

Reader's digest

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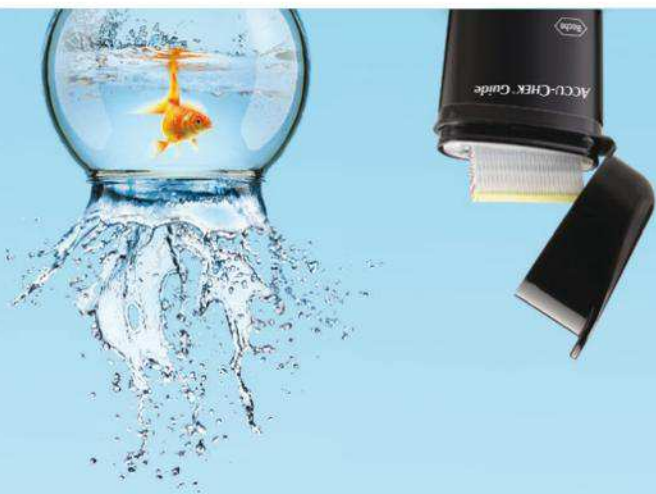
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Editor's Letter

Pest Control

 **THE FIRST TIME I SAW A TICK**, I had no idea what I was looking at. Last summer, while at our cottage north of Montreal, my husband noticed an unusual bump on our dog's leg. Round and shiny, the nub more closely resembled plastic than it did a living creature. Then we spotted its legs, which were tiny compared to its engorged body, and realized we were dealing with a deer tick—one that had feasted on our dachshund, Lizzie.

In truth, I'd been anticipating this moment. As the owner of two dogs and someone who spends a fair amount of time outdoors, I knew I would cross paths with a tick eventually. We carefully removed the pest using tweezers and put it in a zipped plastic bag, following a procedure I'd once read about. What I didn't know was what should happen next.

As ticks proliferate across the country, access to information about these parasites is more critical than ever. Our cover story, "Battling the Tick Boom" (page 28), breaks down the essentials—from identification and removal to Lyme disease testing to the best tactics for protecting yourself, your family and your pets.

Do you have a story you'd like to share about ticks? We'd love to hear from you by email (at the address below) or on our Facebook page. Let's keep the conversation going. **R**

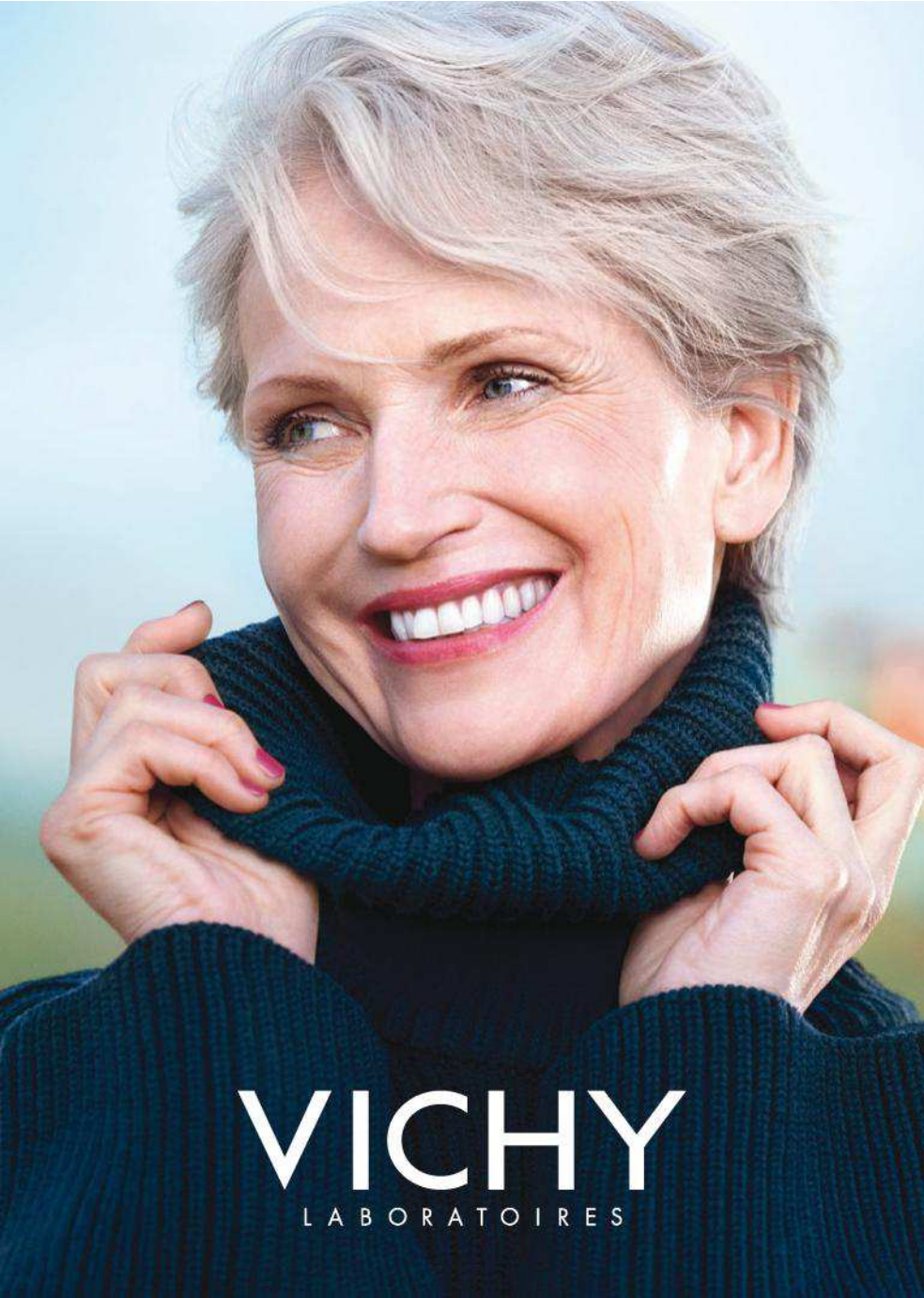
DOMINIQUE
WITH HER DOGS
PEACHES (LEFT)
AND LIZZIE



ROGER AZIZ

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Contributors



SARAH BARMAK

(Writer, “The Bright Side,” page 56)

Home base: Toronto. **Previously**

published in *The Walrus* and *Maclean’s*. **Cynicism can prevent you** from helping others if you believe nothing you do will make a difference. These days, it’s more important than ever to stay energized and fight. The efforts of people who care deeply—even in the face of adversity—are what lead to real change.



IAN DOWN

(Writer, “That’s Outrageous,” page 104)

Home base: Montreal. **Previously**

published in *The Concordian* and *Nuns’ Island Journal*. **I think we’re drawn to** outrageous stories because our day-to-day lives are usually pretty boring. When we read about a strange occurrence happening to other people, we remember that the world is a place full of wonder and possibility. And disruptive turkeys.



JONATHAN DYCK

(Illustrator, “Caught in a Riptide!” page 42)

Home base: Winnipeg. **Previously published in** *The Walrus* and *Maisonneuve*. **Uplifting stories like this one** remind me that collaboration can help us defy expectations and challenge the limitations of our own perspectives. Recognizing a common problem—and understanding that it transcends our individual experience—can motivate us to work together.



KYLE METCALF

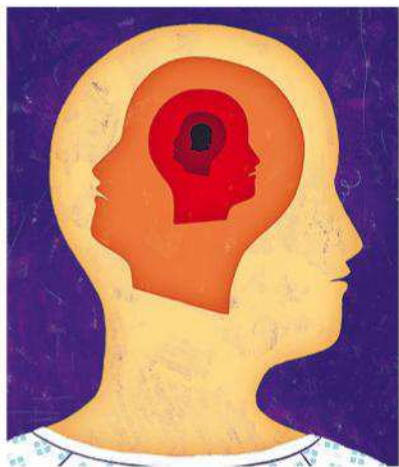
(Illustrator, “Battling the Tick Boom,” page 28)

Home base: Calgary. **Previously published in** *Monocle* and *The New York Times*. **I didn’t realize** that ticks were an increasingly big issue. I thought that Lyme disease was an obscure illness that only famous Canadian female singers got. After reading this story, I’ll be sure to wear long pants and shirts when I go out for hikes, and check myself for bugs afterwards.



Letters

READERS COMMENT ON OUR RECENT ISSUES



MOMENT OF CLARITY

Thank you for Sydney Loney's health article "State of Confusion" (March 2018) and your corresponding editor's letter, "Decoding Delirium." Holy moly, what a revelation. My mother-in-law has been in and out of the hospital a number of times during the

past six months, and we are living through exactly what Loney describes. This finally answers our many questions about why my mother's behaviour has changed and what we should do next. A big thanks for a great story.

JEAN-CHARLES HENRY,
Baie-Comeau, Que.

NO LAUGHING MATTER

I just finished reading your Department of Wit, "Keeping the Faith" (April 2018), and was left with feelings of disappointment. I didn't like that the writer mocked his culture and religion in his responses to his young son's questions about faith. While some of the writer's honesty is appreciated, the flippant exchange detailed at the end of the story was not.

HEATHER ALLINGTON,
Bowmanville, Ont. **R**

Published letters are edited for length and clarity.

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ART of LIVING

Vancouver community advocate Sarah Blyth is helping to curb drug-related deaths

Safety Measures

BY CHRISTINA PALASSIO

PHOTOGRAPH BY TANYA GOEHRING

THE VENDOR STALLS of Vancouver's Downtown Eastside Street Market are piled high with '80s action-movie DVDs, parasols, hand-knitted booties and *Justice League* comics—a trove of treasures for all types. The sprawling social enterprise gives sellers, many of whom are living on low incomes, a chance to earn extra money. It buzzes with the chatter and convivial chaos typical of such places, but in 2016, when the city's opioid issue became a full-blown crisis, that flurry of activity turned ominous.

At the time, community activist Sarah Blyth was working as a manager at the market, which is located in an area that is popular with drug users. She started witnessing more and more overdoses—sometimes

up to five a day. (According to a B.C. Coroners Service report, fentanyl-detected deaths increased in Vancouver from 32 in 2015 to 280 in 2017 due to the potent opioid narcotic contaminating the drug supply.)

“Whenever there was an overdose, someone would come screaming, ‘Narcan, Narcan, where is it? Do we have enough?’” says Blyth, referring to the nasal spray version of naloxone, a drug used to block the effects of opioids, especially in overdose situations. “I thought, We need to be more organized than this. The market is filled with hundreds of people, and we only have a few minutes to respond.”

When there was a death up the street, Blyth and two market volunteers decided things had to change. In September 2016, unsanctioned



"The opioid crisis is a tragedy," says Sarah Blyth, founder of Vancouver's Overdose Prevention Society. "It's a good feeling when you can save lives in a dignified way."

by the market or any agency, they established a pop-up overdose prevention site nearby. They put up a tent, secured some Narcan, found a volunteer trained in administering naloxone and started a GoFundMe page to raise money for supplies and honorariums for their volunteers. In 2017, the pop-up—now called the Overdose Prevention Society (OPS) and supported by Vancouver Coastal Health—received more than 100,000 visits, saw more than 300 overdoses and logged zero deaths.

Blyth knows that doing the right thing sometimes means doing what many consider to be wrong. From Nanaimo to Ottawa, nurses and harm-reduction workers have come to the same conclusion, as

the opioid crisis places them in the difficult position of having to take illegal action to save lives. It was Blyth who inspired nurse Leigh Chapman and her fellow volunteers to open a pop-up safe-injection site in Toronto's Moss Park neighbourhood in the summer of 2017.

Several cities, including Kamloops, Edmonton, London, Toronto and Montreal, have approved supervised safe-injection sites in the past two years. But unlike the pop-up versions,

sanctioned sites take some time to establish—and the number of overdoses continues to balloon. While making it easier for people to inject drugs safely is controversial, Blyth says it's a matter of public health. "In order to really help people, we need to change our opinions and the way we've addressed the crisis. We're not going to police our way out of this."

In December 2017, OPS moved into a building owned by B.C. Housing. The organization is open seven days a week and has between 300 and 500 visitors daily.

Blyth, now the executive director of OPS and of the Downtown Eastside Street Market, oversees 30 trained volunteers, all members of the Downtown

Eastside community.

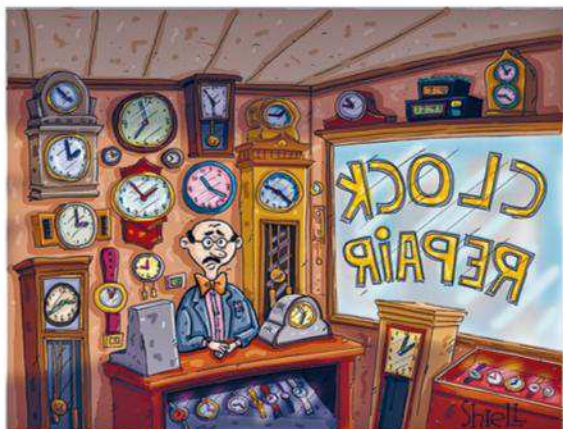
Joy is a peer-support worker at OPS and a recovering opiate addict. "Me being able to relate with using needles, and being able to relate with being homeless, it helps. I understand what they're going through," she says. Joy credits OPS with supporting her to quit using. "Working here, I'm changing my life."

Helping others should never be optional, says Blyth. "Saving a life isn't something you don't do if you can." **R**

“

***Open seven days
a week, the
Overdose
Prevention
Society sees
between 300 and
500 visitors daily.***

Life's Like That



Mr. Evans realizes that he is living in uncertain times.

ONE DAY IN COLLEGE, our teacher stapled answer sheets to the back of every test by mistake. We were asked to draw a flow chart for the last question. I checked the answer sheet, which simply said “Answers will vary.” I drew my flow chart, tore off the answer sheet and walked to the front podium to turn the test in. I checked to see what everyone else had drawn for their flow charts. They had all written the same thing: “Answers will vary.”

reddit.com

SON: I got a D in math.

ME: That's really bad.

WIFE: You need to stop doing his homework.

