (mostly horses) he had cared for and long evenings spent singing, dancing and acting in plays. Then he slept for 15 hours straight.

The sweet, funny and often nostalgic stories you sent us about your own memories of summer camp ("Seasons in the Sun," page 46) were similarly filled with anecdotes of camaraderie and lessons learned. I want to thank you for taking the time to share. **R**



Send an email
to robert@rd.ca

ROGER AZIZ



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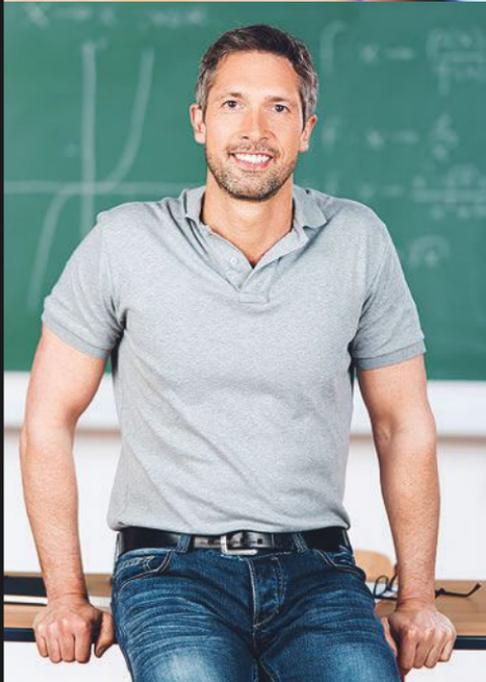
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Contributors



KATIE UNDERWOOD
(Writer, “Oh, Canada!”
page 76)

Home base:
Toronto. **Previously**

published in *Chatelaine* and *The Grid*. **As I searched for Canadian animal heroes**, my family was gunning for me to include our dog, Swiffer. But she enjoys lounging too much to be of assistance to anyone. **What I love most about Canada** is our pathological level of kindness. I missed it while travelling. (The poutine’s not too shabby, either.)



YUTA ONODA
(Illustrator, “Jump, He Said. And They Fell,”
page 54)

Home base:

Toronto. **Previously published in** *Time* and *Rolling Stone*. **The biggest risk I ever took was** moving to Vancouver from Japan to study English. I barely spoke the language at the time. But it led me here, and it was definitely worth it! **I’ve never skydived before**, but I’d love to in the future. I feel a little scared after reading this story, though.



MEGAN JONES,
ASSISTANT EDITOR
(Writer, “The Art of Apologizing,”
page 25)



Home base:

Montreal. **Previously published in** *Maisonneuve* and *The Grid*. **I used to think** my apologies were decent, but it turns out they’ve been pretty lacklustre. Researching this story made me realize I’ve been skipping some vital steps! **I never struggle with** refusing to apologize. I say sorry *all* the time. I’ll literally apologize to a chair if I bump into one.

PUI YAN FONG
(Illustrator, “To Medicate or Not to Medicate?”
page 86)



Home base:

Toronto. **Previously published in** *The Chronicle of Higher Education* and *The Boston Globe*. **My artistic style is** conceptual and graphic, with bright colours. **When translating words into pictures**, I keep the author and their message in mind. The text should be treated with respect, especially if the story is about someone’s personal experiences.



Letters

READERS COMMENT ON OUR RECENT ISSUES



POWER OF PLAY

The article “Smart Solutions” (March 2015) was incredible! Children need time to unwind, play, explore, get dirty and ask questions. Parents, please put down your gadgets, stop booking your children into every lesson available, and go have fun with them. You can impart so much by just hanging out.

LAURA HOGAN-SHEA,
Mississauga, Ont.

GOOD NEWS

“Small Beginnings” (March 2015), about a new approach to preemie care, resonated with me. When our son was born premature, it was hard for me to sit and watch him in his incubator. It wasn’t until he was transferred out of Mount Sinai’s NICU in Toronto that we were able to per-

form many of the typical parenting responsibilities. It was a tough few months waiting for this to happen, and the experience certainly increased our bond with our now 14-year-old son. It’s great to hear that new parents going through this tough time can be more involved.

LORNA MASON-HENDERSON, *Oakville, Ont.*

ISTOCKPHOTO

LIFESAVER

In December 1996, I was on the beach in Dagupan, Philippines, playing in knee-deep water. Suddenly, the seabed I was standing on eroded, and I was swallowed by an undercurrent. By the time I fought my way to the surface, the waves had carried me far away from the shore. I was already very tired, and all I could think was how I was likely going to die. Then I remembered the story “Glenda’s Long Lonely Swim” (1972), which I’d read years before in *Reader’s Digest*. In it, a young woman is carried away by a current and manages to stay afloat for nearly 24 hours until help arrives. The fact that Glenda made it gave me the will to survive. I floated on my back like she did until I found a buoy and swam to it. I waited there for half a day and was eventually rescued by my brother-in-law and a group of fishermen. Glenda’s story gave me hope in that terrifying moment. It will forever remain in my memory.

ZORAIDA PARTIBLE, *Moncton, N.B.*

LONG-TIME LOYALTY

My father introduced me to *Reader’s Digest* when I was about 12. Today, my favourite parts are the jokes and funny anecdotes. And, of course, you also have some pretty amazing stories, which have kept me entertained while waiting at the doctor, dentist, and so on.

DARLENE ROSS, *Montreal*

A CALL FOR EMPATHY

After reading “Born to Be Tame” (March 2015), I felt somewhat bothered. As an animal activist and a vegan, I see no point in locking up an animal in a small wire cage. I agree fox fur is very beautiful, but it looks much better on the animal. The suffering these creatures endure for fashion is entirely unacceptable and unnecessary. No animate being wants to be in captivity. We all need to start putting ourselves in the animals’ places. We need to ask, “Is that the way I would want to be treated?” We must be advocates for those with no voice. All animal exploitation is wrong.

SANDY REES, *Belleville, Ont.* **R**

Published letters are edited for length and clarity.

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Contribute Send us your funny jokes and anecdotes, and if we publish one in a print edition of *Reader’s Digest*, we’ll send you a free one-year subscription. To submit, visit rd.ca/joke.

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My most prized possession is...

...my imagination.

It can take me places I will never go in reality.

MARY LOU PEARCE, NORTH BAY, ONT.

...my books.

They make me happy, and I always have something to look forward to when I want to unwind or be alone.

**KATHY
CLARK-HORTON,
MANNVILLE, ALTA.**



...my mom's

travel journals

from when she and my dad went backpacking through South America.

AMY MICHELLE SMITH, TORONTO



...my grandmother's

bagpipes.

They're from the 1890s and have been passed down for generations.

**KAITLIN GRACE KIMOVE,
STONEY CREEK, ONT.**

...**pictures** of my son—irreplaceable, as he passed away at five months old.

NADINE BOHN, WINFIELD, B.C.

...letters



from my long-deceased mother that I recently rediscovered. She wrote them when I was away at boarding school.

MYRNA BURGOYNE, SACKVILLE, N.S.

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VOICES & VIEWS

With the simple gift of skateboards,
Betty Esperanza is bringing
hope to Cuban children

Wheels of Fortune

BY LINDA BESNER

PHOTOGRAPHY BY MAUDE CHAUVIN

 ELEVEN YEARS AGO, Betty Esperanza was rolling down the streets of Havana, trying to avoid cracks and potholes, when she noticed a boy staring at her. “His eyes were popping out of his head,” she remembers. Hadn’t he ever seen a skateboard before?

Esperanza called him over and spent the next three hours teaching him the basics. The child, who looked to be around 12, had a raw talent that impressed her. At the end of the session, she gave him the board—on the condition that he share it with his friends. Esperanza

had two boys of her own at home and had often noticed how sharing one board had encouraged them to take turns and co-operate.

The boy—Yojani Pérez Rivera—went on to become one of Cuba’s skate stars and has helped popularize the sport on the island. But skateboards aren’t currently available for sale in Cuba, where the state restricts consumer goods. While the end of the U.S. trade embargo could eventually mean more boards, most families don’t have extra money for sports equipment: the average Cuban’s monthly wage ➤➤

Betty Esperanza enlists “ambassadors” in Cuba, Uganda and Canada to teach kids how to skate—and how to repair gear.



is approximately \$20. In short, local children who want to follow in Pérez Rivera's footsteps depend on tourists and non-profits for supplies. Since 2000, Skateboards for Hope, Esperanza's initiative to provide Cuban youth with used gear, has distributed some 300 boards.

Havana's skateboarders know Esperanza, employed as the director of a community health foundation in Montreal, as "Madrina" ("God-mother"). Her nickname came from Pérez Rivera, who now acts as an ambassador for Skateboards for Hope. When Esperanza talks about what that kind of gift can represent for a child struggling with poverty, she smacks the tattoo on her left forearm—a curlicued rendition of her last name, which is Spanish for "hope."

Esperanza learned to skate as a teenager in the Quebec countryside, 100 or so kilometres north of Montreal. She believes the sport—which is both affordable and individual—can teach essential life skills, including self-reliance and perseverance. It might take someone several hundred attempts to perfect their first kickflip, she says, "but the 454th time, they get it."

Havana native Yoan Galliana, 24, remembers splitting time on a board with 10 other kids and trying to repair broken equipment with wood and nails while waiting for donations. "You don't know when or if

you'll get another board," he says—a situation he hopes to remedy now that he's living in Montreal and volunteering alongside Esperanza.

Government officials in Havana recently gave Pérez Rivera the go-ahead to set up a Skateboards for Hope after-school program in an unused building with enough space for indoor skateboarding and graffiti art. As Galliana, who now works with a small video-production company called YMG Films, can attest, an interest in skateboarding can unearth other talents, like digital editing and graphic design.

Skateboards for Hope began in Cuba, but it won't end there. A new branch in Gulu, Uganda, started up in May. And on Christmas Eve of last year, Esperanza drove to Kanisatake, a First Nations reserve west of Montreal, to deliver 35 boards to a new ambassador, 27-year-old Mohawk Justin Darrow.

Being part of the organization, Darrow says, has given him a sense of pride. Recently, he was skating at an indoor park when a stranger started threatening to fight him. Darrow was wearing a T-shirt he'd stencilled with the Skateboards for Hope logo. Thinking about the organization's goals—foster self-reliance, strengthen communities and bring out the best in oneself and others—was enough to keep him out of trouble. **R**

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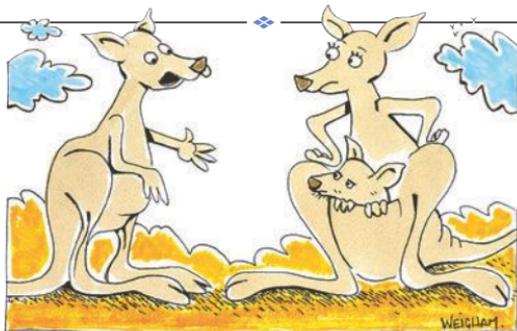
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As Kids See It



“You’re 40 years old. Isn’t it about time you got your own place?”

MY WIFE AND I and our two kids were flying to Miami to go on a cruise. There were high winds as we were landing, and the approach was extra rough. Not being a good flyer, I was scared. I turned to my eight-year-old son and asked if he would hold my hand. Shaking his head, he said, “Get a grip, Dad. You’re, like, 48 years old.” I was good after that.

MURRAY SWANSTON, *Welwyn, Sask.*

I WAS NEARING THE END of my last trimester, and my six-year-old, Savda, was eagerly awaiting the arrival of her baby brother. She kept nagging me each day, asking when he would finally arrive. My usual brush-off was, “I don’t know!” One day, she came up with this brilliant idea: “Mommy, you can google and check!”

SUNENAN IQBAL, *Prince George, B.C.*

MY TWO-YEAR-OLD twins, Rhys and Eloise, had just learned how to count to 10 and were demonstrating this new skill to their grandparents. When Grandpa asked if they could count backwards, both my son and daughter turned around and began again, “One, two, three...”

TERESSA JACKSON, *Oakville, Ont.*



AND ONE FOR THE KIDS

Q: Why can’t your nose be 12 inches long?

A: Because then it would be a foot!

Source: jokes4us.com

Do your children make you chuckle? A funny kid story could get you a free year’s subscription. See page 9 for details.

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- Bake for 8–10 minutes until golden brown



Get more recipes at Becel.ca

The new Captain Canuck designer, Kalman Andrasofszky, on Canada's comic-book hero at 40, men in tights and why Batman is best

Maple Courage

BY COURTNEY SHEA

ILLUSTRATION BY AIMÉE VAN DRIMMELEN

You're the designer of the reimagined Captain Canuck comic-book series. Good time for a reboot, given that comic-book culture has re-entered the mainstream in a big way.

For a while it seemed like comics had aged with their audience. *Batman* was the exception, but other than that, people weren't interested. Hollywood looked down its nose. I think 1998's *Blade* was the first superhero movie where people said, "Oh, wow, this is actually good." *X-Men* came right after that, and then *Spider-Man*, *Iron Man*. Now it's all anybody wants to make.



There are more than 40 comic-book movies in development. Do you worry about crusader fatigue?

We've been wondering that for ages in the industry. But defenders of comic-book culture maintain there's longevity because you can cover any genre: detective superheroes, horror superheroes, romantic superheroes.

Have you always been obsessed with men in tights, so to speak?

It started with my divorced dad, who needed something to do with me on weekends. I remember him explaining comics to me and promising that we could go back to the store and pick a new one each week. That was before I could even read.

How did this new Captain Canuck series come to be?

In 2011, Fadi Hakim, who co-owns the Lakeview Restaurant in Toronto, wanted to have a Captain Canuck sandwich on the menu. He reached out to the superhero's creator, Richard Comely, for permission, and was stunned there weren't any projects in the works. He optioned the rights and started planning the reboot with some producers he knew.

Describe Captain Canuck 2.0's personality.

He is very fair-minded. Any perceived injustice

makes him reckless. He's an Afghan-istan vet, which is a big part of his character. We wanted to embrace that element, since it's a subject that doesn't get talked about enough.

Both you and Captain Canuck have been around for 40 years. Who is having the bigger mid-life crisis?

Captain Canuck. Mid-life crises are about recapturing lost youth, but when you become a comic-book artist, youth never quite ends. We live like students. We're pulling all-nighters, drinking coffee and Red Bull.

A Captain Canuck feature film is rumoured to be in the works. If it does happen, who would you want to see in the lead?

Someone Canadian like Nathan Fillion would be good. Or Kris Holden-Ried, who did the voice of Captain Canuck in our animated web series. He looks pretty darn good in the suit.

All-important question: Who would win in a blowout fight between Batman and Superman?

Superman vastly outpowers Batman—he could decapitate him just by flicking him. But Batman is the smartest person in his universe, so he would probably anticipate that. Superman's not dumb, but Batman is always working the angles. **R**

Captain Canuck #1 is available now.



Historical figures tweet
their online dating profiles

Courting Celebrities

BY JUDY MILLAR

ILLUSTRATION BY LUC MELANSON



**@WHERE4ARTU
(WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE)**

Poet seeks playmate. *Love is blind*. Don't take that literally. I'm a leg man. Ignore rumour I've a wife in Stratford. #muchadoaboutnothing

**@JOZEFINABRUNSZVIK
(BEETHOVEN'S EX-GIRLFRIEND)**

Hungarian noblewoman vants man 2 pay attn 2 me, not piano. I look hot in dirndl. But does Ludvig look up? Nein. Vanna share a schnapps?

**@WEDBEDBEHEAD
(HENRY VIII)**

Tubby Tudor seeks that special someone. No Catherines, Annes or Catholics. Long story. Screening @ Tower of London. Use rear entrance.

**@FILIPAPERESTRELO (ESTRANGED
WIFE OF CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS)**

Seeking mate who won't take off 4 Indies. Ur gonna get east by going west? Ha! Is there a man out there w/sense2ask4 directions? TEXT ME.

**@URKINDAGAL
(LADY GODIVA)**

Free spirit seeks kindred spirit for bareback rides on the beach and general horsing around. (No peep-ing Toms, please.)

**@CORGINUMBER34
(QUEEN ELIZABETH II'S PET CORGI)**

Male seeks action off palace grounds. Kennel Club reg'd. Proud of my pecs. Better built than the mutt who played me in Helen Mirren flick. **R**



NOT YOUR
SMOOTHUAL
SUSPECTS
CONTEST

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Points to Ponder

BY CHRISTINA PALASSIO

Obviously, I value my kids and my family more than the game, but in some ways, having this friend—who is ever-present pursuit—has made me who I am, taught me and tested me, and given me a mission that feels irreplaceable. I am so thankful. I've learned so many invaluable lessons about myself and about life. And, of course, I still have so much to learn. Another incredible gift.



Basketball player

STEVE NASH about his retirement, on *The Players' Tribune*

Where are the sit-down strikes? The mass boycotts? The calls for expropriation? Where, in short, are the angry masses?

NAOMI KLEIN on income inequality, in *The New York Times*' Sunday Book Review

We still haven't figured out that we don't get to choose whether or not to engage China. We may not have a China strategy, but China definitely has a Canada strategy.

Former ambassador to China
DAVID MULRONEY on what he sees as the sum total of Canada's foreign policy toward China

People around the world know very little about the Arctic. It's very much about ice. It's very much about polar bears. It's very much about other issues besides the human beings who live there.

Inuit activist
SHEILA WATT-CLOUTIER, on cbc.ca



PHOTOS: (NASH) © 2015 STEVE NASH FOUNDATION; (WATT-CLOUTIER) © NATIONAL ROUND TABLE ON THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE ECONOMY. QUOTES: (NASH) MARCH 21, 2015; (KLEIN) MARCH 16, 2015; (MULRONEY) NATIONAL POST (MARCH 23, 2015); (WATT-CLOUTIER) MARCH 17, 2015.

The physical constraint of it is crazy. It's like being back in grade school. You have to ask to go to the bathroom, because you're in a van. It drives you bonkers after a while that your basic bodily functions are under the control of other people.

Arcade Fire's WILL BUTLER on touring, in Esquire



I'm really getting into meditation—or naps in the middle of the day. It's a very fine line.

Comedian and radio host
OPHIRA EISENBERG, on Twitter

I think it's remarkable how many chances we get to reinvent ourselves and have new careers. I love the idea that here I am, at 68, embarking on this career that I've wanted all my life.

Debut author and RBC Taylor Prize-winning memoirist
PLUM JOHNSON, in the *National Post*

When I had my own children, I decided from the day they were born I would use the scientific names [for body parts]. My neighbours were astonished, and they used to beg me to make a tape so they could play it for their children.

Sexual-health educator
MEG HICKLING, on CBC Radio One's *The Current*

I am scared of losing him, because it's bad. But I have to show myself, my husband and my kids that I'm strong and we're okay.

CÉLINE DION on performing at Caesar's Palace in spite of her husband's illness, in People

Don't treat me as an equal? Fine—you don't get my money.

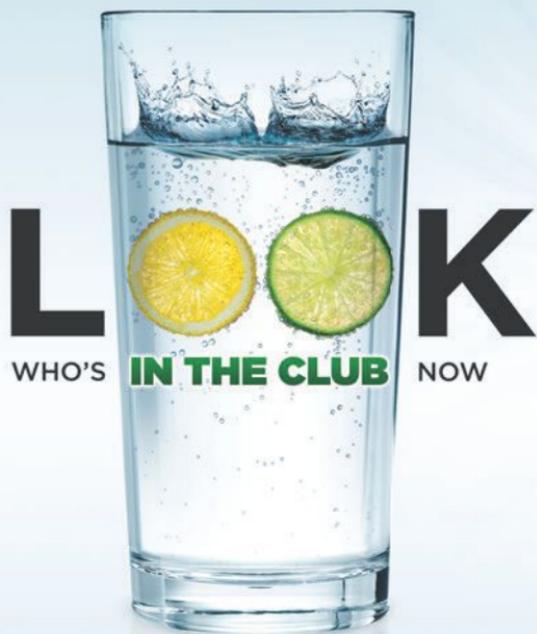
Angel investor
CORALIE LALONDE, in *Maclean's*



This is what I've wanted to do since I was 12 years old. Sort of a strange thing to want to do when you're 12, but every Saturday night I used to watch my two favourite shows: *This Week in Parliament* with Don Newman and *Hockey Night in Canada*. I knew that I probably wouldn't be a professional hockey player, but I did think about the Senate.