🐦 @SOFARRSOGUD

I WORK AS A MECHANIC. My cell-phone was already on the fritz when it fell into a pail of oil at work. I sprayed it with brake cleaner and set it down to dry, but then some stray sparks set it on fire. Not only did it still ring, the ringer was louder and clearer than before. The buttons all worked again, and the call quality was great. The next day, as I was leaving for work, my wife asked, “Why are you taking your laptop? It's broken.”

I answered, “I know. I just want to try something.”

RICHARD MERRICK, Orangeville, Ont.

Send us your funny stories! They could be worth \$50. See page 10 or visit rd.ca/joke for more details.

Historian Carolyn Harris on Prince Harry's wedding, the Queen on TV and the family's changing attitudes

Royal Watching

BY COURTNEY SHEA

ILLUSTRATION BY AIMÉE VAN DRIMMELEN

*Between Prince Harry and Meghan Markle's wedding on May 19, a new baby for Prince William and Kate Middleton and the success of *The Crown*, is the intrigue with royalty at an all-time high?*

There's definitely been a revival of interest among younger people, particularly here in Canada. That actually started in 2010 when the Queen visited to celebrate Canada Day. And then, a year later, William and Kate chose our country as their first overseas tour after marriage.

What do you make of Markle-mania? Why is the newest future royal so popular?

We're definitely seeing her interact with the public in a way reminiscent of Princess Diana. Just as Diana received a lot of attention for crouching down



to speak with children and those who are ill, Meghan has been hugging people and making human connections.

Pippa Middleton famously stole the show at William and Kate's wedding. Any bets on who might upstage Markle on her big day?

Ha! Well I think the public will be interested to see George and Charlotte. William and Kate are generally very protective of their children's privacy, so if the kids are in the wedding party, that's going to attract a lot of attention.

A 2016 Ipsos Reid poll reported that about half of Canadians believe we should cut our ties to the monarchy when the Queen's reign ends. Is there any reason not to?

I would say that when you look at the political climate around the world right now, you can see the value in having a level of government that is above party politics.

Is there any chance Charles could get skipped in the line of succession in favour of his more popular son?

No chance. Charles would have to abdicate and there is nothing to suggest that is something he is considering, or that Prince William is eager to become the king before his time. Prince Harry has even alluded to the fact that none of them really want that role.

Are you a fan of The Crown?

I think it's a very well crafted TV series—but it's certainly a blend of fact and fiction. For example, there is no evidence that Prince Philip had an affair, so those rumours are played up for a great deal of drama in the show.

How do you think the Queen feels about having her private life pilfered for entertainment?

I don't know if she watches the show. But it's interesting that, in her most recent Christmas address, she paid tribute to Prince Philip and to their marriage. She made a joke that when she began her reign there was no such thing as a platinum anniversary.

Back then the idea of a royal marrying a divorcée was absolutely unthinkable. Is the relationship between Prince Harry and the once-divorced Markle a sign of how much times have changed?

I think so. People look at the monarchy as a very traditional institution, but the Queen has reigned over a period of tremendous social change, including attitudes towards divorce. Her uncle, Edward VIII, had to abdicate to marry Wallis Simpson, but in 2005 Prince Charles married a divorced Camilla Parker Bowles. That's helped pave the way for Prince Harry. **R**

Carolyn Harris's *Raising Royalty* was published in 2017.

Our top picks in books and movies

RD Recommends

BY DANIELLE GROEN

1 **OCEAN'S 8** Did we really need a remake of a 2001 remake of a 1960 Rat Pack film? We sure did. This glittering, gender-flipped reboot swaps in marquee actresses hatching criminal schemes in an array of killer coats. Sandra Bullock is Debbie Ocean, a newly paroled ringleader who gathers a team of bandits—played by Cate Blanchett, Mindy Kaling, Sarah Paulson, Helena Bonham Carter, Awkwafina and Rihanna—to nab \$100 million worth of jewels off Anne Hathaway's neck at the Met Gala. *June 8.*



DID YOU KNOW? Not content with his already-impressive cast, director Gary Ross (*The Hunger Games*) scored cameos from Serena Williams, Anna Wintour, James Corden, Kim Kardashian and Matt Damon.

(OCEAN'S 8) BARRY WETCHER © 2016 WARNER BROS. ENTERTAINMENT INC.

2 WARLIGHT Michael Ondaatje

Following the end of the Second World War, Nathaniel and Rachel's parents take off for Singapore, leaving the teens behind in London with a taciturn guardian known as The Moth. Michael Ondaatje's latest novel unspools like a hazy dream: there are shadowy figures in a tube station, an epileptic seizure in a movie theatre, assassinations in empty houses and doped-up greyhounds on a racetrack. *May 8.*

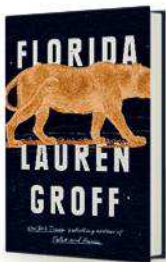
3 WON'T YOU BE MY NEIGHBOR?

If you believe decency to be in painfully short supply these days, *Won't You Be My Neighbor?* comes as a welcome antidote. This behind-the-scenes documentary takes a tender look at the sweet-natured world created by children's television host Fred Rogers. Five decades after its premiere, his show, filled with tremulous tigers and imperious kings, still offers clear-eyed lessons for curious kids. *June 8.*



4 FLORIDA Lauren Groff

Most of the stories in this bracing collection began as a thought experiment about someone the author loves. Protectiveness toward her sister transforms into a haunting tale about two abandoned girls on an island in a storm; her grandmother-in-law's work during the war morphs into a portrait of a woman who slips away from domestic life. *Florida* is a spiky and exhilarating book—it's easy to see why Lauren Groff counts Barack Obama among her many fans. *June 5.*



5 ON CHESIL BEACH

A pair of nervous young newlyweds holed up on their honeymoon anchor this aching drama about sex and class in early 1960s England. Theatre director Dominic Cooke stacks the deck for his film debut, drawing on a subtle screenplay by Ian McEwan, a gifted cast led by *Lady Bird*'s Saoirse Ronan, and the gorgeous, curving shoreline of the Dorset coast. *May 18.*



Points to Ponder

BY CHRISTINA PALASSIO

This is something that isn't immediately apparent from looking at an expedition map: you're constantly confronted with important, stressful decisions and you don't want to make a wrong [move].

Explorer **ADAM SHOALTS**, on his 4,000-kilometre human-powered solo trek across the Arctic, in *Canadian Geographic*

I try to play [guitar] every day. It's something that takes me away from hockey a little bit. Music helps, since it means using a different side of the brain.

New York Islanders right winger **JORDAN EBERLE**, in the *Toronto Star*

I think what's different now is that some men are thinking, "Yeah, I was kind of a jerk and now I'm thinking about that." That's important.

Actress and Air Force captain **LUCY DECOUTERE**, in *Chatelaine*, in response to #Metoo

So much of comedy is about bringing out into the light the little dark corners of shared human experiences. It happens to be a moment in time when those dark corners are expanding and coming out into the middle of the room.

Comedian **CHARLIE DEMERS**, in *The Georgia Straight*

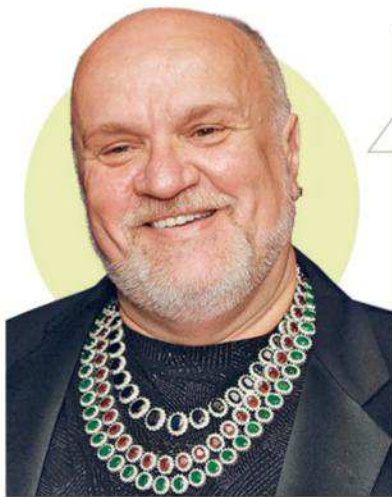
I'm asking you to take an active role—a supportive role—in building Canada for the next 150 years. Find Indigenous movers and shakers in your area and ask them: what support do you need?

ROBERTA JAMIESON, lawyer and *First Nations* activist, on CBC Radio's *Ideas*



PHOTOS: (JAMIESON) INDSPIRE.CA; QUOTES: (SHOALTS) SEPT. 13, 2017; (EBERLE) DEC. 16, 2017; (JAMIESON) JAN. 12, 2018; (DECOUTERE) CHATELAINE (JAN. 18, 2018); (DEMERS) DEC. 4, 2017.

PHOTOS: (BACHIR) DEAN TOMLINSON/CNW GROUP/OCAD UNIVERSITY, QUOTES: (BACHIR) ENROUTE (JUNE 2, 2017); (DAVIS) JAN. 23, 2018; (DOUCET) CBC RADIO'S IDEAS (DEC. 29, 2017); (THOMPSON) NOV. 15, 2017; (JANVIER) FEB. 9, 2017; (TORRENS) CANADIAN LIVING (NOV. 28, 2017).



We take it for granted in the bigger cities, but in smaller towns, there's still an incredible amount of homophobia, and young kids are coming out and need support.

SALAH BACHIR, *president of Cineplex Media*, on why he supports LGBTQ+ cause

What does it mean to be human and alive? The cultures of the world respond in 7,000 different voices, [and they are] our human repertoire for dealing with all the challenges that will confront us as a species.

Anthropologist **WADE DAVIS**,
on CBC Radio's *Ideas*

Never have we been able to know so much, but never have we struggled to find out what is really happening.

LYSE DOUCET, *the Acadian-born chief foreign correspondent for the BBC*

A culture that is stuck in the present is one that can't solve big problems. If you want to plan for the future, if you want to handle big social and political challenges, you have to

decouple yourself from day-to-day crises, to look back at history, to learn from it, to see trend lines.

Tech-culture writer
CLIVE THOMPSON, in *THIS Magazine*

Maybe that's why I was placed on this earth ... to just shout: "This is bullshit!"

First Nations artist **ALEX JANVIER**,
member of the Indigenous Group of Seven, on CBC Arts

Trinity Harbour, N.L.; Ucluelet, B.C.; Banff, Alta.; Pangnirtung, on Baffin Island; and there is something beautiful and haunting about the Prairies. Go everywhere.


JONATHAN TORRENS, on his top
five notable spots to visit with your kids in Canada



How to get rid of these
unsightly skin growths

Warts and All

BY SAMANTHA RIDEOUT

 **CAUSED BY HUMAN** papilloma viruses (HPVs) and transmitted via touch or contaminated surfaces, warts are so common that you're nearly guaranteed to get one over the course of your life. These small, rough skin growths, which can show up anywhere, typically affect the hands, feet or genitals. They're usually harmless but can be bothersome and embarrassing.

Part of what makes warts so frustrating is their stubbornness: they can take months or even years to go away on their own—and some never do. If you're tired of waiting, you could try salicylic acid, which is available in over-the-counter treatment kits. It won't resolve matters overnight but

could speed up the process by eroding the wart a little bit at a time.

Another option is visiting a dermatologist, who can administer more aggressive removal methods such as freezing the wart off with liquid nitrogen, burning it away with an electrical charge, or cutting it out with surgical tools. These treatments may not be covered by medical insurance, so find out ahead of time whether you'll be paying out of pocket.

Particularly obstinate warts might respond better to immunotherapies, which aim to give the body's natural defences the boost they need to suppress the virus. For instance, a chemical such as diphenicyprone might be applied to the affected area to trigger



a mild reaction and kick the immune system into gear.

Until removal is complete, it's best to practise "wart etiquette" to avoid passing on your infection. Plantar warts, which mostly affect the soles of the feet, are caused by viral strains that thrive and spread in wet environments; therefore, wear flip-flops or cover your warts with waterproof tape in locker rooms and public pools, as well as the shower.

Don't share personal items—socks, towels—that come into contact with warts. And resist picking at them, which often helps to propagate the underlying viruses.

See a doctor if a wart is painful, if it bleeds easily or if it changes colour or appearance—you'll want to make sure it isn't skin cancer.

If it is indeed a wart, then it's

"just a cosmetic nuisance," says Dr. Colm O'Mahony, a member of the European Academy of Dermatology and Venereology. "In extremely rare cases, a genital wart can become massive [many centimetres wide] and can become cancerous,

but that's incredibly unlikely."

Feel free to get your lesions treated if they distress you; otherwise, you may choose to just get on with life, warts and all. **R**

At least
65%
of warts disappear
without intervention
within two years.



TEST YOUR MEDICAL IQ

Polymorphous light eruption is...

- A.** a rash triggered by sunlight.
- B.** when acne medication backfires, worsening an outbreak.
- C.** gas caused by eating too quickly.
- D.** an asthma flare-up due to volcanic debris in the air.

Answer: A. Polymorphous light eruption is a bumpy or patchy rash that is triggered by the sun. (It's an immune-system reaction, not a sunburn.) It's most likely to happen after one of your first substantial exposures to sunlight in a long while and normally clears up within two weeks. Until then, avoid the sun, cover up with clothing or wear high-SPF sunscreen.



NEWS FROM THE

World of Medicine

BY SAMANTHA RIDEOUT

Shedding Pounds Can Lead to Same for Partner

Working toward a healthy weight may benefit not only you but also your better half, suggests a recent American study that tracked 130 couples for six months. One person in each pair was actively trying to shed pounds. Their significant others, who weren't making an intentional effort, nevertheless stood a one-in-three chance of losing three per cent or more of their body mass—a modest yet meaningful change. The lead author described this as a “weight-loss ripple effect,” explaining that our partners' lifestyle habits tend to rub off on us.

Plant-Based Milks Not All Equal, It Turns Out

Cow's milk is nutritious for those who can digest it properly, but around 65 per cent of adults cannot. Enter plant-based milks, each variety with its own pros and cons.

Scientists from McGill University in Montreal compared the unsweetened versions of soy, almond, coconut and rice

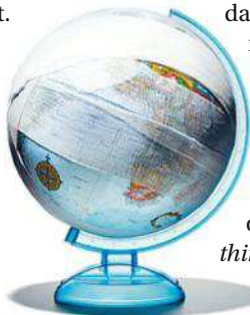
milks and concluded that soy milk offers the most nutritional value. In addition to a balanced blend of the three macronutrients—carbs, proteins, and fats—soy also contains isoflavones, compounds that may help prevent hormone-related cancers by binding with estrogen receptors.