Senator DENISE BATTERS, in *The Globe and Mail*





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ART of LIVING

Offering up an effective *mea culpa* can be challenging, but it's well worth the effort

The Art of Apologizing

BY MEGAN JONES

ILLUSTRATIONS BY SOPHIE CASSON



WHEN THE STAKES ARE LOW, saying sorry is easy. Accidentally bump a stranger on the way into the elevator, and words of apology tumble out reflexively. But in instances of actual wrongdoing—when we divulge

an important secret or speak harshly to a loved one—a shift occurs. Suddenly, guilt and shame take over. We deflect responsibility and fumble to justify our actions. For many of us, “sorry” really is the hardest word.

The appeal of avoidance

Why is this simple exercise so difficult? Our defensive reflexes may be partly to blame. Karina Schumann, a post-doctoral research fellow in psychology at Stanford University, has studied the act of saying sorry for nine years. She says that our desire to see ourselves in a positive light often prevents us from being accountable.

"Committing an offence can threaten your identity as a good and respectable person," Schumann explains. And a genuine apology, which involves admitting fault and acknowledging the harm we've caused, requires us to confront the fact that we've done something wrong.

On top of that, research has shown that refusing to apologize can actually make us feel better about ourselves. A 2013 study from the University of Queensland Business School in Australia found that transgressors who wilfully avoided saying sorry experienced a sense of power and elevated self-worth because they felt as though they were sticking to their guns.

Even when we do consider apologizing, we frequently overestimate how unpleasant the experience will be. A 2014 study published in *Social Justice Research* revealed that participants often anticipated that saying sorry would be

more humiliating and stressful than it actually was.

Long-term gains

Despite the discomfort, being accountable benefits us in the long run. Acknowledging our wrongdoing can save us a lot of loss, says Tyler Okimoto, the lead researcher on the University of Queensland study.

"If we refuse [to apologize], we are likely to undermine trust and damage relationships," he says, noting that the potential benefits of not making amends don't stand up to the negative outcomes.

A sincere apology can even help salvage a strained relationship: in a 2014 study that analyzed interviews and questionnaire responses from 337 people who had recently been harmed by a partner, researchers from Atlanta's Emory University



found that conciliatory actions reduced anger and sped up forgiveness in participants.

On an individual level, Schumann says, apologies lower the guilt transgressors feel, which can lead to a more positive sense of self over time. A 2007 study published in the *Journal of Social & Clinical Psychology* found that people are consistently more likely to regret not saying sorry than making amends.

The secret of “sorry”

Because so much anxiety is associated with the act, crafting an effective apology is a skill few people possess, according to New York-based psychologist Guy Winch, who has written extensively about relationships and guilt.

A successful effort requires multiple elements: there should be a clear declaration of “sorry,” an expression of regret and a request for forgiveness. Most people try to cover those three points, Winch says, but many fail to include an empathy statement, which acknowledges how the transgression made the victim feel. “An empathy statement shows the apology is not about us, it’s about the other person,” he says.

To that end, “I’m sorry I didn’t show up to your party” doesn’t pass muster. A more effective attempt would be something like this: “I’m sorry I didn’t show up yesterday

without calling. That must have made you feel bad. I hope it didn’t put a damper on your night. I hope you’ll forgive me.”

According to Winch, the most common mistake people make is to offer excuses. In focusing on how you’ve hurt another person, avoid trying to justify your behaviour. If you snap at your partner at the end of a frustrating day, it’s fair to explain what caused your short temper—but save your complaints for another conversation.

Strategic self-affirmation

Schumann’s latest research uncovered a simple trick for those who struggle with apologies. Since the need to preserve a positive self-image is often what makes saying sorry difficult, she believes that taking the time to affirm important personal values before offering restitution can help make the experience less painful and ultimately lead to a more sincere resolution.

One strategy is to think about our own goals, values or the people in our lives who are important. This, Schumann says, restores self-worth by helping us see the bigger picture and making that one instance of bad behaviour seem less threatening to our self-image. “Once the need to defend yourself is weakened,” she explains, “you can focus on offering a better apology.” **R**

Insect bites and your health: what to know and what to do

Bug Off

BY SAMANTHA RIDEOUT

FOR EVERY HUMAN on the planet, there are approximately 200 million insects, so it's little wonder we have occasional run-ins with them. Thankfully, most bug bites and stings are more pesky than harmful. That said, there are times when a visit to the doctor is called for—namely when there are signs of a toxic reaction, an extreme allergic reaction (anaphylaxis) or an infectious disease.

It's possible to fall victim to both toxicity (when insect venom acts like a poison) and anaphylaxis (when your immune system overreacts to the venom). If you're having a toxic and/or anaphylactic

reaction, the symptoms can include difficulty breathing, nausea, fainting, muscle spasms or vomiting, and you should seek medical attention immediately.

When it comes to infectious disease, the two principal culprits are ticks and mosquitoes. The former can carry the bacteria that cause Lyme disease, so get checked out if you develop a fever, a skin rash with rings like a bull's eye, joint pain or weakness in your face muscles within weeks after finding a tick burrowing into your skin.

Mosquitoes may carry West Nile virus (although the great majority do not), and in warmer climes, such as



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Italy and Australia, they've been known to transmit so-called tropical diseases like dengue or chikungunya. Several populations of mosquitoes that can spread tropical diseases appear to be heading further and further north into Europe, and this expansion is "associated with changes in ecosystems, human behaviour and climate," says Giovanni Mancarella, a spokesperson for the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control.

30%

The recommended maximum concentration of DEET in a safe insect repellent.

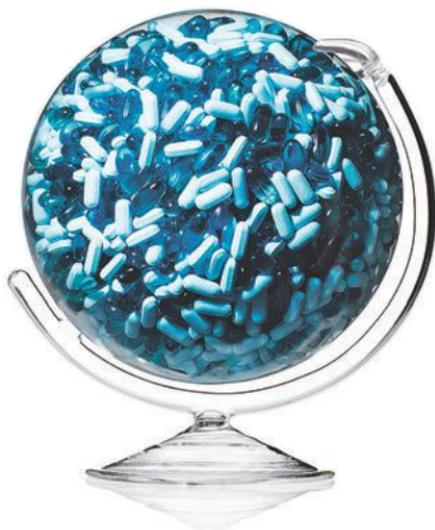
Mosquito-borne infections can be asymptomatic and hard to detect, but keep an eye out for high fevers, headaches and joint pain, and tell a doctor about "any unusual symptoms that occur after travelling to tropical or subtropical countries," says Mancarella.

Above all, don't let apprehension keep you from enjoying the outdoors—just take precautions, such as wearing insect repellent and clothing that blocks access to your skin. **R**

News From the World of Medicine

Vitamin D: A Must for Healthy Aging

Compared to younger people, seniors are more likely to be deficient in vitamin D, in part because their skin doesn't absorb it as well. Researchers at Loyola University Chicago have found a link between low levels of "the sunshine vitamin" and medical conditions common among older adults, including cognitive decline, depression, osteoporosis and heart disease.



CLAIRE BENOIST: (PROP STYLIST) JANINE IVERSEN

Men Lose More Memory

Memory loss doesn't always point to dementia, but rather to simple aging. Though both sexes are affected, a Mayo Clinic study has concluded that memory performance is generally worse in men, especially after age 40. By the time 60 rolls around, the average male hippocampus has measurably shrunk more than the female one.

Hard to Breathe in Nursing Homes

In a study published in the *European Respiratory Journal*, researchers measured indoor air pollutants in 50 different seniors' residences in France, Greece, Italy, Poland, Sweden, Belgium and Denmark. Nursing homes in Greece had the highest quantities of particulate matter and nitrogen dioxide, while those in Belgium and Denmark had the most formaldehyde and ozone. Some types of airborne particles were associated with breathlessness, coughing and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease—even though the air quality met international standards.

Short-Term HRT Ups Cancer Risk

A treatment for hot flashes and other menopause symptoms, hormone replacement therapy (HRT) is rarely prescribed for longer than five years due to the health risks associated

with long-term use. But a recent meta-analysis of 52 studies involving a total of 21,488 women from around the world suggested that even taking HRT for less than five years may increase the risk of ovarian cancer. However, short-term users still fared better than their long-term counterparts, and the overall risk for this rare cancer remains low, at around 6.8 new cases worldwide for every 100,000 women. **R**



TEST YOUR MEDICAL IQ

What is scotoma?

- A. Inflammation caused by vitamin A deficiency
- B. A poison ivy rash
- C. A dark or blind spot in someone's vision
- D. A carcinogenic mould found in old homes

Answer: C. Surrounded by normal sight, scotoma is a dark or blind spot in someone's vision. It has many different possible causes, including multiple sclerosis, retina damage or macular degeneration related to aging.

Don't let physical limitations get in the way of cardio fitness

Keep Moving

BY SIMON LIEM

AS DOM LASSONDE felt the symptoms of rheumatoid arthritis creep into his body, the 40-year-old Vancouver Islander knew he needed a different way to stay fit. The autoimmune disease inflamed his synovial membranes—a connective tissue in joints that produces lubricating fluid for smooth movement—so much it felt like shards of glass were lining his joints. Ultimate Frisbee and hockey, two of his regular activities, were no longer feasible.

After beginning a new medication regime about a year after his diagnosis, Lassonde could cycle and swim—activities that put less stress on his joints. He was right to keep moving: accord-



ing to the American College of Rheumatology, regular aerobic exercise, especially when combined with strength training, can reduce joint pain.

Lassonde is one of many Canadians living with a physical limitation that makes exercise difficult. Two common issues, chronic pain and heart disease—which affect 3.9 million and 1.3 million Canadians, respectively—make it challenging for individuals to achieve the 150 minutes of weekly moderate aerobic exercise, or cardio, recommended by the Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines (CPAG).

But the benefits of regular exercise are too important to pass up. Aerobics—any continuous activity that raises your

You Asked, We Answered

These are some of the questions Canadians asked us in a recent survey. Victor Wong, pharmacist at a Shoppers Drug Mart in Scarborough, Ontario, has the answers.



What is the purpose of a medication review?

A general medication review is a consultation with a pharmacist to review all your medications including prescription, over-the-counter and natural health products to help ensure they are contributing to your health. It gives you an opportunity to ask if there are any things to watch out for, any interactions, and any lifestyle changes that can optimize your response to treatment. When it's done, you'll have a list of all the medications you're taking, any allergies, and any special notes.

There are also tailored medication reviews such as a diabetes medication review, where we talk about how to use devices to measure and monitor blood sugar, and general diabetes education (like diet and exercise). We discuss how to optimize medications, how to achieve safe use, and how to remember to take medications and avoid mixing them up.

When you try to explain a very problematic side effect of a certain medication and yet you're told to take it anyway, what's your next step towards resolution?

—ENID, FROM SASKATCHEWAN

A problematic side effect can be discouraging. Ask your pharmacist or doctor about the benefits and the risks of the medication. Sometimes a medication is necessary to preserve health, and the benefits completely outweigh the risks. The pharmacist or doctor can help you decide whether it's right for you. It's a good opportunity for a medication review with your pharmacist to see if there are any contraindications

(things you shouldn't take with it) or any interactions with other medications, supplements, or alternative medications, just to see if everything fits.

How many times a year should medications be reviewed?

—FERN, FROM ONTARIO

It's a good idea to have a medication review at least once a year to discuss how all your medications are improving your health. Also, it is advisable to have a continued dialogue with your pharmacist through follow-up medication reviews as your drug therapy regimen or disease state changes. Your pharmacist can help guide you during your individual one-on-one consultation.

Is there an easy go-to guide for medication vs. supplement interaction?

—SHEELAGH, FROM ONTARIO

There are some online tools and textbooks that give very general information, which you can reference in advance of your medication review. Because medication is tailored to the individual, I encourage you to go to the pharmacist so she can put this information into context. The pharmacist looks at your medication history, looks at the supplement or alternative medication you're taking, and probes what outcomes you're trying to achieve to see if it's safe for you. The pharmacist will tell you how you can optimize your medication, understand your medication, what side effects to be conscious of, and how to learn how to manage them.

Have another question? Ask your pharmacist about reviewing your medications so they contribute to your optimal health. Find a pharmacist near you at shoppersdrugmart.ca

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heart rate and has you breathing rapidly—can lead to a longer life and prevention of Type 2 diabetes, osteoporosis and heart disease.

Physical limitations needn't prevent you from working out regularly—it's just a matter of knowing which exercises to do.

Pushing back against pain

Approach new exercise regimes cautiously. "People should never use mobility impairment as a reason not to participate, but they should definitely seek guidance from a professional to make sure they're doing it safely," says Audrey Hicks, a professor of kinesiology at Hamilton's McMaster University. She advises those experiencing chronic pain to seek out certified physiologists and personal trainers before beginning a new fitness routine.

Instead of jogging, Hicks recommends that people with joint pain or injuries try swimming or water aerobics, or use recumbent elliptical trainers—activities that reduce strain on joints. "You don't want to do anything that's going to make your pain worse," she says.

Exercising with caution

Those living with heart disease should be especially prudent in their efforts to meet the national CPAG recommendations.

The guidelines weren't designed for people with chronic medical conditions, says Dr. Darren Warburton, a specialist in cardiology and exercise rehabilitation at University of British Columbia. Warburton was one of the creators of the guidelines. "We never prescribe 150 minutes of physical activity to someone who has just had a heart attack," he says.

Warburton doesn't restrict himself to a "magic number" or a certain type of exercise when prescribing fitness routines. "We advocate that individuals start early on at a very light to moderate intensity and progress toward higher levels of activity," he says.

This might mean beginning with two weekly 20-minute sessions, doing activities like gardening or brisk walking. To be effective, your workout should reach a moderate level of intensity—that is, you should be able to feel your heart rate increase and have enough breath to talk, but not sing. This, of course, should only be done after consultation with a health professional.

Don't deprive yourself of the benefits of the small efforts. McMaster University research has shown that short intervals of physician-monitored high-intensity workouts are just as effective as longer sessions of moderate-intensity workouts for the rehabilitation of patients with coronary artery disease. **R**

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Examining the rise of autism spectrum disorder diagnoses

Behind the Numbers

BY SAMANTHA RIDEOUT

☞ A COMPLICATED relationship exists between statistics and the real world they're supposed to represent. The numbers tracking autism spectrum disorder (ASD) illustrate this phenomenon well.

Both the United States and Canada have recorded a steady rise in the neurodevelopmental condition, with rates roughly doubling over the first decade of the millennium—to the point where it's now estimated that one or two out of every 100 people are affected by ASD. This spike has inspired many concerned headlines, but it's up for debate whether there has been an increase in actual cases or just in the number of them that are diagnosed.

In 2013, the ASD label was adopted to encompass three separate diagnoses: autism, Asperger syndrome and “pervasive developmental disorder not otherwise spec-

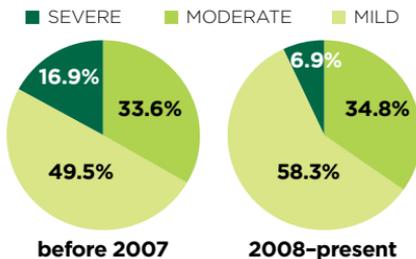
ified.” These conditions were folded together because the line separating them was fuzzy and because they shared a common set of symptoms.



SEVERITY

A greater percentage of new diagnoses in recent years have been on the milder end of the autism spectrum. This suggests that the increase in reported cases of ASD might be linked, at least in part, to people being more aware of its symptoms.

Diagnoses in kids aged six to 17 years



The severity of those symptoms can vary greatly; in general, though, people with ASD demonstrate impairments in social interactions and communication, and restricted, repetitive patterns of behaviour.

There is more awareness of ASD today than in previous decades. So it stands to reason that parents may be more likely to seek diagnoses for kids who might once have been considered eccentric or socially inept. Still, in the words of one 2013 study based on data from the National Epidemiologic Database for the Study of Autism in Canada, “we cannot rule out the possibility of a true increase in incidence.”

We still aren’t sure what causes ASD. Researchers have identified genes that may affect the way the brain develops; and an association with pregnancy complications suggests ASD might arise from an occurrence in the womb—for instance, the exposure of the fetus to unusual hormone levels in amniotic fluid.

Nevertheless, the very fact that diagnoses are on the rise means that support services will need to ramp up. Autism Nova Scotia, for example, launched an eCampus last year to deliver basic training to new respite workers, who provide breaks to primary caregivers of people with autism. Still, there’s a ways to go before all those affected have access to the support they need. **R**



EARLY RED FLAGS CHECKLIST

Although ASD has no known cure and no single treatment is guaranteed to help everyone, early intervention is believed to lead to the most positive outcomes for people on the spectrum. None of these signs necessarily point to ASD, but if you notice any of them, it may be worth consulting a doctor.

A child with ASD might:

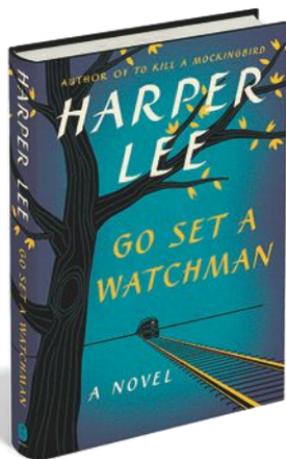
- Not respond to their name by 12 months
- Not point at objects to show interest (e.g., gesturing at an airplane flying overhead) by 14 months
- Be disinterested in imaginative play (e.g., pretending to feed a doll) by 18 months
- Avoid eye contact and want to be alone much of the time
- Have delayed speech and language skills
- Repeat words or phrases over and over (echolalia)
- Get upset by minor changes to routine or surroundings
- Have unusual reactions to the way things sound, smell, taste, look or feel

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

With *Go Set a Watchman*, Harper Lee revisits her most beloved character

Scout's Honour

BY SARAH LISS

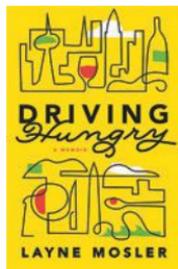


More than half a century ago, the world met Scout Finch, a six-year-old spitfire whose unfettered curiosity and optimistic world view formed the heart of Harper Lee's Pulitzer Prize winner, *To Kill a Mockingbird*. For decades, that classic novel has stood as Lee's only published work—until this year, when it was revealed that the reclusive author had written a *Mockingbird* sequel in the 1950s, one that followed Scout into early adulthood. To lit nerds, the long-lost *Go Set a Watchman* is the equivalent of the Holy Grail. *July 14.*

This month's hottest books, movies and music

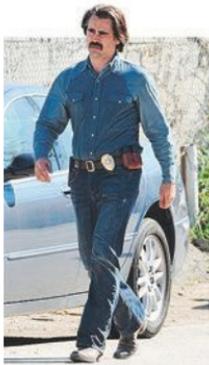
DRIVING HUNGRY Layne Mosler

When Mosler, a restaurant worker with a degree in anthropology and a penchant for tango, asked her Buenos Aires, Argentina, *taxista* to suggest a local eatery, she had no idea that her simple query would change the course of her life. That 2007 tip led to more culinary recommendations from cabbies, which Mosler chronicled in her popular blog, *Taxi Gourmet*, and recounts in this travelogue-slash-foodie memoir. *July 14.*



THE BIRTHDAY LUNCH

Joan Clark
An unconventional triangle—Lily, her husband and her sister—is thrown off-kilter following Lily's sudden death. Clark, an acclaimed East Coast novelist and short-story writer, delivers a powerful exploration of grief and regret. *June 9.*



TRUE DETECTIVE

Last year's self-contained smash hit about gumshoes on the trail of a serial killer gets a second season—with an all-new cast and case to solve. This time around, Colin Farrell, Rachel McAdams and Taylor Kitsch are the law enforcement; Vince Vaughn is the career criminal. *June 21.*



MALE

Natalie Imbruglia

The '90s gamine returns with an intriguing new concept album: her interpretations of material originally performed by men. Drawn from different decades, the gender-flipped covers include Neil Young's "Only Love Can Break Your Heart" and The Cure's "Friday I'm in Love." *July 28.*



MR. HOLMES

If recent revamps (*Sherlock*, *Elementary*) are any indication, the sleuth of Baker Street is in full renaissance. The latest portrait of the master of deduction stars Sir Ian McKellen as a nonagenarian Sherlock Holmes who grapples with his waning mental faculties by revisiting an unsolved case. *July 17.*



WHAT HAPPENED, MISS SIMONE?

Acclaimed documentarian Liz Garbus explores the life of Nina Simone, the formidable singer, songwriter, arranger and civil-rights activist known as the High Priestess of Soul. This comprehensive biography is further elevated by archival footage of transcendent performances. *June 26.*



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Strawberry Summer Salad

My daughter wanted me to submit this family favourite. We love it served with steak and baked potatoes. It's perfect for warm summer days.

—**RANDI GROSS**,
LETHBRIDGE, ALTA.

PREP / TOTAL TIME: 20 MIN.

MAKES: 8 SERVINGS

- 7 cups (1.75 L) romaine, torn**
- 2 cups (500 mL) fresh strawberries, sliced**
- 2 celery ribs, finely chopped**
- 2 green onions, finely chopped**
- 1/4 cup (50 mL) canola oil**
- 2 tbsp (25 mL) sugar**
- 2 tbsp (25 mL) cider vinegar**

- 1/4 tsp (1 mL) salt**
- 1/4 tsp (1 mL) pepper**
- 1/8 tsp (0.5 mL) hot pepper sauce**
- 1/2 cup (125 mL) slivered almonds, toasted**

- 1.** In large bowl, combine romaine, strawberries, celery, and onions.
- 2.** In small bowl, whisk oil, sugar, vinegar, salt, pepper, and hot pepper sauce.
- 3.** Pour mixture over salad and toss to coat. Sprinkle with almonds.

NUTRITION FACTS: *3/4 cup equals 135 calories, 10 g fat (1 g saturated fat), 0 mg cholesterol, 87 mg sodium, 9 g carbohydrate, 3 g fibre, 3 g protein.*

Maple-Ginger Root Vegetables

My family loves this recipe because it brings out the lovely flavours of the vegetables. Even my children enjoy it — they love the drizzle of maple syrup! It's a tasty way to introduce kids to turnips, rutabaga, and parsnips, too.

—**KELLI RITZ,**
INNISFAIL, ALTA.

PREP: 35 MIN. **BAKE:** 45 MIN.
MAKES: 4 SERVINGS

- 5 medium parsnips, peeled and sliced**
- 5 small carrots, sliced**
- 3 medium turnips, peeled and cubed**
- 1 large sweet potato, peeled and cubed**
- 1 small rutabaga, peeled and cubed**
- 1 large sweet onion, cut into wedges**
- 1 small red onion, cut into wedges**

- 2 tbsp (25 mL) olive oil**
- 1 tbsp (15 mL) fresh ginger root, minced**
- 1 tsp (5 mL) salt**
- 1/2 tsp (2 mL) pepper**
- 1 cup (250 mL) maple syrup**

- 1.** Preheat oven to 425°F (220°C).
- 2.** Place first seven ingredients in large resealable plastic bag; add oil, ginger root, salt, and pepper. Seal bag and shake to coat.
- 3.** Arrange vegetables in single layer on two 15 x 10 x 1-in. (38 x 25 x 2.5 cm) baking pans coated with cooking spray.
- 4.** Bake, uncovered, for 25 minutes, stirring once. Drizzle with maple syrup. Bake 20–25 minutes longer or until vegetables are tender, stirring once.

NUTRITION FACTS: *3/4 cup equals 92 calories, 1 g fat (trace saturated fat), 0 mg cholesterol, 119 mg sodium, 20 g carbohydrate, 2 g fibre, 1 g protein.*






Saskatoon berries are native to Western Canada, and have a sweet, nutty taste.


Great as a topping on vanilla ice cream!

Wild Berry Freezer Jam

One year, I decided I wanted to make a wild berry jam but couldn't find a recipe, so I invented my own.

—**BARBARA HOHMANN,**
PETAWAWA, ONT.

PREP: 15 MIN. + FREEZING

MAKES: 6 SERVINGS

(HALF PINTS OR 237 ML EACH)

- 1 cup (250 mL) saskatoon berries or blueberries
- 1 cup (250 mL) raspberries
- 1 cup (250 mL) strawberries
- 1 cup (250 mL) blackberries
- 1 cup (250 mL) blueberries
- 4 cups (1 L) sugar
- 1 pouch (3 oz or 90 g) liquid fruit pectin
- 1 tbsp (15 mL) lemon juice

1. Rinse six 1-cup (250 mL) plastic containers and lids with boiling water. Dry thoroughly. In large bowl, thoroughly crush all the berries. Stir in sugar; let stand 10 minutes, stirring occasionally.

2. Combine pectin and lemon juice; add to fruit, stirring constantly, until sugar is dissolved, about 3 minutes. (A few sugar crystals may remain.)

3. Immediately fill all containers to within 1/2 in. (1.27 cm) of tops. Wipe off top edges of containers; immediately cover with lids. Let stand at room temperature 24 hours.

4. Jam is now ready to use. Refrigerate up to 3 weeks or freeze extra containers up to 12 months. Thaw frozen jam in refrigerator before serving.

NOTE: If saskatoon berries are not available in your area, add an extra cup (250 mL) of one of the other berries.

NUTRITION FACTS: 1 serving (2 tbsp or 25 mL) equals 72 calories, trace fat (trace saturated fat), 0 mg cholesterol, trace sodium, 19 g carbohydrate, 1 g fibre, trace protein.

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SEASONS
IN THE **Sun**





Ghost tales, happy trails, visiting day, sneaking away, learning to grin, playing to win, arts and crafts, endless laughs and songs to make the memories last. The very best summer-camp stories as told by you.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY MARC MONTPLAISIR

HEART AND SOUL

To say I liked camp is an understatement. I loved everything about it, from the moment we arrived and were taken to a barn to fill our ticks with straw for our bedding to the nightly campfires where anyone could perform or tell a story. One night, an older camper got up. She had the thickest glasses I had ever seen and a head of unruly hair. As she launched into “Danny Boy,” a song I had never heard before, I was mesmerized. Her voice was so beautiful. Instantly, I knew that it didn’t matter what you looked like or what you wore; what really mattered was what came from your heart. This eureka moment has remained with me always.

—JUDY PURCELL, STRATFORD, ONT.

CAMP KITCHIGAMI, GODERICH, ONT., 1951-56



SCOUTING EXPEDITIONS

At Girl Guides Camp, in 1948, two friends and I were wandering over the hills when we came upon a Boy Scouts Camp. We pretended to be lost and were invited for tea. We decided to keep our discovery to ourselves and visited the Scouts several more times to play cricket and have tea. Then, on our last day at camp, we were found out. We were severely upbraided for our behaviour and were told we would have been sent home—had we not been going home already. This is why they call me Bad Betty.

—BETTY NEILL, GABRIOLA ISLAND, B.C.

GIRL GUIDES CAMP,
BALLINLUIG, SCOTLAND, 1947-49

FRIENDS FOR LIFE

The best part about summer camp is the friends I’ve made. We worked together, laughed together and helped each other through life. Some have even married!

—COLLEEN ZIMMERMAN,
LEDUC, ALTA.

ALBERTA COMMUNITY
COOPERATIVE ASSOCIATION
COOPERATIVE YOUTH
PROGRAM, GOLDEYE CENTRE,
NORDEGG, ALTA., 1976-80

SMILE MAKER

I was sent to Camp Kanawana at the age of 10 because my mother, in all her wisdom, felt I needed some male influence (my father had died when I was three).

On a rainy Saturday in 1944, we took the train from Montreal Central Station to St. Sauveur, then bused up the bumpy gravel road to camp.

One of the counsellors checking us in and assigning us cabins asked my name. I responded, "Charles Smillie Buckland."

He patted me on the head and said, "Hi, Smillie."

The boy next to me overheard, and I was Smillie thereafter.

I was small for my age and probably lacked confidence, but I decided that first week, since no one knew me, that I could become anything I wanted to be. So I became an inveterate camper. I held the lake swim record. I was the first recipient of the coveted Green Triangle

awarded to a camper who accomplished a series of feats. I was a member of the winning team in the first annual Lumberman/Voyageur competition.

I was fortunate to have many mentors who took me from childhood to manhood over the course of my seven years at camp. They taught me leadership, shaped my future and equipped me to take on any task. Kanawana changed my life, and I will be forever in its debt.

—SMILLIE BUCKLAND, MISSISSAUGA, ONT.

YMCA CAMP KANAWANA,
ST. SAUVEUR, QUE., 1944-51



Kanawana, 1945.



Country Living

I truly believe that YMCA day camp made me the woman I am today—who “lives in the bush” rather than in Toronto, where I grew up. I still sing the old camp songs while kayaking on our lake or walking in the woods (hoping my voice will scare off any bears!). I remember overnight trips where I learned about the beauty of the forest (which now surrounds me) and how to make a fire (which I do every day in our wood stove). Through the influence of wonderful leaders, I absorbed qualities that helped me in my nursing and teaching careers: patience, leadership, organization, innovation, creativity and tolerance.

I look forward to spending a week at family camp this summer with my grandchildren so they, in turn, can someday pass on all that they learn from camp to their own little ones.

—STACEY AMOS, WALFORD, ONT.

NORWOOD PARK YMCA CAMP, TORONTO, 1960-70

RITE OF PASSAGE

I signed up for Girl Guides for one reason only: a week at the group's Doe Lake Girl Guides Camp. And what a week! Vying for that oh-so-coveted piece of white plastic lace that, when hung around your neck, meant you could swim well enough to have access to the deep part of the lake. Singing campfire songs long into the night. Listening to the coolest women tell you about astronomy, using icing from a camper's birthday cake to illustrate constellations on the wall. Learning how to build shelters. Hearing ghost stories on a canoe trip.

Every girl should get to go to camp for a week at least once in her life,



Sherrie Charter's pals at Doe Lake, 1985.

because it makes her a better woman, a better Canadian. And because “on my honour, I will try” is a good motto to have written on your heart.

—SHERRIE CHARTER, MISSISSAUGA, ONT.

DOE LAKE GIRL GUIDES CAMP,
PARRY SOUND, ONT., 1985-87

Path to Wellness

It was 1989, and our five-year-old daughter, Jill, was finally cancer-free after three long years of chemotherapy and radiation. The first Childhood Cancer Camp in New Brunswick had just opened in Belleisle Bay. So much of Jill's short life had been about illness, and we felt the experience would be perfect for her. Plus, her little brother, Matthew, could go along, as well.

Arrival day was emotional. Here were kids, all in different stages of

treatment, running around. There were smiles, laughter and excitement.

Jill was always shy and a bit withdrawn, and camp gave her strength and courage. She sang and danced and swam, did crafts, acted in plays. When she came home, she was radiant and smiling from ear to ear. For Jill and Matthew, camp was a place to heal, to let kids be kids, to be hugged and loved. Today, Jill is an amazing adult who found herself by going to camp.

—JUDY ALLEN, ST. ALBERT, ALTA.

SONGS OF SUMMER

I was nine the first time I went to camp. We were greeted by mullet-haired counsellors singing “Here Comes the Sun” before being sent to lice check.

For me, music and camp memories are intrinsically linked. At the end of my first three weeks away from home, everyone gathered around the flagpole to sing “Leaving on a Jet Plane.”

Over the years, Steve Miller Band pulsed through ghetto blasters at the swimming dock as we jumped in the lake. Campfire classics like “American Pie” and “Cat’s in the Cradle” punctuated the darkness on overnight trips. “You Shook Me All Night Long” and “Eye of the Tiger” played at Friday night socials. I eventually became a counsellor, and in my final year, Chantal Kreviazuk’s cover of “Leaving on a Jet Plane” was released. Swaying to the lyrics, images from that first summer and all the ones in between came flooding back.

I packed my bags and left camp several weeks later.

—ADAM ELLIOTT SEGAL, TORONTO

CAMP HATIKVAH, OYAMA, B.C.,
1987-93, 1996-99



Adam Elliott Segal at Hatikvah, 1998.

Shooting for the Stars

I'd always been an athletic kid who played every sport and spent entire summers outdoors. It was a dream come true when my parents sent me to an overnight basketball camp for the first time. After that week was over,

I knew I was definitely going back. Sure enough, a few years later, I did return, but as a counsellor. I wanted to be a role model to kids. In exchange, I grew stronger, more confident, more self-reliant. I left that summer with a very different outlook on life. To this day, I never give up on my goals.

—KAITLYN BRYSON, BADEN, ONT.

OLYMPIA SPORTS CAMP, HUNTSVILLE, ONT., 2003-04, 2007-08



FREE TO BE

I was very excited to go to camp the year I turned 11—the first time I would venture so far from home. Leading up to the date, I assured my mother I was ready to go for two whole weeks.

Finally the day came. We reached the camp after a six-hour drive. I registered and met my counsellor, then waved my mom away with confidence, eager to take the swim test and start having fun. Camp was more than I had imagined: crafts and elaborate games; canoeing, singing and swimming every day; making bracelets for new friends; listening to our counsellor read to us before falling asleep to the sound of rain on a metal roof.

When the weekend arrived, there was a luncheon for visiting parents and families. I met some of my camp-mates' relatives, then snuck away with a sandwich. I went down to the docks

to watch the water bugs skate across the surface of the lake. My counsellor came and sat companionably beside me. She quietly asked if I was okay.

I told her it was too far for my family to visit. I remember not looking at her or saying anything for what seemed like a long time. It felt like talking might change the magic of the place. But I also wanted her to know me just a little better, so I told her that my dad had died only a few weeks before, whispering “cancer,” just like I had heard the adults say it.

She put her arm around my shoulder, and we sat for a while longer. It felt like she understood.

Summer camp gave me the opportunity to be an ordinary kid for a brief time that year—just a girl learning, laughing and having fun like everyone else.

—MARCIA ANDKILDE, ARKONA, ONT.

PIONEER CAMP, PORT SYDNEY, ONT., 1984-85



WATER-BORNE

Picture this: a gangly 13-year-old girl who went to summer camp, hoping to stay indoors all day. To my chagrin, we had to choose an outdoor activity, so I selected water-skiing—or, in my case, *water-falling*. Embarrassing! And made worse by the fact that both instructors were super cute. At the end of the first day, I was homesick, sunburned and way out of my comfort zone. But my counsellor encouraged me to wait before passing judgment.

The next afternoon, as I approached the water-skiing dock, one of the staff called, “Ashley! Welcome back!” With some encouragement, I did three laps on the skis without tumbling. That night, I chatted with the cute instructors at the campfire. By the end of the week, I felt like a champion water skier and I didn’t hate the outdoors.

In my teen years I became a counsellor and later the director of a camp. I wanted to help others overcome challenges and succeed in ways they never thought possible.

—ASHLEY BAILEY, TORONTO

VISUAL ARTS CAMP AT CAMP WALDEN,
BANCROFT, ONT., 2000

Second Chances

In 2013, eight-year-old Gabriel* was at camp for the first time, and as his counsellor, I welcomed him with open arms. Unfortunately, he turned out to be a nightmare camper and left after only four days.

The situation didn’t sit right with me: Gabriel deserved to be far away from whatever troubled him at home. I spent the next year hoping he’d be back for another try.

The following summer, he was indeed registered. I had made him miserable for those four days, but he’d still been looking forward to seeing me.

The two weeks went by in a flash, and Gabriel earned his first badge. You should have seen the pride in his eyes... and in my heart.

—ANTOINE KACK, SHERBROOKE, QUE.

LE MANOIR DES ÉBOULEMENTS,
CHARLEVOIX, QUE., 2003–08, 2010–15

*Name has been changed.



GREAT MOMENT FOR SPORTS LEGENDS

“No one believed in us!” —unicorn football coach.

@JOHNMOE



A 54-year-old grandmother,
a 44-year-old adrenalin junkie, and
a skydive gone terribly wrong

Jump, He Said. And They Fell.

BY CHRIS BALLARD FROM *SPORTS ILLUSTRATED*

ILLUSTRATION BY YUTA ONODA

DRAMA IN REAL LIFE



ON AUGUST 1, 2009, the Skydive Houston drop zone in Waller County, Texas, was crazy busy. Instructor Dave Hartsock had made his first jump at 9 a.m. and had completed five more since. At 4 p.m., he was getting ready to clock out for the day when Todd Bell, the drop-zone manager, approached him with a favour. Could he take up one more jumper?

Hartsock was tired and sweaty; by late afternoon, the Texas air had reached 37 degrees Celsius. But he was game. He took a slug of Gatorade, grabbed a prepacked parachute off the wall peg and turned to smile at his final jumper of the day.

Usually, Shirley Dygert avoided risks—she didn't even like driving at night. But here she was, wearing a bulky flight suit and preparing to jump out of an airplane. What in the world am I doing? she wondered. Her older son, Will, had invited her down to Waller from her home in Teague, Texas, 210 kilometres to the northwest, for a barbecue to celebrate both her 54th birthday and his brother Joe's 30th.

The plan was for Joe and his friends to go skydiving, but five minutes before Dygert arrived at Will's house, her cell had rung. It was Joe. A buddy from San Antonio had decided not to jump. Did Dygert want to come? This

was a chance to try something new and connect with her sons. "Sure, I'll go," she had heard herself say.

So now here she stood, looking at this tall, 40-something man, a thick parachute strapped to his shoulders. In a few minutes, she'd be attached to him, her life in his hands.

"How many times have you done this?" she asked.

"A lot," the man answered.

AS THE 23-PASSENGER Super Twin Otter ascended to 4,100 metres, Hartsock checked and rechecked his buckles at the four contact points. After more than 800 jumps, he now did it reflexively. He'd long ago gotten over any nerves, and he could tell Dygert would be an easy student. She had a shy, nervous smile. She'd follow directions.

He gave her the patter. They'd spin three times so she could see all the way to Houston, 65 kilometres away. At 1,500 metres, he'd deploy the chute and they'd settle into a soft glide. The whole thing would take four to five minutes but feel five times that long.

In the first moments after Dygert and Hartsock leaped from the Super Otter, all Dygert saw was the vast Texas sky, dotted by clouds. Then her perspective flipped, and she was falling nose first into a wind tunnel. Her forehead tightened; her cheeks felt as if they were trying to run off her face. In the first three seconds, her body accelerated to 80 kilometres an hour;

after nine seconds, she and Hartsock reached 195 kilometres an hour.

As she'd been instructed in the brief training session before the jump, she threw her arms and legs behind her so she fell belly first, allowing Hartsock to control the dive. Time began to slow, and Dygert finally allowed herself to breathe. She could see houses, barns, a golf course. She could almost see Will's house off in the distance, where they'd be having dinner in a matter of hours.

AT 1,500 METRES Hartsock deployed the main chute. As always, the aim was for the canopy to meet the three S's: square, stable and steerable. Then it would be a sightseeing expedition down to the bottom, after which he'd grin for some photos, stow his gear and shower before the fun began. Saturday nights were epic in Waller. The drop zone was in a small private airport that had a clubhouse, a kitchen and a swimming pool. Folks drank Shiner Bock and Bud Light, then told stories around a bonfire.

Now Hartsock pulled the deployment handle and instantly knew something was wrong. A parachute release can be jarring as you slow from 195 kilometres an hour to 30 kilometres an hour, but this was different. Hartsock felt a violent jerk and heard a loud pop from above. He tried to look up, toward the line, but they were already spinning—once,

twice, then dozens of times, faster and faster. Blood began rushing toward his feet. He knew the danger: spin too fast for too long and he could black out. And if he blacked out, no one could pull the reserve parachute.



AS THEY DROPPED
PAST 1,200 METRES,
DAVE HARTSOCK
KNEW TIME WAS
RUNNING OUT.
HE HAD 20 SECONDS.

Catching a glimpse of the bow-tie shape of the parachute above him, Hartsock had an idea of what had occurred: either a tension knot or a “line-over,” in which the cords connected to the canopy twist on top of the parachute instead of below it. Either way, the problem was solvable. All Hartsock had to do was cut away the main chute and deploy the reserve. He closed his eyes to better focus and shoved his hand up from his hip to grasp the cutaway handle. But the handle wasn't there.

Dygert was becoming worried. This was more than three spins.

“Is it supposed to be like this?” she shouted.

“No,” Hartsock yelled back. “To be honest, we have a serious problem. But I've got it.”

With every second, they spun faster. The world became a blur. Dygert wondered what her husband, Bill, was thinking, down there on the ground. They'd met just after high school, in Colstrip, Mont., where their fathers had worked together in a coal mine. They'd honeymooned in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, and had Will in 1977, then Joe two years later. In 1998, when the boys had graduated from high school, Dygert had taken a job at the post office. She walked 21 kilometres a day, opening one mailbox after another. She liked the routine of the job, the predictability.

Cut away the canopy. That's all Hartsock was thinking. Normally it was easy. He'd just reach over and pull the handle, the one that had suddenly disappeared. He'd envisioned the manoeuvre countless times since 2004, the year he'd caught the skydiving bug. At the end of his first tandem jump at Skydive Houston, Hartsock had turned to his instructor and asked, "What do I have to do to be able to do this all the time?"