Herbal Remedies Can Clash With Prescriptions

Just because a product is “natural,” that doesn't mean it's always safe. This fact was driven home by a review conducted in South Africa and featured in the *British Journal of Clinical Pharmacology* in January. By studying the medical literature published since 2001, the researchers found 44 possible incidents of adverse drug-herb interactions; resulting problems

included liver damage, kidney damage and bleeding. One

man drowned because a ginkgo supplement inhibited his anti-seizure medication. The key point: when you get a new prescription, tell the doctor or pharmacist about *everything* else you're taking. **R**



IN PARTNERSHIP
WITH ABBVIE

“MY LIFE WITH HIDRADENITIS SUPPURATIVA (HS)”

Hidradenitis suppurativa (HS) is a chronic skin disease characterized by inflamed, recurrent skin lesions, typically located around the breasts, in the armpits, between the buttocks or in the groin. The lesions are usually very painful and often itch and burn; abscesses may also leak pus that has an unpleasant odour.

While the exact cause is unknown, research shows that HS occurs when the body is attacked by its own immune system. It's estimated that HS affects up to four percent of Canadians. Joelle is a 31-year-old woman from New Brunswick living with HS. We asked her about her life with HS.

Q: How does HS affect your day-to-day life?

A: “HS impacts every aspect of my life. My mental health. I already have anxiety, and this aggravates it. That's the problem with chronic illness—it takes over your life. I'm constantly worried that people will notice. I get so preoccupied with it, I can't think properly. It's all-consuming. There's an element of body horror to it, which is disturbing on a visceral level. That takes a toll on my confidence because I'm aware that there's something systematically wrong with my body.

There are times when I can't wear a proper shirt as it rubs my skin raw and hurts too much. I often have to wear bandages under my arm.

HS also really limits what I can do. I can't travel easily. Physical activity is difficult, too, especially during bad periods when I can't move too much.”

Q: What are your symptoms?

A: “When my HS gets bad, I deal with itchiness and painful pressure under the skin. While people experience HS differently, I have painful outbreaks that tend to focus under my arms. It's an open

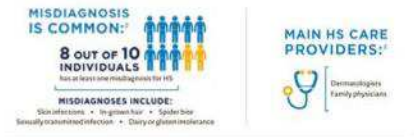
wound, so I must take care of it by cleaning it and making sure it's properly dressed and disinfected.”

Q: What do you want others living with HS to know?

A: “Don't blame yourself for something that you can't control. It's not happening because you're broken or crazy. It's not because you're not a clean person—HS is a skin condition. If your doctor can't figure out what's wrong, ask for a referral for a dermatologist. It's vitally important to confirm your diagnosis so that you can get the help you need. Remember that you deserve to be looked after and you deserve to feel good about yourself.”

For more information on HS, join the conversation on Twitter following the hashtag #HonestWithHS.

THE LONG HS JOURNEY:*



TALK TO YOUR DOCTOR:

IF YOU THINK YOU MIGHT HAVE HS, speak with your healthcare professional and see if a referral to a dermatologist is appropriate. If you've been diagnosed with HS, review your treatment plan and goals with your doctor.

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT HS, VISIT:
CANADIANSKIN.CA, HSAWARE.CA AND HSFUNDATION.CA

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abbvie

What's Wrong With Me?

BY SYDNEY LONEY

ILLUSTRATION BY VICTOR WONG



THE PATIENT: Gavin, a 43-year-old Holstein cattle farmer

THE SYMPTOMS: Compressed abdomen, vomiting

THE DOCTOR: Dr. Stuart Whitelaw, consultant surgeon, Dumfries and Galloway Royal Infirmary, Scotland

🌀 **TEN YEARS AGO**, on a frosty December morning, Gavin was attempting to deliver a breech calf in a field on his small farm in south-west Scotland. The birth took hours and when it was finally over, Gavin collapsed on the ground—and the exhausted cow collapsed on top of him. Gavin's cries for help were eventually heard by a neighbouring farmer, who attached ropes to his tractor to pull the animal away. Gavin was conscious but in severe pain. He was transported by helicopter to Dumfries infirmary, 120 kilometres away.

He had bruising over his ribs and abdomen, but no bones appeared to be broken, his blood pressure was normal and he was lucid enough to answer questions. After 12 hours of observation, the farmer was worried about his livestock and asked to go home, but doctors convinced him to remain overnight. The next morning, he began vomiting large amounts of greenish, small-bowel fluid. Doctors ordered a second CT scan and discovered a complete obstruction in his small bowel that hadn't been visible before.

An exploratory abdominal operation revealed that a loop of the bowel was trapped by an adhesion, a band of scar tissue that binds two other tissues together that are not normally attached. Ninety per cent of these occur after abdominal surgery, says Dr. Stuart Whitelaw, but they can also be the result of an injury. "It's likely

in this case that the patient suffered a long-forgotten blow to his abdomen in childhood (perhaps falling from a tree or receiving a punch on the playground) that led to the development of an adhesion.”

Had the cow not fallen on Gavin, the adhesion may never have caused a problem, Whitelaw says. “But the cow compressed his abdomen and, bizarrely, forced the intestine through a gap caused by the adhesion.” It was a life-threatening problem. The small bowel would become strangulated, blood flow would stop and the integrity of the lining of the bowel would be compromised. This could allow bacteria into the bloodstream, leading to septic shock and multiple organ failure. That same result could occur if a perforated bowel allows bacteria to leak into the nearby abdominal cavity.

Whitelaw performed an emergency operation to divide the adhesion and relieve the obstruction, but while he was inspecting Gavin’s other organs, he noticed a small tumour on the patient’s cecum (a pouch at the beginning of the large bowel). The doctor removed the tumour by cutting out the right side of the large bowel. He then joined the ends

together and sent the specimen to the lab. Gavin, meanwhile, made a quick recovery and within days was back on his farm, attending to the new calf and its mother.

A week later, the pathology report revealed that Gavin had early-stage bowel cancer, caused by a genetic mutation. Fortunately, it had been caught early. “When removed at this stage, the prognosis is very good, with a 95 per cent five-year survival rate,” Whitelaw says. Often patients with bowel cancer don’t have any symptoms or, by the time they manifest, it’s too late because the tumour is more advanced. “If the cow hadn’t fallen on him, his diagnosis would have been delayed, the tumour would have grown and

“

While he was inspecting Gavin’s organs, Dr. Whitelaw noticed a small tumour.

he might have presented at a later stage when the prospect of a cure was less likely, or even impossible.”

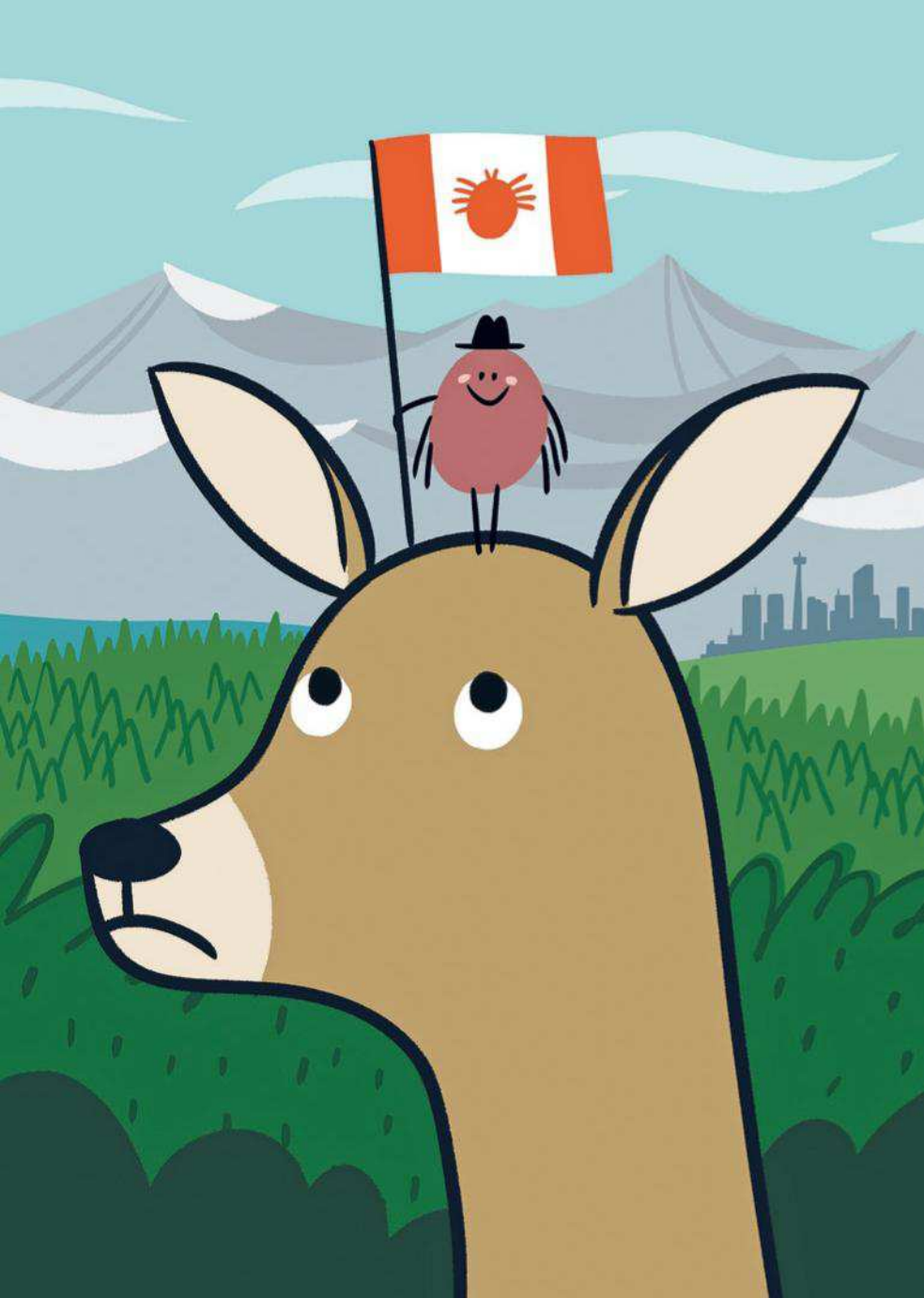
A decade later, Gavin continues to do well, and the cancer shows no sign of recurrence. And, thanks to his diagnosis, his three children can have DNA testing to see if they also carry the cancer gene and require further screening, Whitelaw says. “In the end, the farmer saved the cow and the cow saved the farmer—and potentially his children and their children.” **R**

BATTLING THE TICK BOOM

Due to our changing climate, the parasites are on the rise in Canada—and you no longer need to be in the wilderness to risk getting bitten. Here's what you should know about taking on the disease-carrying critters.

BY JILL BUCHNER

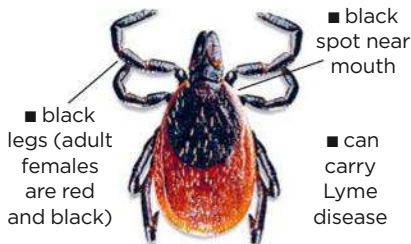
ILLUSTRATIONS BY KYLE METCALF



HOW TO SPOT A TICK

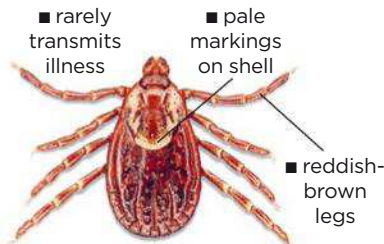
Unlike insects, which have six legs, ticks are eight-legged arthropods: they have jointed legs and an exoskeleton, similar to crabs and scorpions. Katerny Rochon, assistant professor in veterinary entomology at the University of Manitoba, suggests looking for the one-piece teardrop-shaped body—this sets ticks apart from spiders, which have a differentiated abdomen and head. There are about 40 species of ticks in Canada, but luckily only a few typically bite humans.

Blacklegged tick, a.k.a. deer tick



Very similar to the blacklegged tick is the **western blacklegged tick**, found in Western Canada.

American dog tick, a.k.a. wood tick



Very similar to the American dog tick is the **Rocky Mountain wood tick**, found in Western Canada.

SIZING UP TICKS*

Nymph (young tick)
poppy seed for comparison



Male adult
sesame seed for comparison



Female
flaxseed for comparison



*Ticks that are engorged with blood are larger.

THE NEW TICK IN TOWN

Recently, there have been reports of ticks that cause meat allergies showing up in Canada. Known as **Lone Star ticks**, they are native to the United States. In humans, a bite can lead to a twentyfold increase in alpha-gal antibodies—alpha-gal being a sugar molecule found in red meat. So the next time you order a steak, you could have a nasty allergic reaction, from hives to anaphylaxis. Luckily, the species is rare on this side of the border—the few ticks that have arrived in Eastern Canada and Ontario probably hitched a ride on migratory birds.



CC-SCOTT BAUER/USDA, SUSAN ELLIS/USDA, APHIS PPO/BUGWOOD.ORG, CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH, ISTOCK PHOTO

RISING TEMPERATURES, RISING POPULATIONS

Tick populations have been expanding for the past few decades, even infiltrating northern Saskatchewan, the city of Yellowknife and larger urban centres such as Toronto. Tick dragging in that city's Rouge Valley area in 2017 came up with 122 of the blacklegged variety, 63 of which tested positive for the bacteria that cause Lyme disease. Climate change has a lot to do with the surge, says David Lieske, associate professor at Mount Allison University in Sackville, N.B. Lieske co-authored a 2018 study published in *Ticks and Tick-Borne Diseases* about the prevalence of blacklegged ticks in New Brunswick and found that **mild winters and more precipitation led to a growing population**. While ticks might die during a cold, dry season, snow cover with an overlay of leaves provides the insulation they need to survive and lay eggs.



TICK TERRITORY

You're likely to find ticks in deciduous forests where they can hide in moist leaf litter and be protected from drying out in the hot sun. However, though there tend to be more ticks in rural areas, populations can establish themselves in city parks, in treed lots and along trails—anywhere there's vegetation and wildlife, says Rochon. They'll perch on blades of grass or low shrubs, where they can attach to people or animals brushing past.