Hartsock loved the exhilaration of flight, the way it inhabited him. It was electrifying. He had become an instructor, and then, in 2009, he'd begun taking out tandems. He relished that, with every leap, he was introducing someone new to the sport, checking an item off their bucket list.

Now, however, he was in a bind. The canopy malfunction had been so

violent that it had yanked the cutaway handle upward. It was stuck between him and Dygert, and he couldn't reach it. As they dropped past 1,200 metres, Hartsock knew time was running out. He had roughly 20 seconds until the point of no return.

There was only one option left. At roughly 1,100 metres, Hartsock pulled the reserve chute. He hoped the reserve would at least slow them down. Stop the spinning. Give him a chance to think.



HARTSOCK KNEW
THAT SKYDIVING MIGHT
ONE DAY KILL HIM.
THAT WASN'T THE
DEAL SHIRLEY DYGERT
HAD MADE, THOUGH.

The parachute shot into the blue sky behind him and expanded. For a moment, calm returned. One hundred and sixty kilometres an hour became 100 kilometres an hour. Their spin slowed. The blood rushed back to Hartsock's head, and he was able to begin playing with the lines, trying to get the two semi-inflated canopies into the air. Maybe we'll get out of this, he thought.

ON THE GROUND, Bill watched with growing concern. His wife's jump

had looked fine at first. Then the parachute had shot into the sky and, instead of blooming, folded in on itself like a popped balloon. A second chute had gone up, but Bill could tell it wasn't slowing them down all that much. They were streaking toward the ground. Bill felt as if he were watching a car crash he could do nothing to prevent. He put down his camera and began running.

Dygart had just regained her sense of equilibrium when she felt a jolt and then another acceleration. Above her, the two canopies, hungry for air, had swung violently to opposite sides. Their speed increased from 100 kilometres an hour back to 160-plus.

As they passed 750 metres, Dygart came to the realization that this was the last day of her life.

She thought about her mom, who'd died of cancer in 2000. She thought about how they'd see each other soon. She thought, too, of her father, a construction worker and coal miner, who had worked himself into the grave, dying at 66. Dygart felt a warmth: she'd see him again soon, too.

DESPERATELY, HARTSOCK grabbed at the lines to try to slow them down; seven seconds at their current speed would eat up 300 metres. He twisted, pulled. They'd reduced their speed but were down to 450 metres and still plummeting at 100 kilometres an hour. Worse, they were spinning

again. The time to try to fix the canopy was over. It was time to start looking at the ground.

It was a strange position to be in, responsible for someone else's existence. Sure, Hartsock was a good dude and the life of the party. But he could also be a smart aleck and reckless. He'd spent much of his life in pursuit of good times. In the past eight years, he'd fractured his skull and broken his back in serious car accidents, but nothing could keep him grounded for long.

He'd given up on having kids, on having a family. He lived for himself now. He knew other men who'd become "drop-zone bums," cutting themselves off from society and winnowing the world down to skydiving. Hartsock was fine with that. He understood the sport might one day injure or kill him. That was part of the deal.

That wasn't the deal Dygart had made, though. This was the only jump of her life, that much Hartsock had known. He thought about her family on the ground, watching. About what would happen upon impact. He knew what he needed to do.

Dygart in front and Hartsock behind, they reached 225 metres. Dygart couldn't believe it. She thought about Joe, whom she'd once worried would be a college student his whole life. He'd finally graduated from Texas A&M, then earned his master's at Trinity University in San Antonio. He

now worked as a financial analyst for the Harris County hospital district, near Houston, but was unmarried. Dygert would never meet his wife, never know his children.

Then she thought about Will, who was down there watching with his children—her grandchildren—Brady, six; Caylon, four; and Lexi, an infant. One thought overwhelmed her: I don't want my kids to have to see this.



ABOVE HER, DYGERT
SAW LIGHT AND
SKY AND CLOUDS.
BENEATH HER SHE
FELT THE INERT FORM
OF DAVE HARTSOCK.

They hit 30 metres. The yellow grass came closer. Dygert prepared herself. That's when Hartsock shouted into her ear. "Shirley, I want you to pull up your legs now!" he said. "Get ready for a really rough landing."

As she kicked, Dygert felt herself twist upright. Behind her, Hartsock pulled down on the two canopy lines so hard he dislocated both of his shoulders. At the same time, he kicked his own legs up, inverting their positions so he hit the hard Texas dirt first, becoming a human cushion for a woman he'd met only a half-hour earlier.

Moments later, Dygert opened her eyes, then blinked. Above her she saw light and sky and clouds. Beneath her she felt the inert form of Dave Hartsock.

IT'S BEEN ALMOST six years now, and Dygert still thinks about Hartsock every day. She and Bill live in the same ranch-style house just outside Teague. Dygert's hair is tinged with grey, and the creases have deepened around her eyes, but she smiles broadly and walks without a limp. She considers it a miracle that, for someone who broke multiple ribs, lost part of a kidney, tore her spleen, damaged her liver and broke five vertebrae in her neck, she has no lasting effects. "Good as new," she says.

Three days after the accident, Bill thought they'd lost Hartsock. While his wife rested, Bill heard from someone at the hospital that the skydiving instructor had passed away in the night. But the report was wrong. Hartsock was still alive. Barely. When he had come to, on the ground, Hartsock was surprised. Holy crap, he had thought, we actually made it. Dygert was strapped on top of him, and she was trying to get up. He had tried to rise but couldn't. He had assumed he'd broken his back. Later, at the hospital, the doctors recited complicated medical terms, but all that mattered was this: he was a quadriplegic. He'd never walk again.

Two weeks after her surgery, when Dygert was back at the hospital for a checkup, she arrived early and walked a few blocks down to Memorial Hermann, where Hartsock was still in intensive care. She took the elevator up and found his room. No one was there but the nurse. Hartsock looked up. He could see her, but he couldn't talk. "David, how are you doing?" she asked. Then she kissed him on the forehead. Hartsock looked at her. He saw her neck brace. He began to cry.

"It's okay," Dygert said. "We're both going to be walking." Now she was tearing up, too. "Dave," she continued, "I just want to tell you that I love you."

Hartsock looked up at her. A tube emerged from his throat. His head was swaddled, his face puffy, his body lifeless. He began to mouth words. "I. Love. You. Too."

THESE DAYS, HARTSOCK lives with his 77-year-old mother, Viki, in a small three-bedroom house on a residential street near strip malls in Houston's northern sprawl. In conversation, he is sarcastic. The humour comes off as a defence mechanism, a way to try to be normal when his life is anything but. As for the fateful jump, he is matter-of-fact. "I did what I felt was necessary



Whenever Hartsock sees Dygert, he jokes that they should jump together again. He still loves the sport.

for taking care of my student," he says. "That was the most important thing, making sure Shirley got down safely. I thought, If we do it this way, I'll either get killed or paralyzed from the waist down." He pauses. "And I was like, Okay, I can live with that."

When Hartsock and Dygert see each other, which is often, the warmth between them is genuine. She touches Hartsock on the arm during conversation. He says he considers Dygert a friend. As for Dygert, like many of Hartsock's friends, she is amazed by how positive he remains, by how he's always joking and laughing, and how he signs every email with "God bless and blue skies." **R**

To contribute to Dave Hartsock's recovery fund, go to giveforward.com/fundraiser/0635/david-hartsock-s-fundraise

What your eyes can reveal about your health

SEE CHANGES

BY **LISA KADANE** FROM *BEST HEALTH*

ILLUSTRATION BY RAYMOND BIESINGER

LIZ RODOVICH WAS AT WORK last December when she noticed a shimmering, crescent-shaped blur on the periphery of her left eye. She assumed it was caused by eye fatigue, from spending too much time on the computer. But the episodes became more frequent, and she awoke one night with a stabbing pain at the junction of her head and neck. The Ottawa-based registered nurse wondered if she was getting a migraine preceded by visual aura or, worse, a detached retina.

"I knew something was wrong," recalls Rodovich, 59. "My vision didn't seem right the next morning."

She sought advice at the Ottawa Hospital Eye Institute, where she failed a visual field test, a standard assessment that measures central and peripheral vision. A subsequent CT scan revealed that Rodovich had suffered an embolic stroke in her occipital lobe—the brain's visual processing centre. A clot had lodged in one of the arteries that supply blood to the eyes, affecting her vision. Though she has a background as an ER nurse, the news stunned Rodovich.

"The presentation of the stroke was something I never would have guessed," she says. "Generally you think that if you have vision problems, there must be something wrong with your eyes."

Though symptoms such as blurry vision or foreign body sensation can signal a variety of ocular conditions, your eyes also provide a window into your whole-body health. Everything from allergies to autoimmune diseases can start with ocular symptoms. While red eyes, discharge, itching, light sensitivity or visual changes can be uncomfortable enough to send patients in to see their optometrists, some symptoms, such as optic nerve or vascular changes, take place inside the eye and can go unnoticed. This is why it's important for adults to have an eye exam every two years.

"There are many conditions that don't have symptoms, so coming in every couple of years allows us to look for trends or changes," explains Craig Meckelborg, an optometrist with Fyidoctors in Calgary. Eye symptoms combined with a patient's medical history will alert doctors to possible systemic diseases. For example, Rodovich was a smoker who had previously experienced a hypertensive episode—a spike in blood pressure: two risk factors for stroke. (She quit smoking after her diagnosis.)

What's more, women are more susceptible to certain conditions that can present in the eyes, such as multiple sclerosis (MS) and thyroid dysfunction, says Setareh Ziai, an assistant professor of ophthalmology at the University of Ottawa Eye Institute.

Here are five whole-body conditions that can be revealed by looking at the eyes.

Stroke

A stroke is the sudden loss of brain function caused by an interruption of blood flow due to either a clot (ischemic stroke) or the rupture of blood vessels (hemorrhagic stroke). Rodovich experienced an ischemic stroke that temporarily compromised her eye function. Another type of stroke is a transient ischemic attack (TIA), which is a mini-stroke that can interfere with ocular functions when

a temporary blood clot travels to the eye or part of the brain that deals with vision.

WHAT THE DOCTOR SEES: Often, an eye doctor won't actually see the clot because vision loss associated with a TIA doesn't last very long—by the time the patient comes in, the clot has cleared and vision has been restored. The doctor can make the diagnosis based on symptoms and medical history.

WHAT THE PATIENT EXPERIENCES: A painless or partial loss of vision in one eye that lasts minutes or hours.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT: The patient is sent to a stroke clinic for a full workup. "The risk of stroke is much higher in these patients because they've already had a little stroke," says Ziai. "We hope to prevent something bigger from happening by referring them for appropriate testing."

Hypertension

Also known as high blood pressure, this condition puts extra strain on the vascular system. If left unchecked, it can lead to a heart attack or stroke, among other systemic ailments.

WHAT THE DOCTOR SEES: Changes within the blood vessels at the back of the eye in the retina, such as leakages or hemorrhages, and alterations in

the appearance of the vessels. "With chronic hypertension, often we see a narrowing of the arteries in the back of the eye," says Ziai. "And the arteries can change hue—they can start looking silvery or coppery rather than the red colour of normal vessels."

WHAT THE PATIENT EXPERIENCES: There are seldom any symptoms. In extreme cases, a patient might experience a sudden blurring or loss of vision caused by a sudden spike in blood pressure.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT: An optometrist can measure a patient's blood pressure during an exam and relay the information to other care providers. "We interact with whoever we need to—it's often the family physician," says Meckelborg, adding that optometrists sometimes end up being advocates for general health based on their findings.

Diabetes

The most common cause of blindness in North America in patients aged 20 to 65 is diabetic retinopathy, a condition caused by damage to the blood vessels in the retina. Diagnosed diabetics visit an eye doctor yearly to monitor the disease's ocular impact, but sometimes people come in because of blurry vision or for a routine exam, and the eye-care professional is the first to suspect

diabetes, says Ziai. She notes: “In Type 2 diabetes, many adults are unknowingly walking around with



OTHER SYMPTOMS TO WATCH OUT FOR:

1. Bulging eyes can be a sign of thyroid eye disease, a condition related to autoimmune thyroid disease that is marked by swelling of the muscles and tissues of the eye and orbit.

2. Pupil abnormalities—where one pupil is larger than the other or where one pupil reacts inappropriately when exposed to light—could signify an underlying medical problem.

3. Yellow eyes can signal liver disease. Both hepatitis and cirrhosis can turn the whites of the eyes yellow.

4. Redness, pain and inflammation of the ocular coats, a condition called scleritis, can be a symptom of a number of autoimmune diseases, including lupus and rheumatoid arthritis.

5. Eye spasms, or annoying eye twitches, are caused by contractions of the eyelid muscles due to irritation of the muscle fibres. The underlying cause is almost always benign and can occasionally be precipitated by stress, fatigue or caffeine.

higher than normal blood-sugar levels. If you don't go to your doctor for annual examinations and have the blood work done, you could have diabetes for years and not know it.”

WHAT THE DOCTOR SEES: Damage to tiny blood vessels in the retina, such as bleeding and exudation, due to chronic high blood-sugar levels. New, fragile vessels can form, which can leak a yellowish, fatty substance beneath the retina. Additionally, patients can have swelling or blood in and around the macula, the part of the retina associated with central vision.

WHAT THE PATIENT EXPERIENCES: In the early stages, there may be no ocular symptoms whatsoever, or the patient might have blurry vision that seems to come and go (the variations are due to blood-sugar changes). “Even over the course of a day, their blood-sugar levels can fluctuate,” says Ziai.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT: The patient is referred back to the family doctor or to an ophthalmologist, either of whom can order blood work to confirm. “My job is to monitor the condition or triage it to the right person, depending on the severity,” says Meckelborg.

Multiple Sclerosis

MS is a disease of the nervous system affecting vision, sensation, balance,

strength, coordination and other bodily functions. “Some patients can present ocular symptoms before they’ve had a formal diagnosis of MS,” says Ziai.

WHAT THE DOCTOR SEES: A condition called optic neuritis, which is inflammation and swelling of the optic nerve. “If we’re seeing an episode of optic neuritis, one of the things we think of is MS, but it’s not necessarily a slam-dunk diagnosis,” says Meckelborg. “You have to look at the whole body and whether there are other symptoms, such as tingling of the fingers.”

WHAT THE PATIENT EXPERIENCES: A variety of symptoms that can include one or more of the following: dimming of vision, changes in colour sensitivity, pain with eye movements, and alterations in visual field perception.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT: The patient is referred to the family physician or to

a neurologist, depending on the symptoms. A detailed patient history and an MRI can help confirm the diagnosis.

Hormonal Changes

“Hormones, among many other factors, play an important role in the health of the tear film and ocular surface,” says Ziai.

WHAT THE DOCTOR SEES: Ocular redness, ocular surface inflammation, mucus and dryness on the surface of the eye.

WHAT THE PATIENT EXPERIENCES: Blurry vision, burning and irritation, foreign body sensation and difficulty working on a computer (people blink about 66 per cent less when looking at a screen).

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT: An eye doctor can prescribe lubricating drops, ointments or warm compresses, lid hygiene or a range of other products, such as omega-3 supplements, to help ease the discomfort. **R**

*
* *

NATURAL INSTINCTS

Some people say... that violence and war are inevitable. I say rubbish: our brains are fully capable of controlling instinctive behaviour. We’re not very good at it, though, are we?

JANE GOODALL *From Sierra*

Laughter

THE BEST MEDICINE



THE BEST JOKE I EVER TOLD BY MARTHA CHAVES

My aunt came to visit me from Nicaragua, and I took her to Niagara Falls. We visited Louis Tussaud's wax museum. My aunt goes, "These are the ugliest candles I have ever seen."

Find Chaves online at marthachaves.com, or on [@TheMarthaChaves](https://twitter.com/TheMarthaChaves).



GROWING UP WITH a curious younger brother and a sharp-eared dad led to some memorable conversations as a teenager. One afternoon, I decided to clean a purse of mine by throwing it into the wash-

ing machine—spring cleaning and all that.

"Why are you washing it?" my brother asked, perplexed.

From the next room over, my dad yelled, "She's money laundering!"

SHINAE HARTLEY, *Regina*

A TEENAGE BOY IS getting ready to take his girlfriend to the prom. First he goes to rent a tux. There's a long line at the shop and it takes forever, but he waits. Next, he has to get some flowers, so he heads over to the florist and there's a huge line there, too. He waits forever but eventually gets his bouquet. Then he goes out to rent a limo. Unfortunately, there's a large line at the rental office. Still, he's patient and gets the job done.

Finally, the day of the prom comes. The boy and his girlfriend are dancing happily and having a great time. When the song is over, the girlfriend asks the boy to get her some punch, so he heads over to the punch table and there's no punchline. From reddit.com

Think you can make us laugh? Send us an original joke, and it could mean a free year's subscription for your household. See page 9 or rd.ca/joke for details.

OUR UNDERWEAR MAKES
BLADDER LEAKS
FEEL LIKE NO BIG DEAL.

(and that's a really big deal)



liners • pads • underwear

Get dance-all-you-want bladder leak protection—Always Discreet underwear for sensitive bladders. **Absorbs faster than Depend*** to help you feel comfortably dry, with a discreet fit that hugs your curves. Because hey, pee happens. Visit alwaysdiscreet.com for **coupons and to learn more.**

Always Discreet. So bladder leaks can feel like no big deal.

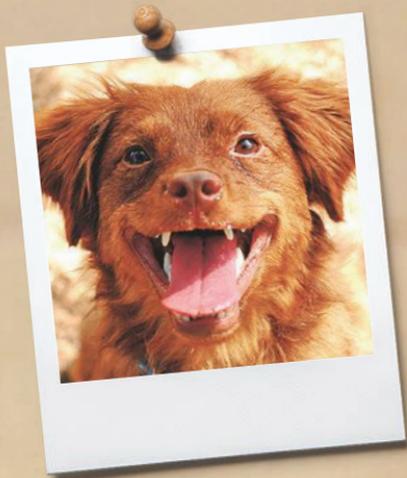


HUMAN INTEREST

Toefu, pictured here with Juno (left), has helped a number of emotionally distressed rescue dogs.



How an abused spaniel gained confidence and learned to comfort other canines in distress



The Dog That Became the Dog Whisperer

BY ALISA BOWMAN

AS ANIMAL-CONTROL officers pounded on the door to the small, one-storey home in Knoxville, Tenn., in the spring of 2010, invisible fumes wafted up their noses, down their throats and into their lungs. It was ammonia, the suffocating by-product of waste and decay.

No one answered. The officers muscled the door open. Blocking them was excrement, 15 centimetres thick. Through the small crack, the

officers could see filth, a couch covered in cardboard and a television. *Cheers* was on.

Light streamed into the dark space, illuminating the eyes of countless dogs. The animals rushed toward the officers. They were frenzied, crawling on top of one another, growling, snapping and fighting for freedom. The officers yanked the door, trying to close the gap, but dogs squeezed through. Two raced off. Two more

were tackled and secured. The others were pushed back in.

The owners were home. That was obvious. The officers continued to shout through the crack, requesting entry. The fumes were overpowering and unbearable; one officer suffered a heart attack and was hospitalized.

Finally, an elderly woman came to the door. She stepped outside and stood on the lawn, looking shocked and embarrassed as she watched officers don protective suits and breathing apparatuses to enter the home. One by one, the dogs were noosed with catch poles and dragged out of the house. Seeing sunlight for the first time, they squinted and pulled back. They were emaciated, some with just hide over bones.

As each dog was brought out, it was numbered.

One... Two... Ten...

Morning gave way to afternoon. Forty... Fifty...

Darkness began to fall. Sixty...

In total, there were 76.

The elderly woman and her brother, who lived with her, were charged with aggravated animal cruelty. They were put on probation and agreed to counselling and unannounced home inspections.

The dogs were taken to Young-Williams Animal Center, where veterinarian Becky DeBolt and a team of others treated them for mange, anemia, worms and dehydration. Most had extra toes on their hind legs; some, a pronounced underbite.

These dogs sure have a short family tree, DeBolt remembers thinking.

This was especially true for dog

No. 16, which looked like a cross between Gomer Pyle and a vampire bat. The brown spaniel mutt trembled, her ears back and tail tucked, as volunteers shaved her matted fur. By the time they finished, she was bald except for her head, paws and the tip of her tail.

"She looked ridiculous," DeBolt says.

Three weeks later,

No. 16 and four dozen other dogs had been nursed back to health. The rest—in very bad shape—were put down. But important questions remained. Who would adopt a dog that couldn't stand being leashed or repeatedly vomited from fear? Could the dogs be house-trained? Allow themselves to be petted and cuddled? No one at Young-Williams knew the answers, so they asked the American Society

“**These dogs had a very short family tree. This was especially true for No. 16, which looked like a cross between Gomer Pyle and a vampire bat.**”

for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) for help.

When ASPCA animal behaviourist Kristen Collins walked into Young-Williams, her presence set off the dogs. Their barking was deafening. She walked past run after run, eventually coming to the one occupied by dog No. 16. The Gomer Pyle spaniel was asleep in a tight ball on top of a kennel-mate.

“She didn’t even look like a dog,” remembers Collins. “She looked more like an Ewok from *Star Wars*. I’d never seen such a pitiful-looking animal.”

Dog No. 16 lifted her head. Her eyes focused on Collins.

No, Collins told herself. Don’t even think about it.

No turned into yes, and a few days later, Collins carried the spaniel to her car for the 10-hour drive to her home in Illinois. She named her adopted dog Toefu, symbolic of the spaniel’s extra toes.

For a year, Toefu’s entire world had been walls, squalor and other dogs. She’d likely never even seen grass. So Collins drove Toefu, along with Juno (the pit bull she’d adopted years earlier) and Wink (a border collie from a shelter), to a secluded park. Toefu, fearful, plastered her body to Juno’s. Slowly, she lowered her nose to the ground and inhaled the fresh scent of grass for the first time. Her entire demeanour changed—her tail shot up, and joy

seemed to course through every cell of her body.

Collins helped Toefu overcome other anxieties, too. She was petrified of cars, so each day, Collins placed dog food closer to her vehicle. Soon, Toefu climbed into the motionless Honda to eat. Then she tolerated a ride around the block. Collins did the same with the other things Toefu feared—the blender, the vacuum, umbrellas, even small children.

Within a year, Toefu was behaving like a typical dog. Each morning, she woke, exploded out of her crate and wiggled her body with enthusiasm. Whenever Collins opened the back door, Toefu raced outside, scooped up a deflated soccer ball with her teeth and fiercely shook it back and forth as the ball made loud thwacking noises. When she wanted attention, she’d bound up to Collins, place a paw on her chest and lightly tap her face with the other paw.

Phase 1 of Toefu’s restoration was complete.

IN 2013, COLLINS moved to Madison, N.J., to take a challenging job overseeing the new ASPCA Behavioral Rehabilitation Center. Shelters around the country sent her their most fearful rescue dogs. One was named Hillary.

On the floor of the centre, the blue-brindle Chihuahua trembled, her eyes enormous, brow furrowed,

mouth gaping as if she couldn't get enough air. She darted to the left of the centre's vestibule. Reaching the end of her leash, she jerked back, then raced to the right, frantically trying to escape.

The Chihuahua had been rescued from hoarders who'd kept her and 19 other dogs in an outside pen, isolated from the rest of the world. The most traumatized of her pack, she behaved like a feral dog and showed no signs of being able to bond with humans.

For six weeks after her arrival, Hillary barked and snapped at her handlers. She cowered in the farthest corner of her run, refused to eat if people were nearby and, when someone touched her, abruptly flattened herself onto the ground as if she'd been hit with a bat.

"She was crashing and burning," says Collins. "We were stalled."

Then Collins had an idea.

She moved Hillary out of her run and into a small penned-in area in the office. Because dogs rescued from hoarders feel more comfortable when surrounded by other dogs, Collins brought Toefu, Wink and Juno to work. One day, she left them in the office with Hillary.

Later that day, Collins checked on them. Toefu bounded over, wagged her entire back end and snaked her body around Collins's legs and torso.

"How are you?" Collins sang to her.

Collins glanced at the back of the

crate, assuming she'd see Hillary's trembling body through the slats. But the space usually occupied by the Chihuahua was empty.

Her eyes shifted forward to the front of the crate. There was Hillary, peeking out, watching.

Toefu continued to wag and wiggle her body.

Hillary walked to the edge of her wire pen.

Toefu thumped her tail against the floor.

Hillary's tail began to wag.

Then, from Hillary's mouth, came a strange high-pitched yodel. It sounded as if the dog were singing.

Toefu continued to connect with Hillary, often passively lounging on the ground as the Chihuahua dive-bombed her, nipped her ears and raced over and around her body. Other times, Toefu curled up next to Hillary, wrapping her larger body around the tiny, shivering dog. At any point, Toefu could have dominated her. Instead, Toefu remained low to the ground and moved slowly, allowing Hillary the upper hand. When Hillary fled under the couch, Toefu pawed the ground but never pursued. She let Hillary come to her.

"Rehabilitation is often about making decisions about when to pay attention to these dogs and when to give them space," says Collins. "The same is true during interactions among dogs. Toefu makes these

social decisions easily, seemingly intuiting what these dogs need.”

One day, as Collins knelt to greet Toefu, a little nose emerged from under the couch. Then a whole head. Then a whole body.

Hillary tentatively walked toward Collins. Just centimetres away, she stiffened, pulled her ears back and walked back toward the couch. Toefu continued soaking up Collins’s attention, her tail happily thumping against the floor. Hillary did another about-face, slowly creeping toward Collins again. Then, as before, she retreated. And that was it.

A few days later, Collins was sitting on the ground with Toefu stretched out on her lap. Hillary approached Collins, but this time, she didn’t pull back. Toefu reached her front legs toward Hillary, pawing her. The Chihuahua’s ears perked up. She pawed Toefu back. Toefu stretched her jaw wide. Hillary did the same. The two dogs emitted guttural growling sounds. Now their heads were side by side, pushing each other back and forth, as Hillary happily let out her high-pitched yodel.

Collins’s hand was just centimetres from Hillary. Would Hillary let her touch her? Collins slowly moved closer. Hillary’s body remained relaxed, her focus on Toefu.

Now closer.

Collins could feel the dog’s fur against the back of her hand. The

dogs pressed their heads together, pushing each other from side to side and back and forth.

Collins slowly edged her hand up Hillary’s back. The animals continued to growl and paw each other.

Collins slid her hand under Hillary’s collar and scratched. Hillary abruptly stopped. She looked confused. “Then she got this dreamy, squinty, this-feels-so-good look in her eyes,” Collins says. “It was magical, and it would not have been possible without Toefu.”

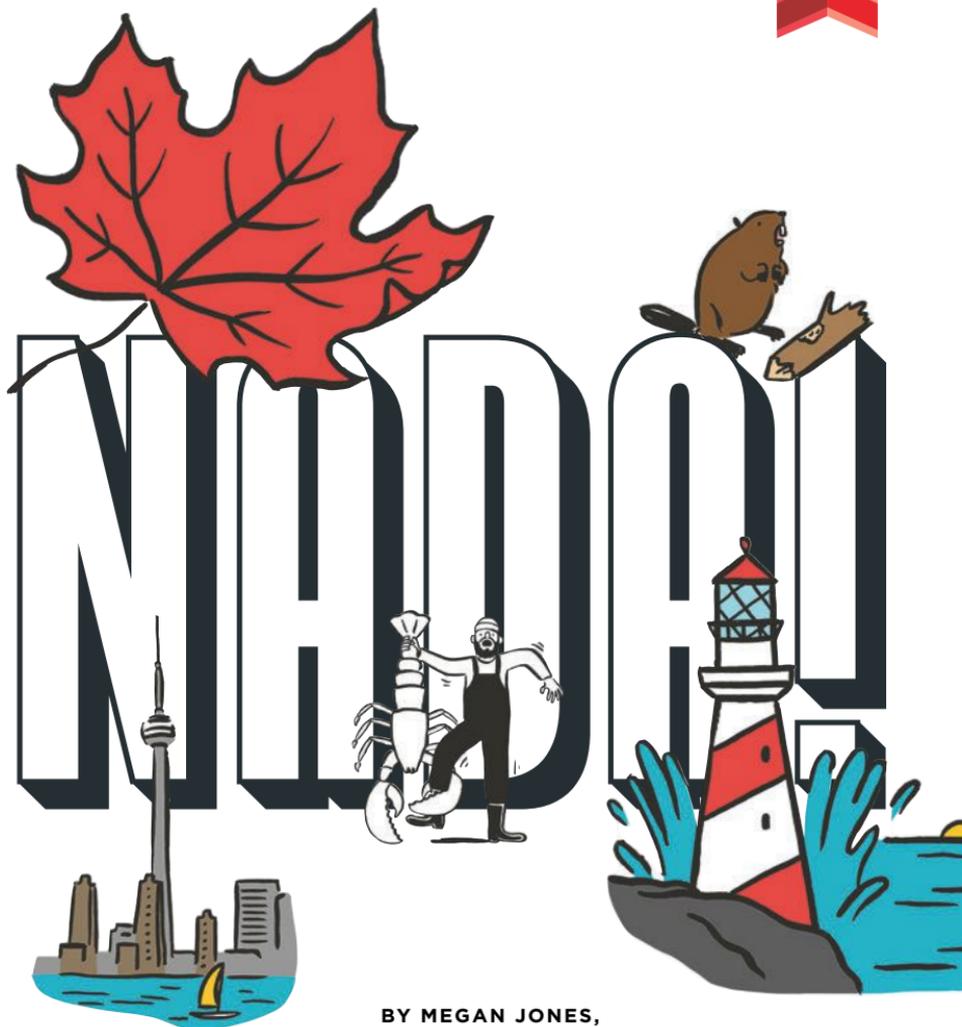
PARTLY BECAUSE OF Toefu’s history and partly despite it, her gentle but persistent manner and intuitive understanding have helped not just Hillary but other dogs that have come to the ASPCA rehab centre.

“People say that dogs live in the present,” says Collins. “But they also make associations, and some of Toefu’s earliest associations came from living in crowded conditions with some 75 other dogs. She had a very large family, and she knew a lot about them. Had she not learned to artfully read their body language, she might not have survived, and she might not be the dog whisperer that she is today.” **R**

Hillary is currently in a foster home. To find out how to adopt dogs like her in your community, contact your local SPCA or Humane Society chapter.

Subterranean science labs, sourtoe cocktails
and 48 other surprising facts, quotes and
stats about life across this country

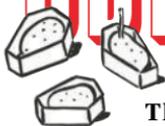




BY MEGAN JONES,
SARAH LISS AND
KATIE UNDERWOOD

ILLUSTRATIONS BY KYLE METCALF

WE HAVE A WEALTH OF ODD ATTRACTIONS



The Canadian Potato Museum, in O'Leary, P.E.I., boasts a hall of fame for tater-industry advocates and a macabre exhibit featuring diseased spuds in tiny coffins.

The Anne Murray Centre, in Springhill, N.S., is an interactive tribute to the beloved Canadian singer, located in her hometown. (Superfans can attempt to duet with Murray—or at least her disembodied voice—in the on-site recording booth.)

The Musée de l'accordéon, in Montmagny, Que., includes specimens of

proto-accordions that date back thousands of years.



The Vulcan Tourism & Trek Station, in Vulcan, Alta., is shaped

like a spaceship and boasts more than 800 pieces of *Star Trek*-themed memorabilia.

The Gopher Hole Museum, in Torrington, Alta., features a bevy of the little rodents dressed up in different outfits, posed in striking dioramas.



20.14
WEIGHT, IN
KILOGRAMS, OF
THE WORLD'S
LARGEST LOBSTER,
CAUGHT IN NOVA
SCOTIA IN 1977.



"I never had a burning desire to be in show business."

—ANNE MURRAY

(ACCORDION) MASTERFILE; (MURRAY) © 2015 ANNEMURRAYCENTER.COM

OUR PROVINCES AND TERRITORIES CONTAIN MULTITUDES

Each year, residents of Evansburg, Alta., elect a **town grouch**, a citizen who's given free rein to pester, harass and grumble without fear of backlash for the next 12 months.



Canada has its own Atlantis. In the depths of Lake Minnewanka in Alberta's Banff National Park, scuba divers can explore the **ruins of Minnewanka Landing**, an abandoned town that has been completely submerged in water since 1941.



Sudbury, Ont., is home to SNOLAB, a **facility located two kilometres underground**, where scientists have performed experiments on dark matter.

Slingsby Channel, near Bramham Island in British Columbia, is home to the **world's fastest currents**, the Nakwakto Rapids, which flow at a rate of up to 29.6 kilometres an hour.

When you step on the sand of Prince Edward Island's **Singing Sands Beach**, it talks back. Walking along the shore produces a sound that visitors describe as akin to singing or squeaking. Scientists have yet to determine the cause.

In Dawson City, Yukon, more than 100,000 people have consumed a **"sourtoe cocktail,"** an alcoholic concoction distinguished by the mummified human toe left to marinate in the liquor.



At **Sustainival**, an eco-friendly fair in Fort McMurray, Alta., the carnival rides are powered by recycled vegetable oil.

During the annual **pumpkin regatta** in



Windsor, N.S., 50-plus paddlers take to the lake in boats made of giant carved-out squash.

Bargain hunters with stamina peruse treasures for days during the annual **70-Mile Coastal Yard Sale**, which has its epicentre in Wood Islands, P.E.I., and features close to 200 vendors selling their wares along a route that stretches more than 112 kilometres within the southeast corner of the island.

Manitoba has been named the world's **official Slurpee capital** for 15 consecutive years. The province's 7-Eleven stores sell the most Slurpees per outlet, on average, of any region on the planet.



-63°C

Canada's coldest-ever temperature, recorded in Snag, Yukon, in February 1947.

15

Percentage of Canadians who visit Tim Hortons daily.



THE RECORD-BREAKING RECORD-BREAKER

It wasn't enough for Doug McManaman to be the best just once. Over the past decade, the 71-year-old Nova Scotian, who describes himself as a "balance king," has set or broken nearly 1,200 world records—more than any other Canadian, he claims. McManaman makes the most of his superhuman ability to balance objects: for his first record, which he set in 2005, he held 56 golf balls on a stick on his chin. McManaman says he sets or breaks 30 records a month.

THE SECRET TO HIS

SUCCESS: "I don't prepare for any records," he says. "I was just born this way. I can balance off my ears, nose, toes. All sorts of places!"

THE EPIDEMIOLOGICAL-RESEARCH PIONEER

Since the early '80s, Vancouver's Julio Montaner has dedicated his life to the eradication of HIV/AIDS. The pioneer researcher was made an Officer of the Order of Canada in 2014, to recognize his work establishing a global standard of care for HIV/AIDS. The UN and others have adopted his Treatment as Prevention protocol, which uses antiretroviral drugs to eliminate the risk of disease progression and transmission.

THE SECRET TO HIS SUCCESS:

"My motivation came from my patients' determination to beat the disease that was killing them and their friends," he says. "I couldn't let them down."



THE 14-YEAR-OLD ECO-ACTIVIST

At 10 years old, Ta’Kaiya Blaney marched up to the Enbridge Northern Gateway’s B.C. office with a letter expressing her concerns about the toll its proposed pipeline might take on the surrounding environment. At 14, her activism continues on a larger scale: Blaney works to draw attention to the challenges faced by aboriginal youth in marginalized communities, both at home and abroad.

THE SECRET TO HER SUCCESS:

“If I don’t encourage others to be more involved in preserving our environment and our culture, [those things] will be lost.”

THE OCTOGENARIAN STRONGMAN

Being a champion weightlifter requires the kind of upper-body strength few of us can even imagine, let alone muster. But at 84, Campbellford, Ont., resident Donald Buchanan is still pumping iron. Although he retired from active competition last year, Buchanan was winning titles into his eighth decade, including snagging the gold medal in his age group and weight class in last year’s Pan American Masters Weightlifting Championships. He still trains a few times a week and can handily lift around 50 kilograms.

THE SECRET TO HIS SUCCESS:

“I still enjoy it,” Buchanan says. “It puts you in a good mood. It’s nice to know I can still move my joints.”

THE TEENAGED MICROBIOLOGY MASTERMIND

Like many university students, 19-year-old Jessie MacAlpine loves team sports and *Doctor Who*. Unlike most of her peers, she already has seven years of laboratory research under her belt. Now double majoring in microbiology and computer science at the University of Toronto, MacAlpine started conducting experiments in her parents’ basement at the age of 12. By 14, she was credited as the lead researcher on a study published in an academic journal. In 2013, MacAlpine set to work creating a new drug to fight malaria made from mustard oil.

THE SECRET TO HER SUCCESS:

“I just really love science,” she says. “I love analyzing new information.”



“Nothing looks as good or smells as good as your own baby’s poop.”

—DONALD SUTHERLAND

35
BILLION

Number of pennies minted between 1908 and the end of penny production in 2012.

94 million

Weight of those pennies, in kilograms (nearly twice the weight of the *Titanic*!).

16

Number of times those pennies would circle the world if laid side by side.

20 million

Number of coins that the Winnipeg mint can produce each day.



"I have never kept diaries. I just remember a lot and am more self-centred than most people."



—ALICE MUNRO

243,042

Length, in kilometres, of Canada's coastline—the largest continuous coastal expanse in the world.

216

Number of trees, on average, felled by each Canadian beaver every year.



72.9
MILLION

Amount, in kilograms, of maple syrup produced globally in 2014.

71

PERCENTAGE OF THAT MAPLE SYRUP THAT WAS PRODUCED IN QUEBEC.

(MUNRO) EPA/DEREK SHAPMAN; (SYRUP) ISTOCK; (PENNY) MASTERFILE

WE EXPECT CITIZENS TO UPHOLD THESE UNUSUAL LAWS

In February 2015, council members in Taber, Alta., passed a bylaw that prohibits swearing, spitting and yelling in public.

According to the Criminal Code of Canada, it is illegal to both challenge another person to a fight duel and accept an invitation to fight a duel.

Residents of Souris, P.E.I., who live on corner lots are not permitted to build any snowman that stands more than 76.2 centimetres tall.



In St. John's, N.L., keeping a cow in your house is strictly forbidden.



It is illegal to *pretend* to practise witchcraft in Canada—though actually being a witch is allowed. A Mississauga, Ont., man was charged with this crime as recently as 2012.



"[Always wear] appropriate ties. When I wear one of my wild jackets, always a plain tie.... When wearing a striped shirt, only a plain tie. Don't try to gild the lily, and always a single Windsor."

—DON CHERRY



"We have to change public perception of ex-convicts. Most Canadians don't realize that, when you come out of prison, you're a complete pariah. You can't get a car loan or money from a bank to start a business, so most end up back in prison within 24 months. It's just so wrong. We need to fix this problem."

—KEVIN O'LEARY

4.28 billion

Age, in years, of the oldest rocks in Canada, discovered along the northern Quebec coast of Hudson Bay in 2008.



**OUR HEROES
COME IN ALL
SHAPES AND SIZES**

5,825

APPROXIMATE
NUMBER OF
CENTENARIANS
LIVING IN CANADA IN
2011. THAT NUMBER IS
PROJECTED TO RISE
TO MORE THAN
20,000 IN THE NEXT
TWO DECADES.

BEACHCOMBER, WAR PIGEON

Birds of a feather... aid in combat? Well, they help. In 1942, commanders in the Canadian Forces were alerted to their troops' landing on the shores of Dieppe, France, by a valiant little pigeon named Beachcomber. In 1944, the brave bird became the only Canadian carrier pigeon ever to be awarded the Dickin Medal for bravery—the animal version of the Victoria Cross.

THE HORSES OF CAN PRAXIS, TRAUMA HEALERS

Horses have an uncanny ability to read and respond to human emotions. For this reason, since 2013, military veteran Steve Critchley and psychologist Jim Marland have employed six docile Haflinger mares to help former members of the Canadian Armed Forces work through experiences of post-traumatic stress disorder. At a barn in rural Rocky

385,937

Estimated number of babies born in Canada between July 1, 2013, and June 30, 2014.

Mountain House, Alta., PTSD sufferers work to manage feelings of anxiety as they walk alongside their animal companions. In many cases, the process helps them feel better.

OPAL, FIRE-RESCUE CAT

In April 2013, Lisa Kosior of Brandon, Man., awoke to the sound of urgent meows from her cat, Opal. A fire had started in Kosior's attic, eluding the smoke detectors. Heeding Opal's warning, Kosior had just enough time to grab a few possessions and flee the house before its ceiling collapsed.



FIDO, SEIZURE-RESPONSE DOG

When 22-year-old Fiona Zhang, currently of Coquitlam, B.C., was diagnosed with stress-induced epilepsy from a brain infection in 2007, Fido, her seizure-response dog, helped her retain her independence. The golden retriever (bred at the Lions Foundation of Canada) is trained to bark whenever Zhang has a seizure, alerting others to severe complications.