To find out if Lyme disease-carrying ticks live near you, go to canada.ca/lymedisease and click on "Risks" to find problem areas listed by province.

DIY TRACKING

A computer science student from the University of Sherbrooke in Quebec is behind Detectick, an app that lets users take a photo of a biting critter and then gives a percentage likelihood that it's a tick. Scott Weese, a professor at the Ontario Veterinary College at the University of Guelph, created Pet Tick Tracker, an online tool that solicits input from users to identify ticks on pets. This can help researchers track when and where ticks are being found.

ISTOCK PHOTO



7 WAYS TO PROTECT YOURSELF

1. Wear closed-toed shoes and tuck your pants into your socks.
2. Gather your shirt into your pants to keep ticks from climbing up and getting to your skin.
3. Wear light colours so you can spot ticks on your clothing and flick them off.
4. Coat yourself with bug repellent, especially from the thighs down, where ticks typically attach.
5. Consider investing in tick-repellent clothing, which is pre-treated with repellent that lasts through washing.
6. When you get home, throw your clothes in the dryer on high for 10 minutes to kill any ticks.
7. Shower. Rochon says people who bathe shortly after a hike are less likely to get a tick-borne illness. The water and scrubbing removes ticks that haven't attached yet and those that are too small to get a grip. ●

BUG SPRAY BASICS

DEET repels ticks for two to 10 hours, with higher concentrations protecting for longer. Ten per cent DEET—the strongest concentration recommended for kids 12 and under—shouldn't be relied on for more than an hour or two.

Icaridin repels for up to eight hours and is safe for kids starting at six months of age. A concentration of 20 per cent is most effective.



CAN YOU FEEL A TICK BITE?

When a tick bites, you likely won't notice anything. The tick's saliva contains a numbing anaesthetic, as well as an antihistamine that prevents itchiness and swelling until the tick has finished feeding. Afterward, the bite site may be itchy.



HOW TO TICK-PROOF YOUR...

YARD

- Mow your lawn frequently so ticks have fewer places to hide.
- Rake. Ticks love to take shelter under dry leaves.
- Get rid of tall grasses or brush at the edge of your lawn and replace them with a border of gravel or wood chips, which will keep ticks from travelling over.
- Put a fence around your vegetable garden to keep out deer (favourite hosts of blacklegged ticks).

KIDS

Children are particularly at risk for tick bites because of their daily outdoor playtime.

- Protect them with tick checks and proper clothing.
- Opt for play areas that are away from long grasses or brush.
- When installing play structures, avoid the edge of wooded areas and construct a gravel border.

DOGS

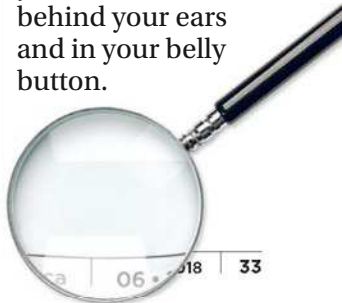
Canines can contract Lyme disease and bring ticks into the house that might bite other family members. (Take comfort, cat lovers: felines rarely get tick-borne diseases.)

- Check your pet for ticks if you're in a Lyme hotspot. Troye McPherson, president of the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association, has treated a Yorkshire terrier that contracted Lyme disease without ever leaving its yard.
- Talk to your vet about getting a prescription for an oral medication for protecting against ticks, suggests McPherson. Two of her own dogs have contracted Lyme in the past, so the vet now has her pets on the monthly pill.
- If your dog won't take pills, try a tick collar, which works topically to repel and kill ticks.
- For added protection, ask your vet about an annual vaccine against Lyme disease.

4 PLACES TO CHECK YOURSELF FOR TICKS

Once indoors, strip down and pay close attention to these spots:

- 1.** Your armpits, behind your knees and in the groin area. Ticks thrive in warm, moist places that are rich in blood vessels.
- 2.** At the base of your ponytail and even under your belt, as ticks enjoy being in tight, pressurized areas.
- 3.** At your hairline and at the back of your neck.
- 4.** In small crevices, such as between your toes, in or behind your ears and in your belly button.



4 DOS AND DON'TS FOR TICK REMOVAL

✓ Do use tweezers to remove a tick, grasping the tick as close to the bite site as possible.

✗ Don't delay. If you're in the wilderness and without tweezers, use your fingers if you must.

✗ Don't twist as you remove. Pull directly up.

✓ Do clean the site of the bite with soap and water.

5 MYTHS ABOUT TICKS

1. IF A TICK BITES YOU, YOU CAN SMOTHER IT.

The only really suitable removal procedure involves tweezers. Attempting to burn or suffocate a tick can actually stress it and cause a greater release of saliva.

2. IT'S DANGEROUS TO LEAVE THE HEAD BEHIND WHEN YOU REMOVE A TICK.

If a piece is left in your skin, it's likely the mouth—ticks don't have separate heads. Wash your skin with soap and water, and if the mouth doesn't come out easily, don't worry—it will work its way out on its own.

3. ALL TICKS CARRY LYME.

In Canada, blacklegged ticks are thought to be the only ones that have the bacteria that cause Lyme, and not all of them are carriers.

4. AS SOON AS A CARRIER BITES YOU, YOU'VE GOT LYME.

It takes at least 24 to 36 hours to transmit the bacteria, so if the tick has been attached for only a few minutes or hours, you won't develop an infection.

5. YOU NEED A BULL'S EYE RASH FOR A DIAGNOSIS OF LYME DISEASE.

Up to 80 per cent of patients will get a rash at the site of the bite, but it only sometimes looks like a bull's eye.





BITTEN!

THESE ARE THE TICK-BORNE ILLNESSES YOU CAN CONTRACT IN CANADA.

Lyme disease is an inflammatory condition caused by strains of *Borrelia* bacteria, carried by blacklegged ticks. It's the most common tick-related illness, and it often comes with a rash, as well as fever, nausea and muscle and joint pain.

Babesiosis is caused by the microscopic parasite *Babesia microti*, which can be carried by blacklegged ticks. The parasite infects red blood cells, causing fevers, chills, headaches and fatigue. More severe cases can lead to jaundice, anemia and shortness of breath.

Human granulocytic anaplasmosis is spread by blacklegged ticks carrying the bacterium *Anaplasma phagocytophilum*. It attacks white blood cells and leads to fever, chills, headaches and muscle aches.

Rocky Mountain spotted fever, mostly confined to the southern U.S., can be transmitted by an infected American dog tick or Rocky Mountain wood tick. It typically shows up with a fever, headache, nausea and then a rash.

Powassan is a tick-borne virus that can be transmitted by the blacklegged tick but is extremely rare—only 21 cases have ever been reported in Canada. Some people don't develop any symptoms, while others have a fever, headache, vomiting or even inflammation of the brain and meningitis.

ISTOCK PHOTO

LYME DISEASE: A PRIMER

I'VE FOUND A TICK. NOW WHAT?

Remove the tick.



Place it in a sealed container.



Submit the tick for testing.



HOW TO TEST A TICK

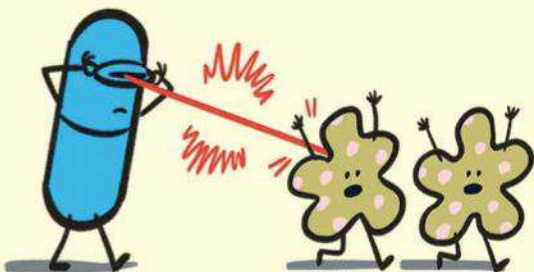
Go to canada.ca/lymedisease and click “Removing and submitting ticks for testing” to find instructions on what you need to do before contacting your local public health unit. Testing won't help with your own diagnosis, but it will inform surveillance of where ticks and Lyme are spreading.

GETTING A DIAGNOSIS

If you have Lyme symptoms and have been bitten by a tick or visited an area where Lyme carriers live, your doctor may diagnose you with the illness. There is a blood test that can confirm a Lyme infection, but because it takes four to six weeks for evidence of the bacteria to show up in your blood, physicians won't wait if there are other signs of the illness.

987

Number of cases of Lyme disease reported in Canada in 2016, up from 144 in 2009.



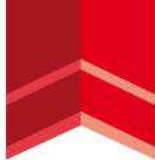
THE TREATMENT

When you're diagnosed, a doctor will prescribe the antibiotic **doxycycline** for 10 to 21 days to kill off the bacteria. "It's a very effective treatment," says Mary Southall, a public health nurse on the communicable disease team at KFL&A Public Health in Kingston. But, she says, if you continue to have symptoms after that, follow up with your doctor.

If you've just been bitten by a tick in an area where Lyme is endemic and believe the carrier has been attached for at least 24 to 36 hours, see your doctor even before you show signs of illness. Your doctor may prescribe 200 milligrams of doxycycline as a preventive measure.

LIVING WITH LYME

Typically, if Lyme is caught and treated early, patients will recover fully. But if you miss the initial signs, the disease can progress for months after the initial bite and bring on symptoms such as headaches, weakness and fatigue. When the illness remains untreated, the resulting inflammation can lead to extreme fatigue, arthritis and long-term neurological problems, including palsy, says Southall.



MORE GREAT READS ON

Rd.ca



ISTOCKPHOTO

SCIENCE

Q: What do cucumbers, apple cider vinegar and banana peels have in common?

A: They all come in handy if you have a close encounter with poison ivy! Check out additional home remedies for summer health hazards at rd.ca/poisonivy

FOOD

84%



of vegetarians and vegans go back to eating meat. Here's why: rd.ca/vegetarian

MORE READER'S DIGEST—STRAIGHT TO YOUR INBOX


Want a weekly dose of health advice from Canada's top medical experts?

Sign up for our free Health Report e-newsletter at rd.ca/newsletter



*Jed the
basset hound,
photographed at
home in Toronto on
March 29, 2018.*

How to Speak to My Dog



A lesson in respecting
elderly canines—
and their owners

BY JANET MacLEOD FROM *THE GLOBE AND MAIL*

PHOTOGRAPH BY JASON GORDON

“Hi, old timer!”

said the man in the park. He had bent down to pat my dog, who is an exceptionally handsome basset hound named Jed.

“Hey, buddy,” the man murmured happily, as he clamped his meaty hands on either side of my dog’s head and wiggled his soft, floppy ears. Jed sighed with contentment. Finally, the man looked up to address me. “So how long do these guys live?”

I shouldn’t have been surprised, and yet I always am. This question is brought up almost daily and it never fails to rankle. Usually it comes from a well-meaning person who admires canines but clearly doesn’t own one. People who have dogs would never ask such a thing. To inquire about my pet’s mortality is akin to approaching someone sitting on a bench with their granny and saying, “What’s the lifespan of this old gal?”

Of course I think about how old Jed is. I think about it all the time. The thought is a small, dark cloud hovering over my head, and I am constantly pushing it away.

Jed is 13 years old and he’s going grey. He walks quite slowly, which isn’t unusual for bassets, except that it’s a little leisurely even for him. Also, he’s almost completely deaf. When I call him, he can’t always hear it—or he may be ignoring me to smell a daisy instead. This, too, isn’t that remarkable.

Among willful hounds, answering to one’s name is a bit of a novelty.

Jed came into our lives when he was four years old as part of a package deal that included two cats. Jim, my partner, and I had seen his photo on an adoption website, had fallen in love with his freckled snout and decided we should meet. The caption under his picture described a “small” basset hound (he’s not) who doesn’t shed (he does) and his two beloved cats (they hate each other) who must all stay together.

Jim and I almost got knocked over by the 60-pound dog who greeted us at the animals’ former home. Jed came skidding over to Jim, gazed up at him with soulful brown eyes and arched one caramel-coloured brow. Then he wiped his slobber on my pant leg, barked loudly and chased a screeching cat down the hall. Slightly shell-shocked, we agreed to become the new foster family for this crew of creatures. But once they were under our roof, we knew that Jed (and the cats) wouldn’t be leaving.

AS FIRST-TIME pet owners, we did have some adjustments to make. The hound, in particular, was a challenge. For a short dog, Jed is capable of large antics. We soon learned that he will eat birthday cupcakes (with or without candles) and that he will leap into a swimming pool (even though he cannot swim). Jed will set his own

pace for our walks, going from saunter to jet-speed at the sight of a pigeon. While his clip has slowed these days, he's still pretty bouncy, incredibly cute and easily the most popular member of our family.

Unfortunately, the place he holds in our hearts isn't obvious to everyone. "So," continued the man in the park, relentlessly, "he's pretty old, huh?"

"No, you're pretty old!" is what I wanted to say. But I didn't. I bit my tongue in the same way I do when faced with similarly insensitive comments. Things like, "Looks like his days are numbered" or "Do you think you're going to have to carry him home?"

TO BE FAIR, not everybody is so inconsiderate. Some people, realizing they're in the presence of an exceptional dog, will compliment his fine physique, his perky gait or his shiny coat. His bark, I might add, is also quite impressive. Then they will say how wonderfully he is doing "for an old guy" and how we must be doing something right.

Darn tootin' we are! When we bought our current home in 2013, we did so specifically because it's only one level. Bassets, for those who don't know, are shaped like giant hot dogs, and going up and down stairs is hard on their spines. We would never allow Jed to be separated from us by a staircase.

His bed is beside ours, and that's where we want him.

Initially, he chose to sleep between us. We know this is bad behaviour, so to encourage him to behave even more badly, we put a bench at the end of the bed to help him up. A few years later we added a second, lower bench to make the climb even easier. But now he's decided we're crowding him and he sleeps in his own bed, located at the foot of our own.

The point is, we are a family and it's rude to ask people how long their family members are going to live.

So I lie. When people say that my dog looks really old, I opt for deception. Last week, I told someone that Jed was prematurely grey. I informed another passerby that my dog was 27 in people years. A third nosy individual was advised that bassets have an exceptionally long life span. The truth is they don't, but if I were to think about a life without my sweet friend I would start to cry.

Recently, when yet another stranger said my dog looked old, I wanted to punch him in the head. Instead, I just nodded and said that basset hounds always look that way and they always dawdle at their leisure. Then the man asked how long Jed was going to live.