With Fido's help, Zhang was able to safely attend school and is thriving.



OZZY, THERAPY ALPACA

Dogs don't have the market cornered on therapeutic visits—just ask Ozzy, a 10-year-old Huacaya alpaca from Enniskillen, Ont. For the past decade, Nancy Hutchinson, owner of 1Stop Alpaca Farm, has taken Ozzy to call on seniors with mobility issues, children with non-verbal autism and adult day programs throughout the GTA. Ozzy's calm nature and teddy bear-like fur can coax even the most reserved patients out of their shells.

(OZZY) © BOBBY ORR PUBLIC SCHOOL/OSHAWA ONT.

1

RANK OF CANADIANS AMONG
GLOBAL MOBILE-PHONE USERS
WHEN IT COMES TO USING THE
"SMILING POOP" EMOJI,
ACCORDING TO A 2015 REPORT.





Each year, doctors prescribe antidepressants to thousands of young Canadians. Two decades ago, **Emily Landau** was one of them. Today, she considers how drugs have affected who she is.

TO MEDICATE OR NOT TO MEDICATE?

FROM *THE WALRUS*
ILLUSTRATIONS BY PUI YAN FONG

WHEN I WAS SEVEN, I became convinced that my house was about to burn down. Night after night, as I tried to fall asleep, I saw the flames encroach upon my bed. Then, at around 1 a.m., unable to handle the dread, I would go wake my dad. He would walk me through the house, pointing out fire alarms and double-checking that the oven was off. This was our normal. My crippling anxiety started when I was a toddler, I'm told, and only worsened as I approached puberty.

On September 3, 1996—the first day of Grade 6—I suffered a mental breakdown. I'd never been popular, but I had one close friend and that was enough. After a summer apart, I spotted her in the schoolyard and ran up excitedly to say hi. She clipped a quick greeting, then turned her back. I'd spent my childhood stewing in amorphous terror, awaiting some unknown calamity. Maybe this was it. I ran to the administrative office in tears and said I was sick—and I was.

The illness manifested as an all-consuming fear of school. When my parents tried to convince me to return, I cried and hyperventilated. A few times, they managed to get me to class for an hour or two. I'd stare into my lap, chin quivering. I stopped eating and lost about 20 pounds. One day, I announced I'd rather be dead than go back to school. That whiff of suicidal thinking scared my parents so deeply that the next morning, we drove from our home in midtown Toronto to the Hospital for Sick Children in the city's downtown core.

This was the era of peak Prozac. By the end of its first year on the market, a decade earlier, the drug racked up more than \$100 million in sales. Between 1981 and 2000, the number of antidepressant prescriptions in Canada increased by 353 per cent, from 3.2 million to 14.5 million.

But the backlash was as ferocious as the boom. Many patients experienced what came to be known as “Prozac poop-out,” in which their serotonin-induced euphoria dissipated and their depression returned. Doctors worried about potential side effects; some reports pointed to agitation, violence and even suicidal thoughts in users. Patients started complaining that, in addition to alleviating their depression, the drugs also numbed their feelings—a condition known as the “anti-depressed personality.”

For children, medication was practically verboten. At SickKids, my parents and I met with a militant child psychologist who prescribed a course of discipline. My refusal to go to school was merely separation anxiety,

he claimed. During each of several subsequent visits, he gave my parents a version of the same advice: roll me into a carpet and carry me into the classroom if necessary. My parents refused. After about a month, it occurred to them that medication might be the only thing that could make me better.

My family doctor referred me to one child psychiatrist, who diagnosed me with a depressive illness, and then another, who pinpointed it as generalized anxiety disorder. He prescribed 250 milligrams of Zoloft, even though Health Canada hadn't approved the drug or any other antidepressant for patients under 18. Almost 20 years later, tens of thousands of young Canadians are taking antidepressants. (A recent study from researchers at the University of Saskatchewan and the University of Ottawa, for example, suggests that 15 out of every 1,000 Saskatchewanians under the age of 20 have been prescribed antidepressants.) Yet the old fears persist. What do these medi-

cations do to the developing brain? The most pervasive fear is that antidepressants will somehow alter the patient's essential identity.

WHEN I WAS INITIALLY diagnosed with a depressive illness around age 11, my doctor explained that I was suffering from a chemical imbalance. At the time, the medical community believed that depressive disorders were primarily caused by a deficiency of monoamine neurotransmitters, which help regulate moods. The new drugs were thought to stall reabsorption of serotonin into nerve cells and allow it to linger instead in the synapse between cells, where over time it may help transmit the "happy" message.

I did improve. Over the next few months, by the time I turned 12, my sadness lifted. I switched schools, made new friends, and slowly, cautiously, returned to normal life. The drugs buoyed me up from cataclysmic depression to relatively stable, low-boiling anxiety. But they came





with side effects. I picked the skin on my face and limbs, creating welts and sores. I also developed a facial tic, wherein I'd scrunch up my nose until it ached. My doctor prescribed even more drugs.

My parents weighed the potential risks of this cocktail against what they imagined would happen if I continued along my destructive path. My doctor, meanwhile, hoped that by staving off anxiety and depression at an early age, my brain might be able to lay down permanent pathways to combat patterns of dysfunctional thinking. No one knew what to expect.

We still don't really know anything about the effects of antidepressants on adolescent development. There have been no long-term studies, partly because of logistics, and because the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and Health Canada require companies to prove only that their medications are better than placebos over the short term. One study found that extended exposure to fluoxetine (the generic form of Prozac) in young mice led to anxiety-like behaviour recurring in the mice as adults.

One of the paramount tensions of mental illness is the blurred line between pathology and personality. It is a fear that metastasizes in the context of adolescence—a period we mythologize as a stage during which a person carves out his or her identity. Some people argue that adding antidepressants to this primordial soup could thwart the development of a predestined selfhood. Katherine Sharpe, an American journalist who started taking antidepressants at 18, reflects on this issue in her 2012 book, *Coming of Age on Zoloft: How Antidepressants Cheered Us Up, Let Us Down, and Changed Who We Are*. "When I first began to use Zoloft, my inability to pick apart my 'real' thoughts and emotions from those imparted by the drug made me feel bereft," she writes. "The trouble seemed to have everything to do with being young."

Geoffrey Cohane, a clinical psychologist in Concord, Mass., studied adolescent antidepressant use in his 2008 dissertation. Issues of identity, he found, were chief among the psychological barriers to seeking medication. Existential angst isn't the exclusive domain of those with mood disorders. From time immemorial, humanity has been preoccupied with questions of identity. Philosophers trace this obsession back to Plato, who espoused what is known as the strict theory of

ACCORDING TO ONE popular psychological theory, the five-factor model, "personality" depends on a fixed set of qualities: openness to experiences, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness and neuroticism. In adolescence, these traits become more consistent and predictable. When I was a teenager, I never had the opportunity for my personality to settle into that equilibrium. In the years immediately following my breakdown, the pills allowed me to pick up where I had left



THE DRUGS BUOYED ME UP FROM CATAclySMIC DEPRESSION TO RELATIVELY STABLE, LOW-BOILING ANXIETY.

soul—the idea that we all have a wispy, incorporeal core that persists independent of the body.

Yet long after many of us have shed the notion of the inextinguishable soul, the desire to label ourselves continues. We scour horoscopes for insights into our astrological constitutions. We worry ourselves with Myers-Briggs psychometrics, trying to nail down our Jungian archetypes—all in the quest to know who we are in this world. But what happens when that question is rigged from the outset?

off—except, in place of the friendly, albeit anxious, kid I had been was a sensitive, prickly preteen. In high school, the surliness softened, but my social fears intensified. The friends I'd made in middle school, a group of funny, eccentric girls, began to act like teenagers. I was a bookish introvert with a mood disorder; not surprisingly, adolescent hedonism made me uncomfortable. Despite my friends' kindness and patience, I couldn't trust them. If I hadn't spoken to them that day, I became consumed with the fear that they

were mad at me. Other times, I was buoyant and confident. It all depended on the time of year, or the time of day, or if I'd taken my Zoloft in the morning or with dinner.

When I was 16, after more than five years on the medication, I decided the cons outweighed the pros. My appetite had increased, and I was gaining weight. It caused heartburn and digestive issues. More than anything, perhaps, I wanted to know who I was off the drugs. The first couple

first few years on a new medication, my sensitivity ripens into empathy, while my anxiety keeps me active and conscientious.

Inevitably, however, the meds stop working. After more than a decade of navigating this unpredictable landscape, I had two major insights. First, I realized I couldn't rely on drugs alone and began cognitive behavioural therapy, or CBT, building my mind's capacity to discern and defuse negative thoughts. Second, although



WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THE QUESTION OF WHO WE ARE IN THIS WORLD IS RIGGED FROM THE OUTSET?

weeks after quitting, I felt great. My anxiety was manageable. Then, seemingly overnight, it all came rushing back: the nausea, the blind panic, the intense social anxiety that escalated into free-floating dread. By summer's end, I was on Celexa, a newer drug that my doctor hoped would help me avoid the side effects I'd experienced while on Zoloft.

I realized then that I'd likely be on some form of antidepressant for the rest of my life. And I have been—about six different kinds. For the

I developed my trademark tastes—Victorian novels, dogs, Diet Coke—I found that my personality had settled into impermanence. I comfortably alternate between introvert and social butterfly, solemn and ebullient, confident and insecure.

James Giles, a Vancouver-born philosopher and psychologist currently based in Denmark, and the author of the 1997 book *No Self to Be Found: The Search for Personal Identity*, argues that consciousness is a fickle constant—people

forget things, invent new memories, rewrite history.

He champions something he calls the “no-self theory,” which is not really a theory about the self, but rather a dismissal of all such theories as “inherently untenable.” Its roots run deep. “The Buddha was the first person who rejected the idea of the self as a delusion,” Giles tells me. “People create the idea of a permanent self, which causes us to grasp at things that are transient. He suggested that once we relinquish the notion of the permanent self, we’re able to let go of things like self-pride, embarrassment and vindictiveness.”

While I’m not on that particular path, it does sound familiar. “I have thoughts, but I am not my thoughts,” is a typical refrain in CBT. And, as in Buddhism, the reward for doing your homework is ostensibly greater happiness. I can’t speak to the viability of

that contract—not yet, anyway. What I do know is that if I had subscribed to popular notions of essentialized selfhood, my true identity would look like a feverishly anxious mass of phobias and self-loathing. Had I stuck with that girl, I’d be either in a padded cell or dead.

I’ve simply had to accept that I am a bricolage of my experiences: my happy (albeit anxious) childhood, my prepubescent breakdown, my fraught teen years and my evolving adult personality, with antidepressants being merely another cog in the wheel. To others, I might argue that there are a billion possible selves, just as there might be a billion possible universes. It’s conceivable that my 18 years of antidepressants have made me a different person, changed the way I think and feel and relate. Luckily, that’s the person I want to be. **R**

*
* *

ZEN KOANS FOR THE INTERNET AGE

- If an anonymous comment goes unread,
is it still irritating?
- What is the sound of no hands texting?
- If nobody likes your selfie, what is the value of self?
- To see a man’s true face, look to the
photos he hasn’t posted.

BRANDON SPEKTOR

Life's Like That



"Your mom's idea of sunblock's a little unorthodox."

IQs TAKE A BREAK

- "Be the nap you wish to see in the world."
- "What doesn't kill you makes you nap."
- "Nap for the job you want, not the job you have (which you are also napping at)."
- "Make new friends but keep the old. One is silver and the other is napping."
- "Never frown because you never know who is falling asleep to your smile."

McSweeney's Internet Tendency

DAILY STRUGGLES

I like to hold hands at the movies. Which always seems to startle strangers. *Comedian TOM RHODES*

I've got very sensitive teeth. They'll probably be upset I've told you.

Comedian GORDON SOUTHERN

If I'm ever feeling down, I just type "Yo are the best" into Google. Then it responds: "I think you mean 'You are the best,'" and I feel much better.

Comedian JACK BARRY

Does wit come easily to you? Send us an original joke! See page 9 or visit rd.ca/joke for details.

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Source: CMHC Rental Market Report Fall 2014

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*The Kawartha
Turtle Trauma
Centre's Kate Siena
holds Bill Mallett's
injured turtle.*

When Bill Mallett found an injured snapping turtle by the side of the highway, he wasn't sure how to help it. But he knew he needed to try.

Shell SHOCK

BY PHILIP PREVILLE
FROM *COTTAGE LIFE*

ROADKILL. That's what first crossed Bill Mallett's mind in the early hours of Friday, May 10, 2013, near his family's cottage on the shores of Lake Huron, in Port Franks, Ont. Mallett was driving to meet a friend for breakfast when he spotted a turtle on the shoulder of Northville Road, not far from the reedy, elbow-jointed pond known as L Lake. The area is famous for its well-travelled turtle crossings, and Mallett had good reason to assume the creature hadn't survived the endeavour. "I've seen 14 dead turtles around here in the last three years," he says.

But when he got out of his car, he discovered an adult snapping turtle, 60 centimetres long from head to tail, still alive despite grotesque injuries. The top of its carapace had a hole in it the size of Mallett's thumb. Worse still, the turtle had suffered multiple fractures to its upper and lower jaws. Mallett didn't imagine it could survive long. "I was going to put him out of his misery," he recalls. "That's when he turned and looked me straight in the eye."

Mallett, a 71-year-old electrician from London, Ont., is a tough-skinned, gentle-souled kind of guy, a bit of a turtle himself. When he and the animal locked gazes, he knew he had to try to save it, even though he had no idea how. He called 9-1-1, which put him through to the Ontario Provincial Police. Their advice: "Call the Kawartha Turtle Trauma Centre."

If any place could help his turtle, Mallett guessed, this would be it. The problem was that it was about 400 kilometres away, in Peterborough, Ont. He called the number the OPP had given him. What he didn't know was that the trauma centre, despite its impressive clinical name, was actually a not-for-profit wildlife shelter operating on a shoestring budget. The lone person on staff that morning was too busy looking after injured turtles to answer the phone. Mallett left a message and waited by the side of the road.

THE FIRST TURTLES evolved some 220 million years ago. Their signature mutations included extensions of their vertebrae and ribs into arched carapaces over their backs and flat plastrons underneath their bellies, and the fusion of the bones around the edges.

When an evolutionary adaptation works, it sticks. The fossil record shows that the turtle shell has changed surprisingly little since its emergence. It hasn't had to. In 2013, a photographer captured an American alligator, whose bites can exert pressure of up to 200 kilograms per square centimetre, trying to crack a live turtle in its jaws for 15 minutes before giving up.



TURTLES PREDATE
THE *TYRANNOSAURUS*
REX BY ABOUT
135 MILLION YEARS,
AND THEY'RE
STILL AROUND.

Thanks to that hardy shell, turtles have survived every competitor, predator, trap, continental rift and mass-extinction event since Mesozoic times. Turtles predate the *Tyrannosaurus rex* by about 135 million years, and they're still around. Slow and steady really does win the race.

Mallett didn't know any of that. He was hovering over an injured snapper with which he'd made a silent pact. The turtle trauma centre couldn't call him back fast enough.

LINDSAY MAXIM, one of the Kawartha Turtle Trauma Centre's few paid staff members, happened to be the person who retrieved Mallett's message that morning. Maxim took the news to Kate Siena, the executive coordinator at the time, as soon as Siena arrived.

There's a stereotype that's often applied to wildlife conservationists: that they're raccoon-hugging recluses who, in their smelly shelters, get along better with animals than people. Siena, 44, does not fit this description. A happily married mother of two, she is gregarious with friends and strangers alike. As a committed biologist, she sees conservation in terms of ecology and biodiversity. Maxim, a 28-year-old who studied biology, is cut from the same cloth. They don't give names to any of the animals they treat. They assign numbers instead, because it keeps them, and their volunteers, from getting emotionally attached. "They are wild animals, and the whole point is for them to stay wild animals," Siena says. "They are not pets."

Since Siena started working as coordinator of the centre in 2010, it's gone from treating about 50 turtles a year to admitting more than 800. After

confirming the creature is still alive, her first question is always: can we help this turtle? If the answer is yes, she'll move heaven and earth for it. But if the answer is no, it can be devastating to roadside rescuers like Mallett, who often develop a strong bond with the injured animals they find.

Maxim called Mallett back and learned that his snapper was holding on. They had to move fast. "We usually give ourselves a 24-hour window to get an injured turtle to the centre," Siena says, so they'd already lost precious time. "If the turtle is still alive, then it's not the injuries that will kill it. It's infection, the shock from the pain and the lack of fluids."

In recent years, the Kawartha Turtle Trauma Centre has trained staff at other Ontario wildlife organizations to stabilize injured turtles for safe transport to Peterborough. Maxim recommended that Mallett drive 45 minutes south to Heaven's Wildlife Rescue in Oil Springs, where the staff knew the injured-turtle drill.

Siena, meanwhile, fired off a mass email to her turtle taxi list—about 100 volunteers scattered across southern Ontario who shuttle injured animals. But she and Maxim suspected that no single driver would be prepared to make the 400-kilometre drive. It would have to be a relay.

Mallett took the turtle to Oil Springs, where it received pain medication and fluids, as well as a name:

Porter. Meanwhile, Siena and Maxim worked the phones and the email lines. They could arrange to get Porter to Guelph but no further.

That's when Mallett, who hadn't come this far just to see Porter buried, said aloud in desperation, "There must be a pilot who'll fly him!" It turned out there was. Pilots N Paws Canada, a volunteer organization that usually airlifts cats and dogs in need of rescue or medical attention, made an exception for Porter and hooked him up with Rick Woodall, a financial adviser and hobby pilot with his own single-engine airplane. On Saturday morning, Woodall picked Porter up at the Sarnia airport and flew him to Peterborough, arriving just after noon. Now all Porter had to do was survive reconstructive surgery.

MALLETT CAN REMEMBER a time when turtles were everywhere around Port Franks. "Back when I was young, it wasn't uncommon to see 25 painteds and 10 stinkpots down here in the evening," he says.

There are seven species of hard-shell turtles in Ontario, more than any other province in the country. They include painted turtles, identifiable by the red lines on their extremities, and eastern musk turtles, which release a foul-smelling odour when under threat—hence the "stinkpot" nickname. Of the seven, every species but the painteds ranks somewhere on

the conservation barometer. Ontario isn't unique: after 220 million years, turtles everywhere have fallen on hard times. Of the seven species of hard-shell freshwater turtles listed in Canada's at-risk public registry, most are endangered or threatened.



ON ROADS, TURTLES
ENCOUNTER THE
MECHANIZED PREDATOR
THAT NATURAL
SELECTION HAS YET TO
CONQUER: THE CAR.

Young turtles survive by stealth. They're always hiding from predators among the reeds and the lily pads. Once a turtle gets big enough and its shell hard enough, it no longer has predators in the water, and some species can live past the age of 100. In Algonquin Park in the 1970s, wildlife scientists tagged a giant female snapper, B7. Four decades later, she is still laying nests of around 40 eggs every year.

Turtles move from pond to pond in search of food and mates. Across southern Ontario, you are rarely more than two kilometres away from a road, and some active species will amble across thoroughfares multiple times in a season. That's where turtles encounter the

robust. They aren't supposed to die at this rate, and the species can't afford to lose them."

AS GRIM AS THE statistics are, there was reason for optimism with Porter. The moment that Sue Carstairs, the executive and medical director and resident turtle surgeon at the Kawartha Turtle Trauma Centre, laid eyes on him, she knew that she could help. She stabilized him, administered anaesthetic and went to work. "The shell is essentially bone," she explains. "It'll heal just like a broken leg would. It just needs to be secured and kept clean."

Carstairs is self-effacing about it, but she is probably among the world's most experienced turtle vets. To bore holes in shell pieces, she uses a dental drill, then loops orthopaedic stainless-steel wire through them to hold the pieces in place. She sometimes wires other body parts back together, too, but Porter's jaws were fractured in so many places that wire wasn't feasible, so Carstairs taped them back together and changed his dressings regularly.

The next 12 months were surely Porter's loneliest. All animals carry bacteria and parasites unique to their home ecosystem. To keep those organisms from spreading, Ontario law stipulates that a captured animal must be released within one kilometre of where it was found. Because

the trauma centre receives turtles from all around the province, it isolates each one. The majority of the centre consists of rooms filled with giant black Rubbermaid tubs, each containing a single turtle in recovery, each with its own small UV lamp, like a turtle tanning salon.