"Forever!" I replied, as though the answer was obvious. And we slowly walked away. **R**

When two young boys get sucked out to sea off Florida's Panhandle, dozens of beachgoers must band together to save their lives

CAUGHT IN A RIPTIDE!

BY DEREK BURNETT
ILLUSTRATION BY JONATHAN DYCK





THE STORY BEGINS on July 8, 2017, in Florida's hard-work-and-cold-beer Panhandle. Members of the Ursrey family, eight in total, are enjoying an evening together at the beach. At around 7:30 p.m., as the sun sinks lower, the two boys—Noah, 11, and Stephen, 8—take their boogie boards and wade into the waves without the grown-ups noticing. When the kids are about 65 metres from shore, they realize that the ocean has tugged them out to sea. After trying hard and failing to paddle back in, they start waving and screaming for help. But the lifeguards have clocked out for the evening. There's a yellow flag flying, indicating caution, but most of the regulars were scarcely paying attention to the warning.

The boys have been struggling for several minutes when Brittany and Tabatha Monroe, a married couple from Georgia, stroll by. They don't see Stephen and Noah at first, but they hear them. "If someone yells for help, I'm going to try to help if I can," Tabatha says.

The two women leap into the ocean and easily reach the brothers, who are still in water less than six feet deep. The women reassure the frightened boys and grab their boogie boards—then discover that they, too, are in trouble. They can't make any progress

back to shore and can barely graze the sandy bottom with their feet.

AFTER A FEW MINUTES, it becomes clear that they are all trapped in a rip current. Rips move perpendicularly to the shoreline and can quickly exhaust swimmers who try to fight them; the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration reports that 93 people drowned in these flows in 2017. Safety experts warn against fighting the pull and advise that anyone trapped in a rip should swim parallel to shore until finally exiting its deadly belt—or float calmly to preserve energy if exiting isn't possible. The women try swimming, but no matter which way they move, they're still stuck.

Brittany, who has eight-year-old Stephen, is petite and struggling to keep her head above water. Panicking, she releases the boy and makes a frantic push for safety. By now, some teenagers have heard the commotion. One of them, a boy who is tall enough to keep his feet on the ocean floor, dashes into the water, grabs Brittany and hauls her back to shore.

Meanwhile, Tabatha can feel herself being pulled further out. She is treading water, already exhausted and beginning to despair now that she's trying to save both boys alone. The waves keep plunging her underwater as the two boys bob next to her, holding their boogie boards.

Onshore, Brittany is hysterical. Shaun Norgan is heading back to his car but stops. “What’s wrong?” he asks her.

“My wife is drowning!” Brittany says. Shaun, a hulking house framer from Georgia, looks out and sees the trio of heads through the waves. He immediately strides into the water. A year ago, Shaun had been caught in a rip current in this very spot and narrowly escaped drowning. The feeling of the ocean lapping about his nose and ears is familiar—uncomfortably so. Still, he wades out as deep as he dares, up to his chin.

Four metres still lie between him and Tabatha and the boys. She’s screaming for help, and while it’s painful to abandon them, he knows that if he continues, he’ll become another victim. He turns around.

“Please don’t leave me,” Tabatha pleads. “I’m fixing to die!”

“I’m not leaving,” Shaun answers. “I’ll be right back.”

IT’S AROUND THIS TIME, about 15 minutes into the rescue, that Roberta Ursrey, the boys’ mother, returns from the bathroom and looks for her children. She is shocked to see them floating with their boards much further out than they’re allowed to go. She hollers at them to come ashore, and they scream through tears that they’re stuck. She can’t make out what they’re saying but can tell that they’re upset, so she flings her phone onto the sand and



A family day at the beach turned terrifying for Stephen Ursrey (left), and his brother, Noah.

sprints into the water, fighting the waves to get to her sons and the stranger who is trying to save them.

“I’m going to help you,” Roberta says. She seizes the boys’ boards and starts kicking for shore but quickly discovers what others had before her. It is nearly impossible to make headway in any direction.

By now, people on the beach have begun to notice the stranded group, though the gravity of the situation isn’t entirely clear. A few yards away, an Asian couple are treading water and trying to inflate a child’s ring-shaped flotation device. They likely came out to help the boys, but when Roberta



Brittany (left) and Tabatha Monroe were the first to try to save the boys.

tries talking to them, she runs into a language barrier. Just beyond them is a young man on a surfboard who is attempting to catch waves. Tabatha and Roberta scream to him for help—they know that if they could all cling to the surfboard, they would survive until a rescue boat comes. But the surfer misunderstands, laughs and paddles away.

Roberta sees her grown nephew, Justin Hayward, surface nearer to the shore. He'd been exploring the shallows underwater, oblivious to what was going on further out. He can see now that his aunt and cousins are in trouble. Even though he broke his hand playing football just a week before, he swims hard for the boys.

"Don't come out here!" Roberta says. "We're gonna drown."

He moves toward them anyway. "Give me one of the boys," he tells his aunt. Roberta can't bring herself to relinquish either of her children. Justin finally persuades her to give him 11-year-old Noah and sets out to tow him on his boogie board toward shore. But Justin, too, learns that he's no match for the force of the water.

FORTUNATELY, MORE HELP is on the way. Shaun Jernigan has told his daughter to call 911 and has returned to the water's edge. He's frantically searching for a rope or other lifesaving equipment when he sees a man running toward the water. He tries to stop him. "Don't go out there!" Shaun says. "We're trying to get them out!" But the boys' father, Bryan Ursrey, charges in anyway. "That's my family out there!" he says.

Shaun spots two police officers and rushes to them. The officers not only refuse to help but also attempt to stop him and any other would-be rescuers from entering the water. (Deputy Police Chief Chad Lindsey later explains in a televised interview that the officers thought it was too risky to let anyone swim out to the boys.) Shaun ignores them and instead flags down a few other beachgoers, and together they start to wade in.

To keep from losing their footing in the current, they hold on to one

another, and that gives them an idea: why not form a human chain extending from the beach out to the swimmers? As long as the furthest link stays connected to those whose feet are firmly planted in the sand, they'll be safe.


Of course, that will require more links—probably dozens of them. Shaun calls to Derek and Jessica Simmons, a local married couple in their 20s, and they start rallying the folks who have been watching the drama with passive concern. “Don’t just stand there!” Derek yells. “There’s got to be some hope left for humanity in some of you!”

Then the most astonishing thing happens: one by one, link by link, total strangers wade into the waves and grasp one another by the wrists.


JESSICA SIMMONS IS an unusually strong swimmer for her small size. As her husband continues to recruit rescuers, she grabs two boogie boards and heads out past the still-forming line to see how she can help. When she reaches the end of the chain, she sees that it’s still at least six metres shy of the group of swimmers. A tall man at the end of the chain says to her, “Do you think you could get them close enough to where we could grab them?”

“Yeah, I can do that,” Jessica says. When she turns around, she sees her husband swimming just behind her. “I couldn’t leave you out here,” Derek says.

Derek grabs Noah’s board from Justin, who has been trying desperately to get his young cousin over to the chain, in part by plunging beneath the waves to “walk” over the ocean floor while holding the boogie board over his head.



**“YOU JUST HEARD
THE CHAIN, ‘PULL!
PULL!’ ALL THE
WAY BACK TO
THE BEACH,” SAYS
DEREK SIMMONS.**



“I was telling the boy, ‘Everything is going to be all right. Just stay on your board,’” Derek says. At one point, Noah falls off, and Justin grabs him by his trunks and hauls him back up. “As soon as I got him to the end of the chain, where Shaun was, it was like lightning. Shaun started passing him back, and you just heard the chain: ‘Pull! Pull!’ All the way back to the beach. Everybody on the beach pulling them in.” It takes only a minute or so for the chain to ferry him to the beach.

Jessica has been helping little Stephen make his way over to the chain, which is now some 70 volunteers strong, and when he reaches it, he, too, is whisked ashore.

Next comes Roberta, who is so exhausted that she blacks out just as Jessica helps her connect with the



Barbara Franz (left), shown here with her daughter, Roberta Ursrey, spent several days in the hospital.

chain. The people pass along Roberta's limp body, one link to the next, and deposit her on the beach. It will be five minutes before she wakes up. As it turns out, that was a blessing, considering what's happening to her mother out in the ocean.

BARBARA FRANZ, 69, saw her two grandsons struggling and swam into the danger—despite the fact that she'd had two heart attacks in the past two months. Within minutes, the water overwhelmed her. She's still out there when Roberta and the boys are brought to shore. In fact, she doesn't realize they have been rescued as her body continues to fail her.

Justin struggles to float his grandmother along on a boogie board, but she keeps flopping off. Over and over, the waves hit them, she goes under, and Justin brings her back up, being

careful of his broken hand. Derek swims up to assist. By now, Barbara has become delirious and incoherent.

Finally realizing the gravity of the situation, the surfer has returned and given his board to the Asian couple. "I just remember saying, 'God, give me the strength to get this lady up on that surfboard or we're both gonna die today,'" Derek says. "And it was just like a burst of energy I had. I picked her up and I just chucked her in the middle of this couple who were hanging on to the board. And that's where she stayed until we got probably three metres from the chain, and then there was another boogie board. We transferred her onto that."

Somehow Justin swims to the end of the chain to add a link and ensure that his grandmother is taken ashore. When the man next to him grabs his injured hand, Justin hears the bones rebreaking. The man recoils but Justin reassures him that it's okay.

Moments later, they shuttle the Asian couple down the chain, and Justin and a stranger carry Barbara onto the beach. She appears lifeless but a moment later begins vomiting seawater. (Barbara spent a few days in the hospital and months recovering from what turned out to be a third heart attack.)

FORTY MINUTES INTO the rescue, everyone is ashore except for Tabatha, who flounders about six metres from the end of the chain, and the boys' dad,

Bryan. Tabatha is beyond exhausted, beyond despairing.

“Hold on, baby girl,” Bryan tells her. “I got you.” Again and again he digs the tips of his toes into the sand and tosses her forward—and again and again, the sea undoes his feeble progress.

**THERE'S A GREAT
SCRAMBLING IN THE
SURF, AND THE
CHAIN FORMS AGAIN,
ALIGNED TO
RESCUE TABATHA.**

Shaun and the others in the human chain see what's happening, and the shout goes out to move the rescue operation down the beach, closer to where Tabatha has drifted. There is a great scrambling in the surf, and a moment later the chain forms again, aligned to rescue Tabatha.

A fresh swimmer splashes up to her. “Come on—grab my arm,” he says. Tabatha reaches for him and he tugs

her the last few metres to the chain, which zips her back to the beach. In the meantime, Bryan manages to find his footing and wades in on his own steam. Everyone, miraculously, has made it.

THE VAST MAJORITY of the rescuers from that day remain anonymous: the teen who helped Brittany ashore, the lanky young man who swam Tabatha in, the Asian couple. Each deserves to be celebrated—but won't be. This humbles the Ursreys almost beyond words.

“There were people there who didn't know how to swim whatsoever, and they were up to their necks in water, holding on to other people,” says Bryan.

“It didn't matter what colour you were, what age you were. People stopped what they were doing. They got off their phones, tablets, whatever, and helped my family out of the water,” he says.

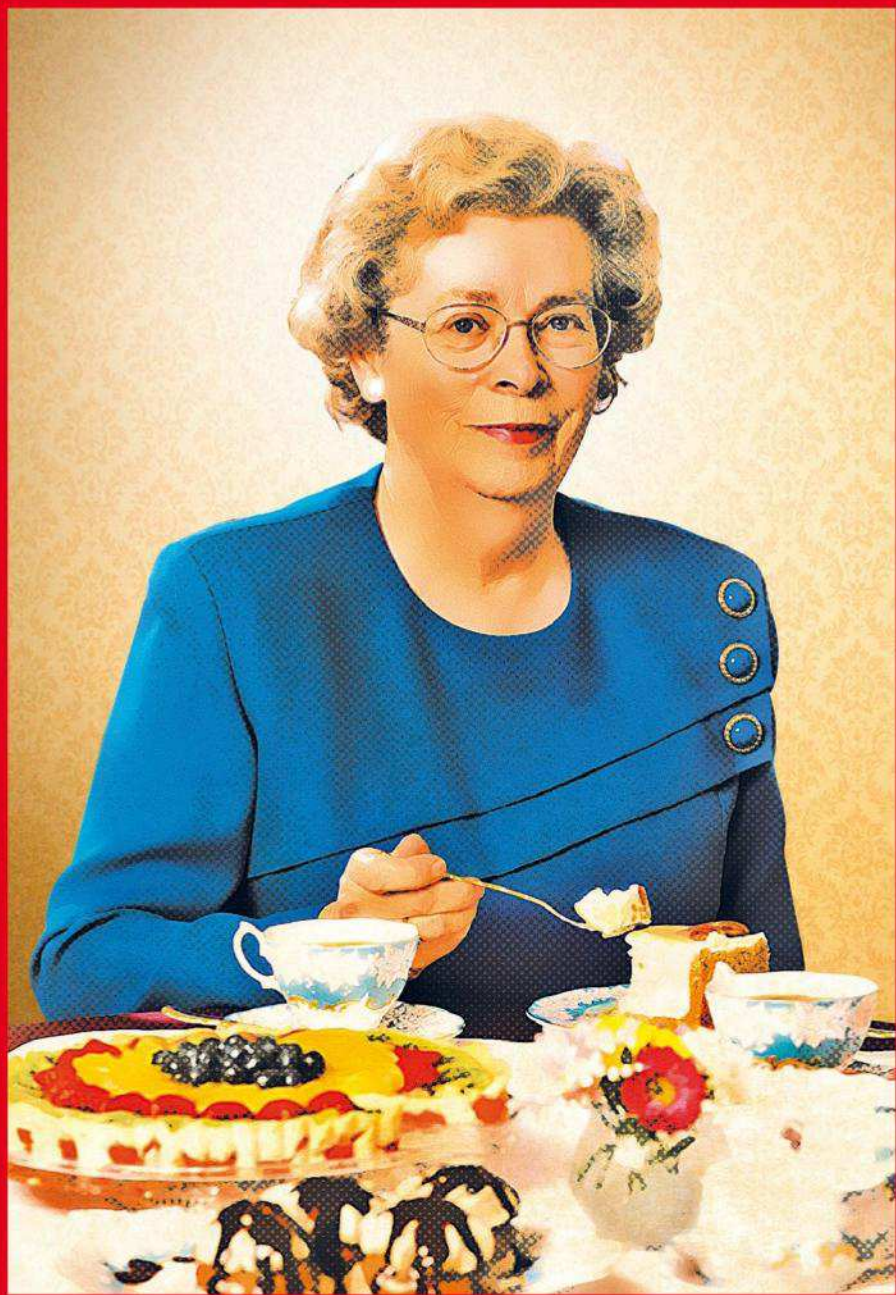
“Those people on that beach that day were angels on earth,” says Roberta. “Whether it's the first person or the last person in that chain, they were our heroes.” **R**

* *
* *

VANTAGE POINT

I always thought that “thriving” would come when everything was perfect, and what I learned is that it's actually down in the mess that things get good.

JOANNA GAINES, HGTV host



Master Chef

BY KRISTY WOULDSTRA
FROM *THE WALRUS*

How Jean Paré,
author of the
Company's Coming
books, taught our
country to cook

SIX YEARS LATER, Gail Lovig still remembers the afternoon her mom taught her how to make pie crust. Lovig laid out the required ingredients in her kitchen in Fanny Bay, B.C., while her mother—who happens to be Jean Paré, of Company's Coming cookbook fame—perched on a stool nearby, a glass of white wine in hand. When she was ready, Lovig looked at her mother and said, "Okay, tell me what to do."

Paré had always made pies for get-togethers, so Lovig had never felt the need to make her own. But as Paré got older, her daughter wanted to carry on the tradition. "It's food, it's connection to your family," reflects Lovig, now 60.

Just as Paré showed her daughter tricks for achieving perfect pastry that day, she helped a generation of Canadians learn how to cook and bake. She launched Company's Coming Publishing Limited with her bestselling cookbook *150 Delicious Squares* in 1981 from her home in Vermilion, Alta. By the time Paré hung up her apron 30 years later, she'd won numerous awards, authored and self-published more than 200 books (which have collectively sold more than 30 million copies) and established herself as one of the most successful cookbook authors in the world.

One of Paré's great insights was seeing the potential in "a book about bars

and squares,” says fellow Canadian-cookbook author Elizabeth Baird. “She had an eye for what people really wanted, and she did a good job in giving it to them.” Paré’s books looked and felt like heartwarming instruction manuals, with knee-slapping puns and colourful photos of comfort food scattered throughout.

During her reign, Paré—who turned 90 last December—became an archivist of Canadian cooking traditions, preserving and interpreting recipes she collected. But even as she became a Canadian tradition herself, she never abandoned one of her most treasured sources of inspiration: the community cookbook. “She wasn’t trying to be a fancy-pants,” says Baird. “She was just being honest in the way she was.”

IN THE FIRST HALF of the 20th century, most of our country’s home cooks didn’t own many cookbooks. (Paré only had two when she first married in 1946.) But they didn’t lack recipes. They relied on ones clipped from magazines, handwritten by loved ones and pulled from the community cookbooks that have been curated across North America since the late 1800s.

“These local cookbooks were often about fundraising for your church or the war effort, and what they ended up being was this amazing collection of recipes,” says Toronto-based culinary historian Elizabeth Driver. “You’d only give a recipe that you thought was your

best. You often put your name on it, that’s how proud you were.”

Judy Schultz, the *Edmonton Journal*’s food writer for 26 years, also wrote the biography *Jean Paré: An Appetite for Life*. In it, Schultz describes Paré’s voracious appetite for reading and collecting any and all recipe books, and her “particular fondness for community cookbooks...anything written by those homemaking women she considered to be the real cooks in North America, and indeed everywhere else she travelled in the world.”

The Company’s Coming titles were a vital addition to the Canadian culinary canon, says Kathryn Harvey, head of archival and special collections at the University of Guelph’s library, where Paré donated 6,700 recipe books from her personal library in 2009. “When you think of published cookbooks, you tend to think they are more aspirational, that they don’t really tell you what a community or society ate,” she says. “Company’s Coming was an empire, yet it had the feel of community cookbooks.”

Paré’s books also evoke her own practicality, down to the original series’s telltale spiral bindings, which allow the books to stay open as cooks measure, stir and pour. Having raised four kids largely on her own, Lovig says, Paré understood that sometimes it was necessary to prepare good food, fast. Why worry about making a sauce from scratch if a can of creamed soup worked in a pinch? And who needed

to peel and mince fresh garlic for a weekday dinner when powdered was ready to go in the cupboard?

Each of her themed titles, from *Anytime Casseroles* to *Most Loved Pies* to *Adding Vegetables to Everyday Meals*, offers simple recipes made with ingredients that could be found even in rural areas. As the brand grew and Paré moved her test kitchen and office to Edmonton, she still insisted on tasting every dish herself.

“There’s a reason why [Company’s Coming] did so well,” says recipe developer Annabelle Waugh, who has contributed to *Canadian Living* publications. “When you put out 200 cookbooks, it’s because you’ve built up an incredible trust relationship with your reader, and I think that speaks more to her style than anything.”

AS OPPOSED TO GLOSSY books with complicated recipes and hard-to-find ingredients, or even today’s more polished guides to home cookery (think Rachael Ray or Delia Smith), Paré’s guides look like the community recipe collections that inspired her. She wanted her readers, no matter their

skill level, to succeed. A photo of her calm, reassuring face appeared on the back of her books, as though she was saying, “You’ve got this. I’m here with you.” Readers loved her for it, sending her thousands of letters to thank her for simplifying their lives. She kept every single piece of correspondence and wrote each person back, by hand.

When Paré received the Order of Canada in 2004, she was perplexed. “Why would they give me this?” she asked her daughter. But to Lovig the answer was clear: her mother made cooking accessible for readers who might otherwise be intimidated.

Paré has applied that same humility and practicality to planning for her funeral, telling her children to keep the service simple, no longer than 20 minutes. When the family discussed where to hold it, in Vermilion or Edmonton, Lovig stressed the importance of choosing a location big enough to accommodate everyone—just the Company’s Coming staff and their spouses will amount to a couple hundred people. “She looked at me in disbelief,” Lovig says laughing. “Like she can’t imagine anyone wanting to even come.” **R**

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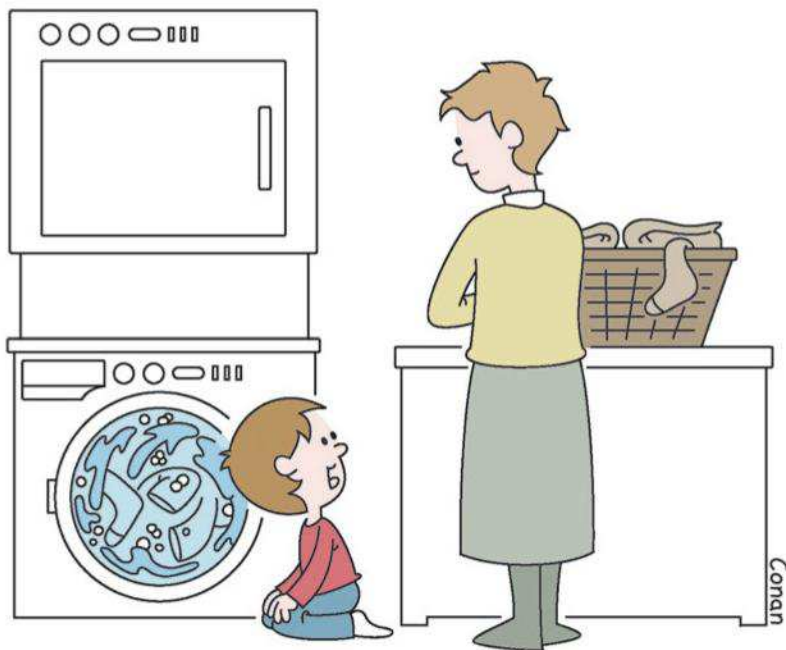


FINANCIAL REPORT

The only exercise I’ve done this month is running out of money.

@COLLEGESTUDENT

As Kids See It



"This looks like more fun than taking a bath."

PLEASE DO NOT compare your dog problems to parenting. Your dog cannot say your name 3,258 times in a day. [@PERFECTPENDING](#)

WHILE TAKING MY SON for a walk around the park, he told me I had to carry him. When I asked why, he said, "My feet are bored." [women.com](#)

WHEN MY FIVE-YEAR-OLD daughter came home from school on the bus, I muted the work conference call I was on to ask about her day. She responded, "Shhh! Go back to work! I have a list of things I want you to buy me with the money you're making."

KAYLA REYES, [huffingtonpost.com](#)

TODDLER: (Getting ready to jump off the bed.)

WIFE (to me): Do something!

ME: (Takes phone out to record it.)

WIFE: Do something else!

🐦 @IWEARAONESIE

WE TOLD OUR KIDS that we are no longer saying “shut up” because it sounds mean and can hurt people’s feelings. So our kids are getting creative. Our nine-year-old daughter was talking and talking, and our six-year-old son couldn’t take it anymore and said, “Silence, you peasant!”

CANDY AND ERIK CISNEROS,
huffingtonpost.ca

FIVE-YEAR-OLD (glares at me): My shoe doesn’t fit.

ME: You grew. How is that my fault?

FIVE-YEAR-OLD: You fed me.

🐦 @XPLODINGUNICORN

ONE SUNDAY AT church, I requested that the pastor bless my six- and seven-year-old granddaughters during the Holy Communion. When it was their turn, the pastor asked the younger one if she would like to receive the host. Apparently she had seen the pastor dipping the host into the chalice of wine, because she replied, “Yes, please, but without the sauce.”

MARGARET CHEE, *Richmond, B.C.*



AND ONE FOR THE KIDS

Q: How did the lagoon greet his sibling?

A: “Oasis!”

@lanDown1996

THE BABY JUST discovered the footrest release on the recliner. So if you need me, I’ll be here doing hamstring curls for the next seven hours.

ANDREW KNOTT, *writer*

I WAS DRIVING my three-year-old granddaughter, Nevaeh, to daycare one morning after a heavy snowfall. I said to her, “Everything is so white Grandma doesn’t even know where the road is.” She innocently replied, “Grandma, it’s under the snow.”

BONNIE GRONNING, *Houston, B.C.*

THE BAD THING about the baby napping in my room is that I can’t get dressed or grab the dirty laundry. The good thing about the baby napping in my room is that I can’t get dressed or grab the dirty laundry.

🐦 @BETSYKI

Want to wake up to a \$50 cheque in your mailbox? Send us your stories! If your kids make us laugh, you could win big. For details on how to submit an anecdote, see page 10 or visit rd.ca/joke.

Creating positive change in your life and in your community might hinge on how well you can check your cynicism

The Bright Side

BY SARAH BARMAK ILLUSTRATION BY WENTING LI

AS AN UNDERGRADUATE in his early 20s, Christopher McKinnon often attended political protests. In 1999 and the early 2000s, he went to Toronto rallies in support of anti-globalization actions worldwide, such as the World Trade Organization protests in Seattle. Instead of being filled with hope by these actions, however, after a few years he became skeptical when he saw what little progress was being made both in the political sphere and within his own communities.

“I realized people weren’t really approaching the issues with a deep level of analysis; they were just arguing and fighting,” he says. “I felt powerless and thought, ‘I can’t possibly change anything. The world is just a mess.’”

It’s understandable that one could view humanity as being on an irreversibly wrong path. News headlines are dominated by school shootings, accelerated climate change, threats to democratic institutions, economic and racial inequality, and gridlocked government.



If anything is guaranteed to make things worse, however, it's checking out and giving up. Thankfully, there are ways to keep caring and even maintain a positive outlook.

Unlock your critical thinking

Gallup surveys in the United States show that trust in institutions such as government and the medical system has been declining precipitously since the 1970s. While our country hasn't seen as much of a drop, in 2014 only 38 per cent of Canadians surveyed by Statistics Canada expressed confidence in the federal Parliament.

But as McKinnon's story shows, gloominess about the state of the world can actually be a sign that you have—or had—high standards for something you care about and you've become discouraged. According to David Mazella, author of 2007's *The Making of Modern Cynicism*, the term "cynic" was used in exactly this way in ancient Greece, where a person was described as such if they believed in "the autonomy of the self and the ability to be moral no matter how corrupt things become around you."

Feeling cynical, Mazella argues, is useful if it allows us to identify where a situation isn't aligned with our values—especially if it "helps you slow down to see if you can verify and believe what you're getting told," he says. The next step is to avoid letting

this new awareness get you down so much that you're paralyzed. Instead, you should recognize it as the first move towards solving the problem.

Focus on the positive

Some who succumb to negative expectations do so because they think that constantly preparing for the worst insulates them against it. Research has shown that the opposite may be true, however. In 2014, a University of Eastern Finland study reported that agreeing with statements such as "it's safer to trust nobody" correlated with being almost three times more likely to develop dementia. And two years later, researchers at the University of Cologne in Germany discovered that people earned 230 euros less per month after nine years of holding cynical views.

"Focusing on bad news can become a self-fulfilling prophecy," agrees David Richard Boyd, author of 2015's *The Optimistic Environmentalist*. "It really does make your health worse, and lead to less success and taking less action." Working in Canadian environmental law for over two decades had left Boyd depressed and hardened about the planet's future. But with the help of his daughter, he discovered the benefit of deliberately seeking good news.

Five years ago, the then-seven-year-old Meredith came off the school bus crying, saying she had learned that

global warming was causing certain species—including her favourite, polar bears—to go extinct. “To see your own child in tears because of bad news about the environment is like being stabbed in the chest with a dull knife,” says Boyd. He told her that while that was true, some species, such as sea otters, had been brought back from the brink of extinction by conservation efforts.

From there, he began what he calls “a real journey of hope,” seeking similarly inspiring stories that included improvements outside his field—from the rise in literacy worldwide to the decreasing global maternal mortality rate. The unheralded boom in green energy affected him the most. “I absolutely think we’re going to make it,” he says. “I think we’re in the early stages of turning the ship around.”