The happiest room is the hatchery. The lighting is bright and fluorescent, the cheerful sound of bubbling water fills the air, and thumb-sized turtles are everywhere. The staff can harvest the eggs of a recently deceased female from her oviduct, hatch them and nurse the offspring to strength. In 2014 the centre released more than 700 hatchlings—about 60 per cent of them snappers—into the wild. If it takes about 1,500 eggs to replace one adult snapper, the hatchery is helping the odds.

SHORTLY AFTER PORTER'S surgery, Siena had to undergo surgery of her own, for cancer. Her recovery required her to relinquish her duties at the turtle trauma centre—Maxim capably took over—but she's still a volunteer. And on an overcast morning in May 2014, she makes the drive to Port Franks to meet up with Mallett, reintroduce him to Porter and then return the turtle to the waters of L Lake. Seeing "his" turtle for the first time in almost a year, Mallett is impressed.

Porter has visible scars on his shell and jaws, but even if his good looks are now flawed, his potentially fatal wounds have functionally healed. He is, it is safe to say, one tough turtle.

When Siena takes Porter out of his Rubbermaid container, it's his first look at the outside world since Mallett scooped him off the road. He is alert and searching, as if recognizing the smells of home. Siena and Mallett are enchanted by him. Science has saved Porter, but science cannot explain how an adult turtle can hush a room simply by its presence. Turtle shells are also uncanny numerological artifacts. Some turtles' shells have 28 sections around the edges and 13 in the middle. These numbers, Siena points out, correspond perfectly to the lunar calendar: 28 days to a cycle, 13 cycles a year. She has no idea why. No one does, she says. It remains the turtles' secret.

Porter is eager to reach the water. As Siena holds him over the edge of the dock, he paddles his feet through the air, already swimming. She drops him gently into the lake. He makes straight for the tall reeds, and like that, he's gone. **R**

HOW TO HELP AN INJURED TURTLE

1. If you spot a turtle while driving, never try to straddle it with your vehicle. Snapping turtles can't retreat into their shells and are often injured or killed by hitting the underside of cars.
2. Call your nearest wildlife centre as soon as possible. The first 24 hours after an injury are critical, and turtles will need immediate medical attention.
3. Carefully pick up an injured turtle with two hands, and never by the tail. For snappers, steer clear of those jaws! You may want to use a shovel or flat surface to lift the creature.
4. Place the injured turtle in a ventilated container with a proper lid. Turtles can—and will—climb.
5. Don't place the turtle in water or give it food.
6. Be sure to note where the injured turtle was found. Once healthy, animals must, by law, be released in the immediate vicinity.
7. Wash your hands after handling a wild animal.

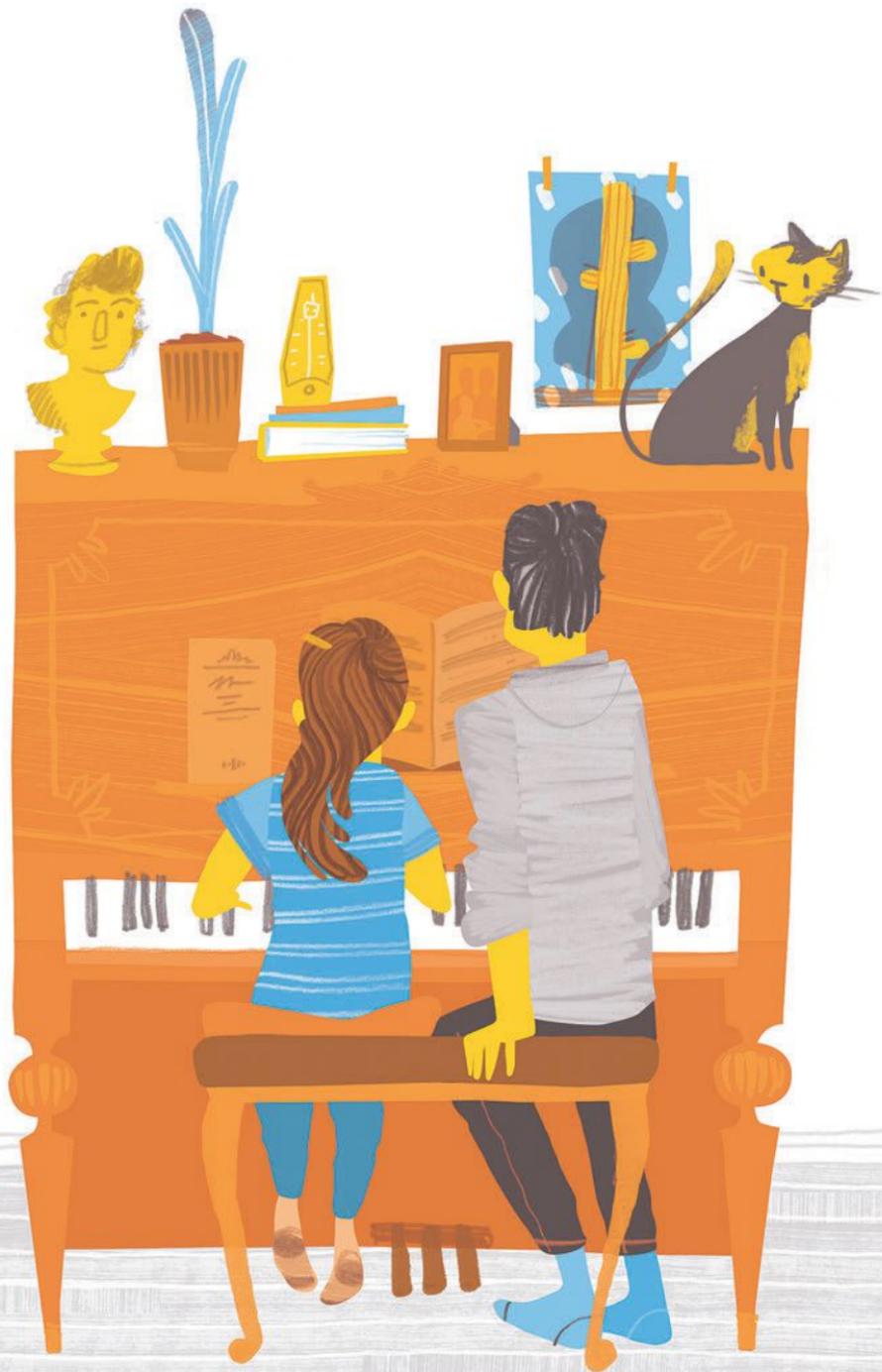
Source: Kawartha Turtle Trauma Centre

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* *

THANK-YOU NOTE

The man who forgets to be grateful has fallen asleep in life.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON



Sometimes one note says it all

Behind the Music

BY JOE POSNANSKI FROM JOEPOSNANSKI.COM

ILLUSTRATION BY JEFF KULAK

WHEN I WAS GROWING UP, we were not an “I love you” family. We certainly appreciated such expressions of affection; we just didn’t indulge in them. I think saying “I love you” was viewed as overkill, not unlike pronouncing, “Don’t forget to breathe at school today.” Or maybe it was a stubborn refusal to be obvious. Love was evident in every hard-earned compliment, in every fair punishment, in every one of those thousand movies my mother took me to see, in the very act of my father getting up before dawn to go to the factory and in every game of catch he found the energy to play in the afternoon.

I was thinking about all of this one Saturday at my daughters’ piano recital. I have never insisted they do anything with their free time except

learn how to play the piano. I carried this from childhood. We didn’t have much back then on my dad’s salary, and we just couldn’t afford lessons.

My daughters have mostly accepted the demand with good humour. My request has meant, through the years, that our house has been filled with a few muffled complaints mixed in with slightly off-key versions of songs with names like “Up the Stairs With a Cat” and “The Mountain Bird.” This recital season, Elizabeth was playing “The Purple People Eater,” and Katie was playing “The Entertainer.” As the event drew closer, they were executing their songs better and better.

The day of the recital, I was listening to Katie practise “The Entertainer,” and I noticed something. Right at the end of the song, there’s a series of

notes that leads into the finish, and something sounded just a little bit off. It seemed like one note wasn't lasting quite long enough. I don't tell my kids how to play the piano, since I don't know how, but I did say, "Hey, Katie, you might want to hold that one note just a teeny bit longer."

"Which note?" she asked.

"Well, play it again," I said, and she played it, and I tried to pinpoint the note for her. This took longer than you might expect. She tried to hold this note, then another note, then a different note. She started to get determined about it, and I realized that I had done something unintended—I was making her think too much just a few hours before her recital.

So I told her not to worry about it, but it was too late—she's our persistent daughter. There's an experiment I heard about in which researchers promise kids a piece of candy any time they want but tell them that if they can hold off for 15 minutes, they can have two pieces of candy. Most kids can't make it the 15 minutes. Katie would be able to wait five days.

She kept at it for a little while longer, until finally I said that she'd

played it perfectly and she could go to the pool. I don't think we ever isolated that one note. I felt pretty bad for even bringing it up.

Then it was time for the recital. Katie was the first one up. She was well-dressed, and she was her usual determined self. As I watched her play "The Entertainer," all I could think was how grown-up she had become, how deeply I already missed the four- and

five- and six-year-old versions of her, but also how fantastic the nine-year-old version was.

She got to the end of the song, and she reached the note we had talked about. And she held it. I mean she held it. She held it long enough that for an instant it broke her timing on the rest of the song.

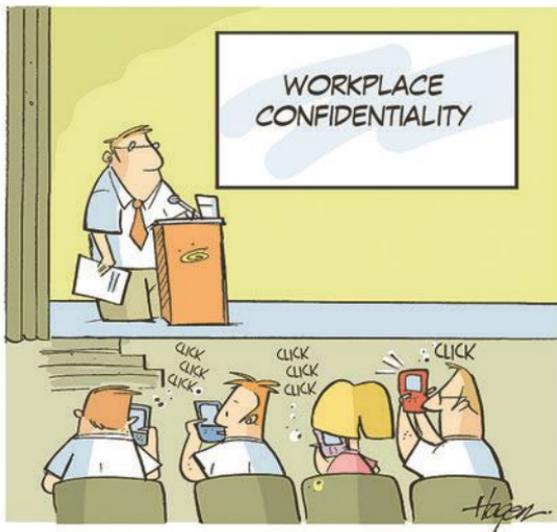
But, oh, she held that

note, the one we had talked about, and then she finished the song, and she looked right at me.

And, of course, before the day was out, I told her I loved her two or three or five times. I told Elizabeth that, too. I hope to tell them I love them 100,000 more times in their lives. But my parents were right, too. You don't have to say the words "I love you." Sometimes one note will do. **R**

“ SHE HELD THAT NOTE, THE ONE WE HAD TALKED ABOUT, AND THEN SHE FINISHED THE SONG. ”

@ Work



DOCTOR'S ORDERS: MEDICAL TRANSCRIPTION MIX-UPS

- Social history reveals this one-year-old patient does not smoke or drink and is unemployed.
- On the second day, the knee was better, and on the third day, it disappeared.
- Discharge status: alive but without permission.
- Occasional, constant, infrequent headaches.
- She is numb from her toes down.

Sources: gmrtranscription.com; nursebuff.com

PROFESSIONAL OPINION

The best legal advice spotted on a billboard came from an ad for the law office of Larry L. Archie: "Just because you did it doesn't mean you're guilty."

funnyordie.com

TEEN ANGST

Being a lifeguard is a weird summer job for a kid. Ninety-nine per cent of the time, sit and do nothing. One per cent of the time, **SAVE SOMEONE'S LIFE.**

🐦 @WEISMANJAKE

Need some professional motivation? A work anecdote could get you a free year's subscription. See rd.ca/joke for details.

A Vancouver woman's poetic account of the challenges and rewards of caring for a parent with Alzheimer's

This Is Your Very Own Home



BY CATHIE BORRIE
FROM *THE LONG HELLO:
MEMORY, MY MOTHER, AND ME*

COURTESY OF CATHIE BORRIE (1952);
(STACK OF PHOTOS) MASTERFILE



Every day I sit with my mother and watch the sea.

There's a row of birds perched on an errant log—cormorant, cormorant, seagull, heron. Crow.

"Cathie, sometimes I drift off for 10 minutes and I don't know where I've gone."

"Does that bother you, Mum?"

"No, it doesn't. Are you my daughter?"

We watch frantic wing flitting at her bird feeder. Chickadees, starlings, sparrows. A house finch.

"Cath, I think it's a finch, it's only... oh—a finch, a finch, a finch! Are they trying to tell you they aren't in there? What are they trying to say?"

"To say...? I don't know."

"I think there's something... they're trying to get something across, aren't they, love?"

BIRD-PECKING AT THE feeder. I tap on the window.

"Chick-a-dee-dee-dee, chick-a-dee-dee-dee. How do you think birds get their names?"

"I don't know."

"What shall I call myself? What name?"

"Don't you know?"

"Yes, but I'd like a different name."

"Well, I like Hugh or Cath, but I think Hugh is better. More suitable."

"But you won't ever forget me, will you?"

"As if I ever could."

Starlings replace chickadees. The seed is getting low.

"What do you think is the most important thing, Mum? I mean, a good thing?"

"Understanding."

"And what about the rest of your life? What's your thinking on the rest of your life?"

"Oh, gosh, there can't be much left of it, can there, Cath? What will I be, 66?"

"You're going to be 86."

"Oh, yeah, 86."

"How old am I?"

"Oh, about 60. Sixty and the pen you're holding. I'm 62 or 63, the age I quickly got to."

"How would you like to live out the remainder of your days?"

"I don't know. It fills me with horror. The same as what I'm doing over there, only I'll be better. I'll be flying down the hill in my jacket!"

FOR LUNCH I MAKE fruit salad and cottage cheese and a piece of whole wheat toast. I stand at my mother's kitchen window and look out at the day. It's raining. A raven watches me from its perch on the power line as the wind whisks wave tips into frothy white manes. I try not to think about where I am or the things I used to do

and miss most—working, studying, canoeing, movies. Men.

She has her lunch on a TV table in the den.

“How are you, Mum?”

“I’m sort of dragging myself through.”

“What are you dragging yourself through?”

“Oh, wheat fields and sticky things. Someone’s pinning me all together. Oh, yes, yes. I’m very, very clear. When that girl Cathie phoned this morning, I thought, What’s she phoning me for?”

“Cathie? But I’m Cathie—”

“Then I heard her say, ‘Oh, because it’s a day.’ But she didn’t say the right name. Anyway, he went into sing and you went into sing, didn’t you?”

“Into... sing? Um, I guess I did. Mum, I miss you.”

“You know, I just stamp my foot and there she isn’t.”

“She? Oh. You know, even though I see you every day, I still miss you.”

“Then my daughter Cathie came back to this side when she was through over there. I guess she was through, and I was so surprised and thrilled and we had tea together and it was nifty.”

“Your daughter? Well, how would you like us to be related?”

“I think we’re doing fine in the water.”



I TELL PEOPLE I’M still working and making money, but I’m not. I try to ignore the tightness in my chest from having to move so slowly when I like moving fast, and a creeping sense of captivity sits heavy in my gut.

My mother sits on her couch with her eyes closed.

“Would you like to have a little rest?”

“Okay, dear. But where are you going to sit? And then you’re going to go away with Dad, aren’t you, and I’ll be all alone.”

“I never go away with Dad.”



and I can't think of anything. I don't know what I did this morning. I have no idea."

"Oh. Maybe a better question would be—how are you right now?"

"Well, I'm fine, just fine. Yes, it's a good, a better question to come for me."

"You look like a little porcelain doll lying there."

"Does it, does it look just like china?"

"Yes, just perfect."

"Well, that's good. Somebody's got to be perfect."

AS SOON AS I'M home, I call to say good night.

"Hi, Mum. It's Cath. What are you doing?"

"I'm waiting for you. I'm just here waiting for you."

"But I just got home. I was just over there."

"Over here?"

"Yes... never mind. I'll call first thing in the morning, okay?"

"Where are you? I couldn't find you."

"I'm home. I'm at my home. I'm fine."

"I thought I'd left you in the living room, all alone."

I drink two glasses of my favourite red wine, eat two bars of dark chocolate, swallow one and a half sleeping pills and sink down into nothing. I crawl into bed in my clothes, pull the radio



"Oh, that's good."

"You seem so tired. Are you giving up?"

"No, I don't give up. I don't know how you do it."

"Neither do I."

I draw the curtains.

"How was your day?"

"It's very hard for me to tell you because when you say, 'How have you been today, Mum?' I try to think,

up beside me and tune in my favourite all-night talk show. Tonight's program features government conspiracies, CIA subterfuge, contrail theory, alien abductions. The window is wide open, and my bedroom is freezing. I wrap the sheet around my face, a shroud. As far as my mind can see, there is nothing.

Everywhere.

My new favourite thing.

THE SPRING MY MOTHER has a good spell, I spend time with an artist, a wood turner. While he works, I paddle my canoe in search of treasures and find a discarded bird's nest. At night we curl up on the couch, listening to Coltrane and Metheny. When my mother gets worse, I stop visiting my wood turner. Before I leave, he makes me a half-moon treasure box turned from a cedar burl, and during long winter nights with my mother, I breathe in the earthy scent of wood and oil, dreaming of trees and stones and bark and the buttery slice of my paddle slipping into the sea.

I TACK UP ORANGE, yellow and green neon signs in my mother's home and write messages to her using a thick black felt pen.

Mum, this is your very own home.
You will never have to leave here.
You are home!

When she starts getting anxious going to bed and anxious waking up, I record tapes for her caregiver to play first thing in the morning—

“Good morning, Mum. You are safe and sound in your own home. Time for breakfast! I'll be over to see you this morning.”

Last thing at night—

“Time for sleep, Mum. Everything is in order. I will be over in the morning. You are in your very own bedroom with all your wonderful paintings around you. You will always be able to stay in your own home.”

I SIGN UP FOR ballroom and Latin dance classes. I want to move to music and get out of my head. Get my mother out of my head. I go to all the group and practice parties, but I don't tell anyone about her. I dance nine hours a week at the studio and practise at home and at the gym. A pain creeps into my left hip.

Sinatra croons Irving Berlin, a slow waltz.

*I'm just the words, looking for a tune,
Reaching for the moon and you...*

1-2-3, 2-2-3, 3-2-3, 4-2-3...

I close my eyes and imagine seabirds riding wind currents over a slate-grey wintry sea.

5-2-3, 6-2-3...



I WANT TO KEEP the words of my new poet-mother.

"I'm taping our conversations, Mum."

"Is the machine recording everything now?"

"Yes."

"That's kind of silly, isn't it?"

"No. I like listening to what you have to say."

"It's not very much, is it?"

"I think it is. Your opinions are very important to me."

"I'd have to hear them and find out how important they were."

I anchor the tape recorder between pillows on her lap.

"Why do people smoke?"

"To cast off pain and loneliness."

"Why do people drink too much?"

"Because they know it's such a relief."

"And how are you enjoying your mind these days?"

"Oh, very much, very much. I wake up in the morning and the first thing I think of is myself, and then next I think of myself again, and the third thing is I get my breakfast."

"In the meantime, do you want to tell me how you're feeling today?"

"In the meantime, no, I don't really want to, thank you."

"You sound a little down."

"A little, maybe."

"What does sorrow look like?"

"It's a form of sadness brought about on a grey and heavy day. I've reached the ultimate of the intimate, and that's the end of it."

"Oh, dear. Let me ask you, what do you think is the ugliest thing in the world?"

"A lack of dignity. Is that the right answer?"

“Yes. Okay, what about this one: what’s the worst thing a person could do to another person?”

“They could throw their sublime into the ridiculous.”

“What is so scary about dying?”

“Have you ever tried it?”

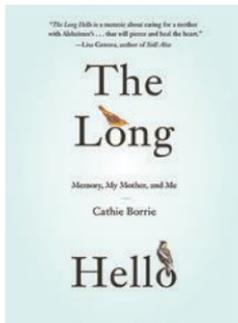
“Good point.”

I TAKE MY PHONE with me wherever I go, leave contact numbers with the caregivers, check voice mail, call every few hours. Friends tell me to turn off my phone, take a vacation, that my mother could go on and on and that I should live my own life. This is my life.

After my mother has been sick for a few years, an old friend calls.

“I must visit. We all have so many happy memories.”

He never comes. Family and friends begin to write my mother off, write off her changing mind.