While news organizations tend to lead with the bad, balance can be found if you look for it. “The great thing about optimism is it’s not something you’re born with or without,” says Boyd. “It can be cultivated.”

Be the change

One easy way to escape the negative news feedback loop is to volunteer in your community. Doing good, even on a small scale, can dramatically transform your outlook.

Now in his 30s, McKinnon says his own about-face began about 13 years ago when he was managing volunteers

at the Toronto International Film Festival. There, he witnessed his charges finding meaning in helping others, and ended up doing so himself. When he taught one elderly volunteer how to use the Internet and set up her first email account, she later came to the office proudly showing off pictures of her grandchildren that had been sent to her. “I found value in realizing I could be helpful,” he says. “It didn’t need to be big. Even the small things could be powerful.”

Seeking more ways to improve his world, McKinnon joined one of the working committees involved in the Green Line, a Toronto-based community outreach initiative that aims to better use green urban spaces. As part of that effort, he became the enthusiastic organizer of an annual November 1st pumpkin parade, at which kids compete to see who carved the best jack-o’-lantern and local businesses hand out prizes. “Families come out and people meet and talk to each other,” he says. “The conversations they have are often about how we can make our neighbourhood better.”

These days, McKinnon even has a more optimistic opinion of the politicians he once distrusted. “People in power are just like us,” he says. “There’s a capacity inside of everyone to be good and make a difference, to look around you and say, ‘The world is not the way that it should be. I can be a part of that change.’” **R**

Driving With My Daughter

Parenting a teen can be trying. But when we're in the car, singing along to our favourite song, everything else falls away.

BY JOE POSNANSKI FROM JOEPOSNANSKI.COM

SHE'S 14 NOW, a turbulent age. Everyone warned us. There will be times when she's still your little girl, they said. And there will be other times when she lashes out with such fury, you will wonder where you went wrong. They warned us, and we heeded them. My wife and I had many talks about being patient and open, but also firm when needed.

We were ready.



WE THOUGHT we were ready.

I'm a sports writer for a living and I've heard many elite athletes say that in their first professional game, everything moves so impossibly fast that there's no way to prepare for the speed and fury and violence of it all.

We just thought we were ready.

We weren't ready at all.

SHE GETS INTO THE CAR. It's nighttime, and I'm picking her up from a school activity, and she is happy. She used to always be happy—or at least a lot of the time. Now it's a 50-50 proposition at best. Right away, she shows me a picture she wants to post on Instagram of herself with a friend. She asks if it's okay. I tell her it's okay. I don't know if it's okay; I'm trying hard to keep up with the rules. But more importantly, she is happy. I start the drive home.

A few blocks from the school, we get stuck at a red light because of the indecision of the car in front of us. I growl at this car. She laughs and mimics me. I suddenly remember one time when she was a baby and we took her to a spring-training baseball game in Florida. It was unseasonably cold, and we had her bundled up in a blanket. Every now and again from the blanket there would emerge a loud "Rahhhrrrrrrr," and people in the rows in front of us would look back to see who—or what—was making the sound.

The light turns green. We talk about nothing important, and it's pleasing for

this moment not to ask her about school or homework or friends. I think she's pleased, too, not to be talking about any of that. The air is cool and fresh, and the windows are cracked. "Video Killed the Radio Star" is playing. "I like this song," she says. I tell her that years ago, I made a list with my friends of our favourite 100 songs, and this was on it.

"Would it still be now?" she asks.

She's in a curious mood. She used to be like that all the time. "Tell me a story of when you were a boy," she'd say when she was little. She doesn't make that request anymore; for a teen, curiosity is a sign of vulnerability, a too-eager admission that they need to know something. I remember feeling that way.

Sometimes, when I offer advice or instruction, she yells back, "I don't need your help!" And I remember saying that, too. She shouts, "You don't understand!" but adds, "It doesn't matter. I'm going to fail anyway." I remember thinking that most of all.

SHE HAS LITTLE interest in recalling the past. For her, the clock only moves forward, and that's where she wants to look—there's so much ahead for her. In a year, she'll be in high school. In two years, she'll be driving. In three, she'll start looking at colleges. Forward. Always forward.

Meanwhile, I look back. I am rocking her, her tiny head resting on my shoulder, and I'm singing "Here Comes the Sun," trying to get her to fall asleep. I'm

walking with her through the gift shop at Harry Potter World as she decides between a stuffed owl and a Gryffindor bag. I'm helping her with her math homework when the problems were still easy enough for me to figure out the answers in my head. I'm watching *The Princess Bride* with her for the first time, and I hear her say in a delighted voice, "Have fun storming the castle!"

"Hey, Dad," she asks, bringing me back. "Can I have your phone? Can I play some music?"

"Sure," I say, handing it over. She punches a few buttons, the song begins and immediately I know what it is.

*I once knew a girl
In the years of my youth
With eyes like the summer
All beauty and truth
In the morning I fled
Left a note and it read
Someday. You will. Be loved.*

I introduced her to it a year ago. "What kind of music would I like?" she had asked. "Why don't we try some Death Cab for Cutie?" She was smitten.

She still is. She sings along to every word. I do too.

*You may feel alone when you're
falling asleep*

*And every time tears roll down
your cheeks*

*But I know your heart belongs to
someone you've yet to meet*

Someday. You will. Be loved.

She looks over and smiles. I still expect to see braces, but they're gone now; her teeth are straight. She leans closer and says, "Don't you love this song, Daddy?"

I hear her say "Daddy" and I'm sent backwards again, to when she was seven and racing over to me at the airport as I returned from a work trip, shouting my name and hugging me, not letting go.

She's 14, a turbulent age. Tomorrow, she may look right through me. But now, in the coolness of this evening, she smiles at me and holds my hand, and we sing along with our favourite song. We are off-key. But we are off-key together. **R**

FROM JOEPOSNANSKI.COM (SEPTEMBER 2015), © 2015 BY JOE POSNANSKI



BLANK CANVAS

Fatherhood is great because you can ruin someone from scratch.

JON STEWART



The good news: there was no sign of a stroke. The bad: my brain was covered in lesions. I was 27, newly diagnosed with multiple sclerosis, and facing a very different future than the one I had planned.

To Know Myself

BY MEREDITH WHITE FROM *THE WALRUS*
PHOTOGRAPH BY MAY TRUONG

A

fter a weighty pause, my neurologist told me that this year's MRI was "not too bad," whereas last year's was "rather concerning."

"If you have another attack," he said, "call our office immediately. In a case like yours, I'll want to see you right away and put you on something stronger."

Then he paused and added, as a kindly afterthought, "But of course, hopefully that doesn't happen."

I got the feeling he thought it would happen one day. In a case like mine, whatever that means.

Four years ago, things were a lot less uncertain. I had extracted myself from a Ph.D. program in classics that was feeling increasingly untenable and moved from Cincinnati, where I'd been studying, back to Toronto.

I made just enough peace with the fact that I would not be spending the rest of my life studying Greek literature that I could finally sleep at night without panicked second-guessing. I'd started a job and found an apartment with a friend from high school. I had all these things, a whole edifice of definitiveness, around me. No more starting thoughts with "if": "if I pass these exams," "if I complete my dissertation." I'd settled it—enough for me, at least. My life felt solid, full of statements. When I go to work. When

I pay my rent. When I see my friends this Thursday.

Then one day, I couldn't see.

I SHOULD CLARIFY: I couldn't see properly. The centre of my vision was sort of missing, and whenever I looked straight at something, it would dissolve. This wasn't new to me; it seemed like the aura I typically experience before a migraine. Usually, I'd take an Advil and resign myself to 30 minutes of being slightly spacey before the aura would lift and the migraine would arrive. Only the aura didn't lift, and the migraine never arrived.

After two days, I was frustrated but still sanguine about this curious development. A couple more days and I was panicked, wondering what was happening. I saw my family doctor, who referred me to an ophthalmologist, who ruled out glaucoma and referred me to a neurologist. This appointment was months away; after about two weeks, my vision slowly

returned to normal, and I eventually stopped worrying.

By the time I saw the neurologist, I was studiously blasé, wondering out loud if I should have cancelled the appointment. He wasn't too concerned, either, and thought that it was a "complicated migraine," which is to say, a migraine that didn't work properly. "But there's a tiny chance," he continued, "that you've had a stroke, so I'll schedule an MRI to make sure we can rule that out."

Then he added, "Of course, if anything else happens, give my office a call."

Nothing else happened. One night, three months later, I slid into an MRI machine and lay as still as I could, a little fascinated, a little bored, a little anxious. To give myself something to think about, I recited a William Butler Yeats poem that came to mind: "I have drunk ale from the Country of the Young / And weep because I know all things now ..." In it, the speaker has gained prophetic vision but is miserable because he learns he will never be with the woman he loves. Knowledge of what is to come, Yeats suggests, will not spare you from the necessity of experience.

MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS IS a neurodegenerative disease where the myelin sheath, a fatty insulating layer on one's neurons, is damaged. Think of myelin like the rubber casing on an electrical

cord: it shields the wire inside from damage and thus also protects the current that the wire carries. Spots of damaged myelin can allow the electrical pulses that run through our nerves to become scrambled, resulting in loss of motor skills, tingling, tremors, vision problems and loss of sensation in limbs. The spots where demyelination happens become lesions. Multiple sclerosis is a brain covered in these little scars.

In one type of the disease, relapsing-remitting multiple sclerosis, a sufferer experiences attacks, or flare-ups, when demyelinating activity in the brain causes a sudden neurological symptom to manifest—such as, say, being unable to see properly for two weeks. When the attack subsides, the symptoms will also subside, though lesions will be left behind and the damage may not be completely reversible. Over time, a person with MS can accumulate small disabilities that build toward major ones, such as impaired mobility and limited vision.

Jean-Martin Charcot, a 19th-century French neurologist, first identified the disease in 1868, though the lesions on the brain and spinal cord caused by demyelination had been observed in the decades prior. When Charcot created his set of diagnostic criteria, lesions could only be observed through dissection, and he relied on the outward manifestations of MS for a diagnosis. But now, medical technology

allows us to peer into the recesses of our bodies that have never been opened to the light. On MRIs of the brain, lesions show up as little spots of white. And as much as it is peering into the dark recesses, it is also peering into the future, because it turns out that not every lesion necessarily causes a neurological symptom—they may simply foretell a likelihood.



MY DIAGNOSIS
HAS HAD THE EFFECT
OF REMINDING
ME JUST HOW
MYSTERIOUS OUR
BODIES CAN BE.

In my case, the good and expected news was that my first MRI came back with no sign of stroke; the bad and unexpected news was that my brain was covered in demyelinated patches. “Something lit up,” as the neurologist told me. My sparkling brain.

Seventeen months later, after observation and two more MRIs, I heard the physician at the MS clinic say, with the awkwardness with which one delivers bad news, “At this point, we consider the diagnosis to have been made” while flipping through MRI images of my brain, covered in pale dots. I was now one of the estimated 100,000 Canadians with MS. After more than a year of

waiting, it seemed the moment of diagnosis passed by almost without notice. “If I get diagnosed” bled seamlessly into “when I got diagnosed.”

IT TURNS OUT THAT learning one has a chronic disease does not chart a clear path to the future; it only highlights the risks in a way that is both useful and useless. I take medication to reduce the rate of demyelination, an act that lowers the risk of an attack while bringing its own set of attendant complications, from hair thinning to cardiac failure. But I cannot know with certainty what is coming next any more than I could three years ago, or yesterday.

There are still days—like when the neurologist looks at my most recent scans and reminds me once again to call the clinic if anything happens—when the *ifs* and *whens* start to blur in my head and catastrophic thinking causes me to retreat to what I do best with my troublesome brain: look up the etymologies of words. I observe that, in Greek, “diagnosis” means “distinguishing, discernment; medical diagnosis.” But it also means, in legal writing, “resolution, decision”—which sounds like a level of certainty that I suspect many people with medical diagnoses wish they could achieve.

The “-gnosis” part of “diagnosis” comes from a Greek root, “-gno,” which means “to know.” If you’ve read a bit of Plato, you might have come across *gnothi seauton*, “know thyself,” the

maxim written at the temple where ancient Greeks visited the Oracle of Delphi to learn about the future.

If I really knew myself—physically, rather than the way that Socrates meant it—perhaps I would know what the future has in store for me. Instead, my diagnosis has had the effect of reminding me just how mysterious our bodies can be. For months, I was obsessed by the fact that there were things happening in me that I couldn't sense even if I wanted to. The scope of my life shrunk down to this diagnosis; nothing else was relevant.

In the face of knowledge, what to do? Despite my fears a few years ago, my life has not been permanently unsettled: I have a more interesting job; I have my own apartment; the sky didn't fall. I manage through periods of fatigue caused by the disease—a whole-body tiredness unlike anything I had experienced before—but still, I wake up every morning and take a pale blue pill that, through its own unseen magic, slows down the rate of demyelination and mostly keeps the symptoms of MS at bay. If I didn't

know, none of this care to safeguard my future would be possible.

The vision in my right eye never fully returned. With both eyes open, I don't notice this, but if I squint or wink or cover over my left eye, I am reminded that I carry this small neurological scar and that one day I might have more. I've wondered, struggling through a bout of debilitating fatigue, if the fog in my brain and the weight in my limbs might never lift and if this would mean I have to give up my ambition to do, to see, to write, to accomplish anything.

I try to look straight at the future, but it dissolves, in my flawed vision, into a continuing mystery with a slight possibility, now, of bad things. A life can feel so small. But there is a contingency plan, phone numbers of the clinic to call if I need to. I take a deep breath. I remind myself that there are many things beyond myself that are worth investigating in the meantime. There are so many activities worth doing with a belief in their certainty. When I go to work. When I see my friends tonight. When I finish this essay. When, when, when. **R**

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EYES WIDE OPEN

Fear is a natural reaction to moving closer to the truth.