Reader's
digest
EDITORS'
CHOICE

“I just don’t know what to do or what to say to her anymore. I’m sorry, but it’s really as if she died a long time ago, isn’t it? I mean, she’s 10 per cent of who she was—”

“No! She’s becoming more and more. She’s 100 per cent of who she is.”

MY MOTHER’S IN BED, propped up with pillows. I’m curled up be-

side her. It’s a tight squeeze. Pillows to the north, under her head, pillows east and west under her shoulders and arms. South, under her knees. A lace collar circles the neckline of her now loose-fitting pink nylon nightie. She holds her baby doll against her right shoulder, nestled under her chin. From time to time she remembers it’s there and nuzzles its forehead. Smiling, her eyes closed... the most beautiful gesture I have ever seen. **R**



THE BENEFIT OF EXPERIENCE

Wisdom is like frequent-flyer miles and scar tissue: if it does accumulate, that happens by accident while you’re trying to do something else.

BARBARA KINGSOLVER

Peanut butter and jelly

Summer and baseball

Batman and Robin

Canada Day and fireworks

Reader's Digest and Sweepstakes

Things that are always
better together.

Reader's
digest

To find out more, please visit us at
readersdigest.ca/sweeps

GET SMART!

13 Things You Should Know About Getting Back to Nature

BY DANIELLE GROEN

1 A hit of nature does wonders for our concentration. “A 2008 study showed that the attention-boosting effects of a 20-minute walk in a park rivalled those of prescription stimulant medication,” says Melissa Lem, a Toronto family physician.

2 “When resolving an issue, we may have better luck when we’re outdoors,” says Vicki Harber, a professor emeritus of physical education at the



University of Alberta. For example, in 2014, researchers from Stanford University found walking boosted participants’ creativity by 60 per cent on average, with the best ideas coming during strolls in green spaces.

3 Even the smell of the outdoors is calming: a 2009 Japanese study found that inhaling phytoncides, chemicals produced by trees, caused levels of stress hormones to drop. ➤➔

4 “Research suggests that greater exposure to natural light at the office results in better sleep,” Lem says. How much better? According to American and Taiwanese researchers, workers near a window slept an average of 46 minutes more a night than their windowless peers.

5 In Japan, *shinrin-yoku*—literally meaning “forest bathing,” but essentially a walk in the park—has been linked to everything from lower blood pressure and pulse rate to higher activity of anti-cancer proteins.

6 Those benefits linger, too: Tokyo researchers measured “natural killer” cells in healthy women before and after three walks through forests. Spiked levels of these cancer-fighting cells lasted more than a week after exposure to forest air.

7 We live longer when we’re closer to nature. Academics from (where else?) Japan tracked 3,144 senior citizens in Tokyo over five years. Those living near walkable green spaces were significantly more likely to remain alive at the end of the study.

8 Living near nature curbs loneliness. A 2009 study of 10,089 Dutch residents found that having green spaces close to their homes promoted a sense of community and stronger feelings of social support.

9 Nature can calm an overloaded brain. Researchers at two Edinburgh universities monitored a dozen healthy adults, who walked through a shopping district, a busy commercial strip and a park. Their brainwaves became more reflective and less frustrated during the green stroll.

10 “We highly underestimate the value of a 20-minute walk a day,” Harber says. A 2001 University of Washington study found that, after eight weeks of walking outdoors for 20 minutes daily, women aged 19 to 78 reported fewer signs of depression and an increase in self-esteem.

11 In 2001, academics found that in Chicago social-housing communities, proximity to nature was linked to reduced aggression and fear, as well as better self-discipline. The greener the building’s surroundings, the fewer crimes reported there.

12 It’s worth making nature part of our prognosis. A landmark 1984 study conducted at a Pennsylvania hospital found that rooms with a view of the outdoors can lower recovery time and reduce pain and depression.

13 If all else fails, get a plant. Studies have revealed that at work, they’re associated with fewer sick days and greater productivity. **R**

That's Outrageous!

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

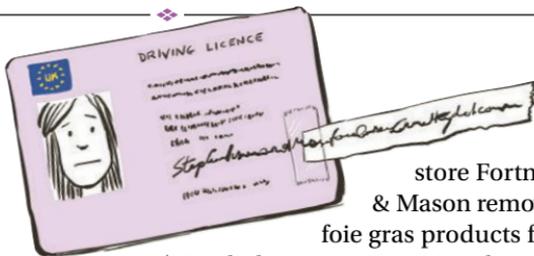
BY DANIEL VIOLA

MISTAKEN IDENTITY

Five days after depositing a \$32,000 cheque in March 2014, 72-year-old Steven Fields suspected something was wrong. The money—proceeds from a land sale—hadn't appeared in his account. A call to his bank in Hull, Ga., revealed that the cash had been transferred—but it was placed in the account of a different Steven Fields, an 18-year-old local. When the younger Fields noticed, he blew through most of the cash, even buying a used BMW. Still, the spree didn't last. Teenage Fields eventually pleaded guilty to theft of lost/mislaid property. The cost? Ten years' probation and nearly \$17,000 paid to the bank in restitution.

STAUNCH ADVOCATE

When Abi Izzard, 31, changed her name, she was trying to change the world. In September 2011, the PETA employee from Malvern, England, became StopFortnumAndMason-FoieGrasCruelty.com, vowing to keep the title until the department



store Fortnum & Mason removed foie gras products from

its shelves. Her campaign drew praise from celebrities, including Roger Moore. Nevertheless, two years later, Izzard returned to her birth name. She doesn't regret the experience but says it had its challenges—specifically, fitting her entire signature on her driver's licence.

INVESTING IN THE FUTURE

Since January 2015, Switzerland-based company Erfolgswelle has offered to come up with one-of-a-kind baby names—at the cost of only \$36,500. The team includes more than 32 creative professionals, translators, researchers and trademark lawyers who study clients' histories and cultural backgrounds before crafting new names. The company won't release examples, but don't worry about getting a dud: each name is screened to ensure it doesn't have a negative meaning, like "poop," in any language.

MORE GREAT READS THIS MONTH

Rd.ca/July

FOOD

6 Delicious Summer Salads



HOME

5 THINGS TO DO WITH SHAMPOO

Check out what these versatile suds can tackle.

TRAVEL

From Chile's Atacama Desert to India's Valley of Flowers National Park, 50 natural wonders to put on your bucket list.



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ISTOCKPHOTO

Brain teasers

Challenge yourself by solving these puzzles and mind stretchers, then check your answers on page 124.

BY MARCEL DANESI

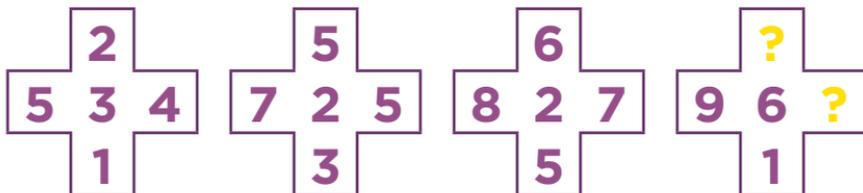
GREAT WALL OF NUMBERS *(Difficult)*

Complete the number array with the missing number.

1	3	2	1	2	0	1	0	1
3	2	1	1	0	2	0	1	1
1	2	0	0	1	3	2	0	2
5	0	1	0	1	0	0	4	0
4	1	1	0	0	2	0	2	1
0	0	1	0	7	2	0	1	0
4	0	4	0	1	1	0	0	1
2	1	2	3	0	0	1	0	2
3	2	0	?	1	1	1	1	0

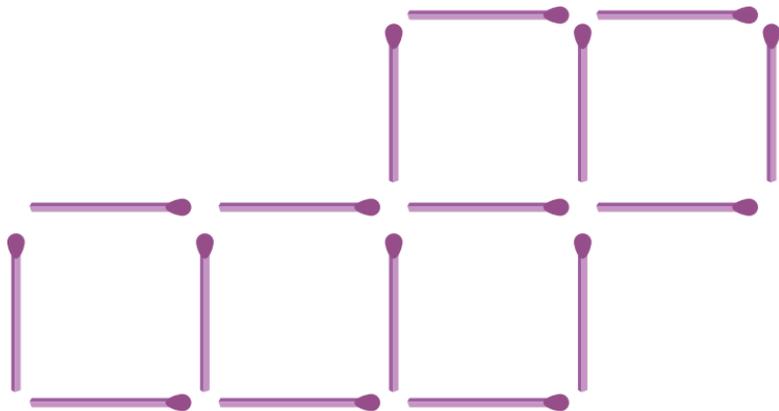
CROSSFIT *(Moderately difficult)*

Supply the missing numbers.



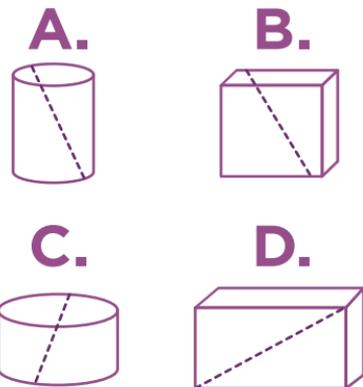
PLAYING WITH FIRE *(Moderately difficult)*

In the figure below, 16 matchsticks have been arranged to make five connected squares. Remove one matchstick and move others to produce five identical and connected squares again. There can be no partial squares remaining.



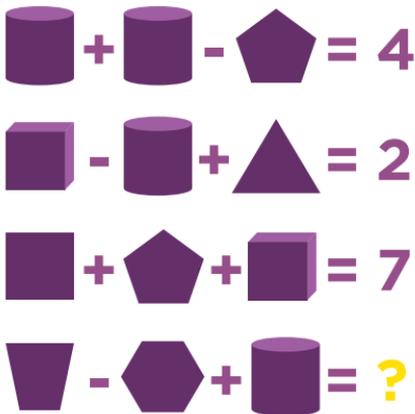
THE INTRUDER *(Easy)*

One of the figures below does not belong. Which one is it?



SHAPE UP, TRIM DOWN *(Difficult)*

Complete the number array with the missing number.



Trivia Quiz

BY SAMANTHA RIDEOUT

1. The air pollution in the world's smoggiest city can be 60 times higher than safe levels. Which city is this?

2. Traditionally, how is one supposed to kill a vampire?

3. By what name is the Red Cross known in Islamic states?

4. The TV commercial that introduced the Macintosh computer paid homage to which novel?

5. In which mountain range was the body of Ötzi, a man who lived over 5,000 years ago, discovered?

6. Which island nation has reason to worry about the melting ice caps, since its highest point is 4.6 metres above sea level?

7. Of beets, carrots, celery and onions, which is the odd one out?

8. All domestic dog breeds could survive without humanity. True or false?

9. What is it called when a financier bets on the price of a stock going down?

10. I spent more than 15 years under house arrest in my home country of Myanmar. I have also won the Nobel Peace Prize. Who am I?

11. The ancient philosopher Plato knew that the brain is responsible for thinking, but Aristotle believed it was a different body organ: which one?

12. Which East Asian language seems to have no ancestor in common with any other surviving language?



↑ 15.

Which Olympic Games were the first to host women's boxing?

13. According to legend, what was invented once an Ethiopian goatherd noticed that his animals gained energy after eating a particular fruit?

14. By the end of 2016, yearly Internet traffic will apparently reach a zettabyte. How many gigabytes are in a zettabyte?

ANSWERS 1. New Delhi. 2. Driving a stake through his heart or exposing him to sunlight. 3. The Red Crescent. 4. 1984. 5. The Alps. 6. Tuvalu. 7. Celery. It is a stalk; the other three are roots. 8. False. 9. Short selling. 10. Burmese politician Aung San Suu Kyi. 11. The heart. 12. Korean. 13. Coffee. 14. 1,000,000,000,000. 15. The London 2012 Olympics.

Sudoku

BY MARCEL DANESI

	3	2			9	7	5	8
	4		3	8	2			9
9	8	6		7	1	3	2	
6		8	2				7	
		3	9				4	6
4	9		8	3			1	5
8	6	4	7				9	1
		1	6		8	4		2
3			1	5	4	6		7

TO SOLVE THIS PUZZLE...

You have to put a number from 1 to 9 in each square so that:

- every horizontal row and vertical column contains all nine numerals (1-9) without repeating any of them;
- each of the 3 x 3 boxes has all nine numerals, none repeated.

SOLUTION

7	8	6	4	5	1	9	2	3
2	3	4	8	9	6	1	7	5
1	6	5	2	3	8	4	7	9
5	1	7	9	3	8	6	4	2
9	5	1	7	8	4	2	5	6
3	7	6	5	2	4	8	1	9
2	4	9	7	1	3	5	6	8
6	9	1	6	2	1	3	5	4
8			7	5	4	6	9	2

Brainteasers:

Answers

(from page 121)

GREAT WALL OF NUMBERS

2. In each horizontal row, the numbers add up to 11.

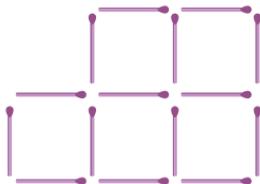
CROSSFIT

3 and 7.



In each arrangement, add the top number with the one in the centre to get the number to the left; then add the centre number to the one on the bottom to get the number to the right.

PLAYING WITH FIRE



THE INTRUDER

D. D is the only one where the dotted line does not cross the top surface.

SHAPE UP, TRIM DOWN

3. If a figure is three-dimensional, it has a value of 3; if it is two-dimensional, its value is 2. Those values are added or subtracted accordingly.



Word Power

Life doesn't always steer clear of extremes, and neither does the English language. When it comes to exceeding the bounds of moderation, how's your vocabulary?

BY CRYSTAL BELIVEAU

1. frore—

A: very hairy.
B: easily excited.
C: freezing.

2. adamantine—

A: long-suffering.
B: unbreakable.
C: keenly discerning.

3. havoc—

A: widespread destruction.
B: harsh, guttural sound.
C: sledgehammer strike.

4. corybantic—

A: wild or frenzied.
B: long-winded.
C: power-hungry.

5. elliptical—

A: regarded as having overinflated importance.
B: carefully detailed.
C: concise to the point of being unclear.

6. trifling—

A: dramatic.
B: insignificant.
C: involving three lovers.

7. catatonic—

A: insane.
B: in a stupor.
C: overwhelmed with anger.

8. dreggy—

A: extremely tired.
B: depressed.
C: filthy.

9. Cimmerian—

A: deeply gloomy.
B: perfectly virtuous.
C: repulsive.

10. rococo—

A: elaborately ornamental.
B: ludicrous.
C: agitated.

11. scintillating—

A: violent.
B: sharply painful.
C: brilliantly clever.

12. meteoric—

A: causing great surprise.
B: very sudden or fast.
C: liquefied by extreme heat.

13. stentorian—

A: wicked.
B: unreasonably excessive.
C: thunderous.

14. avaricious—

A: utterly hopeless.
B: extremely greedy.
C: overly sweet.

15. catharsis—

A: purging of emotion.
B: bitter sarcasm.
C: state of awe.

Answers

1. **frore**—[C] freezing; as, The Navut winter was dark and *frore*.
2. **adamantine**—[B] unbreakable; as, Navya tried to talk her brother out of joining the army, but his resolve was *adamantine*.
3. **havoc**—[A] widespread destruction; as, Out-of-control bushfires created *havoc* in the Australian city of Perth.
4. **corybantic**—[A] wild or frenzied; as, Alan exploded in *corybantic* dancing when he learned his rare stamp could make him rich.
5. **elliptical**—[C] concise to the point of being unclear; as, The professor's lectures were so *elliptical* that it seemed she was talking in code.
6. **trifling**—[B] insignificant; as, The NHL decided the hit was too *trifling* to warrant suspension.
7. **catatonic**—[B] in a stupor; as, That five-hour experimental play where the cast was naked and never spoke? It left me *catatonic*.
8. **dreggy**—[C] filthy; as, Without running water, the squatters were living in *dreggy* conditions.
9. **Cimmerian**—[A] deeply gloomy; as, Inga hated November's *Cimmerian* weather.

10. **rococo**—[A] elaborately ornamental; as, When it comes to furnishings, my husband's tastes run toward the *rococo*.

11. **scintillating**—[C] brilliantly clever; as, Pianist Glenn Gould's virtuosity in interpreting Bach was *scintillating*.

12. **meteoric**—[B] very sudden or fast; as, From interning at 18 to becoming CEO at 30, my sister's rise at the firm was *meteoric*.

13. **stentorian**—[C] thunderous; as, The preacher's *stentorian* voice allowed him to be heard above the din in the tent.

14. **avaricious**—[B] extremely greedy; as, With billions in the bank, the tech company became *avaricious*, devouring smaller start-ups.

15. **catharsis**—[A] purging of emotion; as, Writing down the story of his Second World War tour was a *catharsis* for Terrance.

VOCABULARY RATINGS

7-10: fair

11-12: good

13-15: excellent



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Quotes

BY CHRISTINA PALASSIO



I REMEMBER I WENT TO LOS ANGELES AND SOMEONE SAID, “OH, YOU’RE CANADIAN? CANADIANS ARE REALLY COOL IN L.A.” IT’S LIKE WE’RE IN FASHION.
KIESZA

We’re all privileged... but I think an awareness of that is important, and we don’t just start accepting the fact that that’s the norm. DANIEL MACIVOR

I stole my sister’s really comfortable sweatpants and took my garbage out in them and was caught by the paparazzi, so I had to give them back!

EMILY VANCAMP

I THINK ALL THOSE PEOPLE WHO MAKE BLANKET STATEMENTS ABOUT THINGS ARE IDIOTS.

GAVIN CRAWFORD



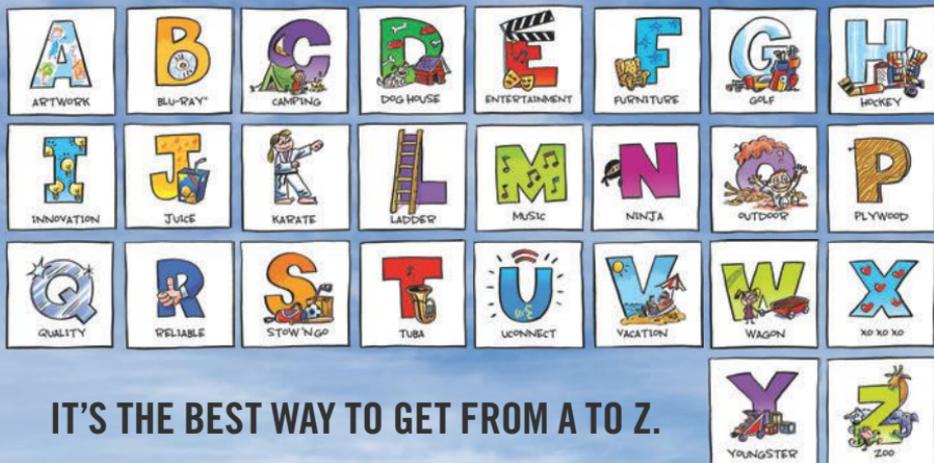
I LIKE LIAM NEESON SO MUCH, I COULD WATCH HIM BEAT UP A PHONE BOOK. SETH ROGEN

It’s ultimately about the tension between commitment and desire. That, I really think, is at the centre of the drama of all adult life. SHAD



I think one of my favourite things in the world is when someone types an angry/insulting/racist/sexist comment and spells a word incorrectly.

KELLY OXFORD



IT'S THE BEST WAY TO GET FROM A TO Z.

The Dodge Grand Caravan will take anything a family throws at it, or in it. And it's been doing it for over 31 years, by leading the way with family-friendly innovations. Safety always comes first thanks to over 55 standard and available safety and technology features. Then add in some real crowd pleasers like one-touch Stow 'n Go® seating, oodles of in-floor storage, Uconnect® hands-free communication, dual Blu-ray®/DVD Entertainment, ParkView® Rear Back-up Camera,* and a powerful 283 horsepower 3.6 L Pentastar™ V6 engine that gets as good as 9.4 L/100 km highway (30 MPG)∧. The Dodge Grand Caravan. It's the most awarded minivan ever. For a whole alphabet of good reasons.

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*Certain features shown are optional and not offered on all models. ∧As good as 13.7 L/100 km (21 MPG) city and 9.4 L/100 km (30 MPG) highway rating. Based on 2015 EnerGuide fuel consumption ratings. Government of Canada test methods used. Your actual fuel consumption will vary based on driving habits and other factors. Use for comparison purposes only. Ask your retailer for EnerGuide information.

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1. Take 2 capsules of Lakota Joint Care Formula every morning with breakfast.



2. Natural source pain relievers, such as White Willow Bark, target and relieve tough joint pain.



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Pain relief for moving mountains.

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