PEMA CHÖDRÖN, Buddhist nun



*After a lifetime of rejection,
a plain Timbit speaks out*

Being Old-Fashioned: A Tragedy

BY CASSIE BARRADAS FROM CBC COMEDY | ILLUSTRATION BY GRAHAM ROUMIEU

As the most unadorned Timbit, you've often been overlooked, even maligned. Here's your chance to show the world what life is like for one of the least popular types of fried-dough confectionery.

Thank you so much for the opportunity. It's nice to be approached with journalistic neutrality instead of the usual judgmental grimace.

Of course. When did you first notice that you were different from the other Timbits?

In grade school we were all the same: just round balls of dough playing hopscotch, dreaming of what we could become and speculating about how much being deep-fried might hurt. We were all the very best of friends.

What changed?

I remember it so clearly. We were in the middle of a game of kickball when Apple Fritter sauntered toward us. She looked different somehow, carrying herself with a new maturity. We suddenly realized why: she'd been glazed. And in an instant, she was the coolest Timbit in the yard.

What happened next?

This is painful for me to talk about. One by one, all my friends—from Chocolate to the Fruit brothers (Blueberry, Strawberry, Lemon and Raspberry)—were dipped, glazed or sugared and immediately became too “important” for schoolyard antics. At first I thought, “What’s *their* problem?” But as I slowly became outnumbered, I started to feel childish. For a while I had my twin brother to play with until ... well, you know how the story ends. He goes by “Old-Fashioned Glazed” now.

How did you cope during such a trying time?

I prayed to my makers every day that I would be glazed. Then, as hope faded, I pleaded for at least a light dusting of sugar. But it was not to be. Without any sweetening, I was brutally isolated from the Timbits I'd grown up with. I held out some hope that it would get better as I got older.

Did it?

Have you met me? I'm the only one who doesn't fulfill my purpose in

life—no one wants to eat me. I don't want to be sleeping on a wire rack for my whole life, but day after day I'm ignored in favour of Timbits that are apparently worth consuming. It's discouraging.

Does anything bring you comfort in those moments?

Not really. I occasionally feel hopeful. At the end of the night, when the store is nearly closed, sometimes a customer will request a box of two dozen Timbits. And of course, my plain brethren and I are all that's left. We'll be in the process of getting packed up before the customer realizes what they're getting and says, "Oh, no. No thanks. I'll just eat a napkin instead."

Does anyone have it worse than you?

Sour Cream Plain Donut, for sure. Eating the whole thing is a commitment most aren't willing to undertake. That guy has no shot at any sort of professional satisfaction.

I see. Moving on, now is your chance to rewrite your narrative. Tell us something surprising or unexpected that not many people would know.

Everyone thinks I just spend my time rolling around hoping some "hero" will decide it would be

wasteful to throw me out and bravely chooses to eat me. But actually, a large part of my day is devoted to my music. I'm really into bluegrass; I have a custom banjo.

That's a start. Do you think you can reinvent yourself in the eyes of the public?

Probably not. The kindest thing anyone's ever going to say about me is, "I guess I'll eat it."

What about those who claim you're their favourite?

To be honest, I don't exactly want to be associated with the people who choose me. You know they're all wearing Crocs in the winter and searching with Yahoo instead of Google. They're weirdos. And probably the last people who would get chosen for any sports team—

Go on.

Sorry, I suddenly realized I'm rejecting my fans just like they're ... old-fashioned plain Timbits. God. What a bitter thought. I clearly have some things I need to work through.

Do you have anything else to add?

Just a question: would you be interested in consuming me?

Absolutely not.



FROM "I DIDN'T ASK TO BE MADE: AN OLD-FASHIONED PLAIN TIMBIT SPEAKS OUT," BY CASSIE BARRADAS, CBC COMEDY (JANUARY 24, 2018), CBC.CA/COMEDY

Laughter

THE BEST MEDICINE



THE BEST JOKE I EVER TOLD BY MATT WRIGHT

I feel bad for hockey players because they can get traded. Imagine if you were 19 and you worked at Subway and one day you went in for your shift and they said, “Sorry, now you work at Quiznos in Winnipeg.”

Follow Matt on Twitter at @mattwrightjokes and on Instagram at @mattwrightcomedy



BITE THE BULLETS

Lists tick me off.

MARTIN BAKER, *Toronto*

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

“Hey Dad, have you seen my sunglasses?”

“No, son, have you seen my dad glasses?”

reddit.com

I'M TRYING TO DATE a philosophy professor, but she doesn't even know if I exist.

🐦 @CASEYTDUNCAN

APPARENTLY YOU CAN'T use “beefstew” as a password. It's not stroganoff.

reddit.com

ACCORDION TO RESEARCH, nine out of 10 people don't notice when you replace words with the names of random musical instruments.

🐦 @PEACHESANSCREAM

Send us your original jokes! You could earn \$50 and be featured in the magazine. See page 10 or rd.ca/joke for details.



TINY PIECES OF PLASTIC FROM OUR CLOTHING ARE POISONING OUR WATERWAYS. BUT ONE NOVA SCOTIAN JUST MIGHT HAVE A SOLUTION.

MICRO MANAGEMENT

BY TINA KNEZEVIC FROM *THE WALRUS*

ILLUSTRATION BY DREW SHANNON

IN 2001, THE BASEMENT of Blair Jollimore's house near Dartmouth, N.S., flooded with sewage. He called the septic company. "The guy showed up and he goes, 'You have a lint problem,'" Jollimore remembers. In his septic tank, a layer of lint seven centimetres thick was floating like a grey cloud.

Jollimore, who has worked in maintenance for an aircraft-engine manufacturer for 30 years, is no stranger to fixing things on his own. After a few failed attempts, he came up with an idea to keep the problem from happening again: modify a water-filter housing

with a stainless-steel mesh screen. When a load of laundry drained, he could see lint gather as the water passed the screen in the clear discharge hose.

Not only did his filter work, but neighbours, worried about similar issues, began asking him to install the device in their homes. In 2003, he sold around a dozen at his first home show in Halifax, enough to cover expenses. He named his product Lint LUV-R and launched a website, Environmental Enhancements, for homeowners around the world to order the filter and install it on their own. He now

ships around 600 filters each year—a household product that may also be a solution to a nearly invisible global environmental concern.

MICROPLASTICS ARE the hidden scourge of our waterways. These particles measure less than five millimetres and are dangerous precisely because they're small and ubiquitous. So far, global attention has focused on two of the three sources of microplastics: macroplastics (from plastic bags or containers that have degraded into fragments) and microbeads (plastic exfoliators in toothpastes, body washes and face scrubs). But scientists are learning that the third kind, microfibrils—microscopic plastic threads that shed from our clothing—are potentially the most abundant of the three.

Municipal wastewater-treatment plants can capture some microfibrils, but most facilities aren't capable of stopping their flow into our waterways each time liquid from our washing machines leaves the drain. And while natural materials also shed, synthetics have scientists particularly worried.

Peter Ross, vice-president of research at the conservation association Ocean Wise, based in Vancouver, has been researching microplastics since 2001 and is leading a Canadian study on microfibrils. In 2014, his team published research that found as many as 9,200 microplastic particles—of which about 75 per cent were fibres—in each

cubic metre of water sampled off British Columbia's coast. We are figuratively drowning in these little threads.

Depending on their size, microplastics can be ingested by fish and even zooplankton, and lacerate or block intestines, leading to starvation, injury or death. They can leach chemicals into an animal's tissue. (Even gutting a fish won't remove the toxins in the filets on our plates.)

Jollimore's Lint LUV-R could be a key weapon of defence. After an ecologist in California first documented the pollutant as a global problem in 2011, several researchers (and eventually Ross's team) became interested in testing Jollimore's filter. One test is showing that its second-generation model can catch over 80 per cent of fibres.

WHEN THE DANGERS of microfibrils first became publicly known, polar fleece seemed to be the principal culprit. The cozy material, created by engineers at a textile mill in Massachusetts who wove polyester fibres into a dense fabric, came to market in the early 1980s in partnership with the American outdoor-gear company Patagonia.

Fleece shot to popularity as a replacement for wool: it was soft and lightweight, and it provided excellent insulation. It was also billed as eco-friendly, especially once it began to be manufactured from recycled products. The problem, though, was that it shed. As accusations against fleece began to

mount, Patagonia commissioned a 2016 study and found that each time a single fleece garment gets laundered, up to two grams of microfibres are released.

We know now that microfibres don't end with fleece. Many companies use synthetics, such as polyester, nylon and acrylic, to make anything from leggings to button-up shirts.

Mountain Equipment Co-op, keen to produce clothing with a low environmental impact, provided Ross with 45 of the 111 textile samples he is running through his test washing machines. After specialized filters collect the effluent, Ross's team spends hours peering through microscopes, trying to understand which materials shed most—information that could inform how MEC engineers its textiles.

The company's samples are largely the synthetic performance gear it's known for, but MEC has also given Ross materials made from natural fibres, to test how much they shed relative to synthetic textiles. Cotton, wool and silk are often treated with chemicals—dyes, softeners, stain-release agents—that change how they break down.

Researchers say that washing our clothes less frequently and buying fewer, built-to-last items—which shed less—are the best ways to keep microfibres out of our waters. But as one recent study has warned, “Without a

well-designed and tailor-made management strategy for end-of-life plastics, humans are conducting an uncontrolled experiment on a global scale.”

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THIS JULY, THE SALE of toiletries containing microbeads will be banned. (The selling of natural health products and non-prescription drugs containing microbeads will be prohibited next year.) But regulating microfibres, a by-product rather than an additive, will be more difficult.

Even consumer choice can only go so far. It's much easier to swap out harmful face wash than to find a T-shirt that doesn't shed, and few rules dictate how clothes can be manufactured or laundered. In the same way that many provincial fire codes require that dryer lint traps be cleaned regularly, researchers hope that mandatory washing machine filters will one day be the norm—that a global threat may be considered as serious as a personal one.

Jollimore is still using his original prototype filter, which he only needs to empty every few weeks. He is waiting for research, rather than legislation, to roll in, and he is ready to grow his business as microfibres become better known. “The silver lining of the cloud was for me to come up with an idea,” he says. “This solution that I'd come up with can maybe help solve a world pollution problem.” **R**

After the death of his wife, a young widower writes an open letter to her medical team

THANK YOU
SO MUCH FOR

Caring

BY PETER DeMARCO FROM *THE NEW YORK TIMES*

AS I BEGIN TO TELL my friends and family about the week you treated my wife, Laura Levis, in what turned out to be the last days of her young life, they stop me at about the 15th name that I recall. The list includes the doctors,

nurses, respiratory specialists, social workers and even cleaning staff members who cared for her.

“How do you remember any of their names?” they ask.

“How could I not?” I respond.

*The author
and his wife,
Laura, hiking
in Scotland.*



Every single one of you treated Laura with such professionalism, kindness and dignity as she lay unconscious. When she needed shots, you apologized that it was going to hurt a little, whether or not she could hear. When you listened to her heart and lungs through your stethoscopes and her gown began to slip, you pulled it up to respectfully cover her. You spread a blanket not only when her body temperature needed regulating but also when the room was just a little cold and you thought she'd sleep more comfortably that way.

yourselves invisible? How many times did you help me set up the recliner as close as possible to her bedside, crawling into the mess of wires and tubes in order to swing her forward just a few feet?

How many times did you check on me to see whether I needed anything, from a bite to eat to a drink, from fresh clothes to a hot shower, or to find out whether I needed a better explanation of a medical procedure or just someone to talk to?

How many times did you hug me and console me when I fell to pieces,



The nurses shifted Laura in her bed, leaving room for me to crawl in with her one last time.

You cared so greatly for her parents, helping them climb into the room's awkward recliner, fetching them water almost by the hour and answering every one of their medical questions with incredible patience. My father-in-law, a doctor himself, as you learned, felt he was involved in her care. I can't tell you how important that was to him.

Then there was how you treated me. How would I have found the strength to make it through that week without you?

How many times did you walk into the room to find me sobbing, my head down and resting on her hand, and quietly go about your task, as if willing

or ask about Laura's life and the person she was, taking the time to look at her photos or read the things I'd written about her on Facebook? How many times did you deliver bad news with compassionate words and sadness in your eyes?

When I needed to use a computer for an emergency email, you made it happen. When I smuggled in a very special visitor, our tuxedo cat, Cola, for one final lick of Laura's face, you "didn't see a thing."

And one special evening, you gave me full control to usher into the ICU more than 50 people in Laura's life,

from friends to co-workers to college pals to family members. It was an outpouring of love that included opera singing, guitar playing and dancing, as well as new revelations to me about just how deeply my wife had touched people. It was the last great night of our marriage together, for both of us, and it wouldn't have happened without your support.

There is another moment—actually, a single hour—that I will never forget.

On the final day, as we waited for Laura's organ-donor surgery, all I wanted was to be alone with her. But family and friends kept coming to say their goodbyes, and the clock ticked away. By about 4 p.m., finally, everyone had gone, and I was emotionally and physically exhausted, in need of a nap. So I asked Laura's nurses, Donna and Jen, if they could help me set up the recliner, which was so uncomfortable but all I had, next to her again.

They had a better idea.

They asked me to leave the room for a moment, and when I returned, they had shifted Laura to the right side of her bed, leaving just enough

room for me to crawl in with her one last time. I asked if they could give us one hour without a single interruption, and they nodded, closing the curtains and the doors and shutting off the lights.

I nestled my body against hers. She looked so beautiful, and I told her so, stroking her hair and face. Pulling her gown down slightly, I kissed her breasts and laid my head on her chest, feeling it rise and fall with each breath, her heartbeat in my ear. It was our last tender moment as husband and wife, and it was more natural and pure and comforting than anything I'd ever felt. And then I fell asleep.

I will remember that last hour together for the rest of my life. It was a gift beyond gifts, and I have Donna and Jen to thank for it.

Really, I have all of you to thank for it.

With my eternal gratitude and love,
Peter DeMarco

Laura Levis was a patient in the intensive care unit at CHA Cambridge Hospital in Cambridge, Mass. She died in 2016, at the age of 34. **R**

FROM THE NEW YORK TIMES (OCTOBER 6, 2016), © 2016 BY THE NEW YORK TIMES COMPANY, NYTIMES.COM



A GRAND ENTRANCE

If opportunity doesn't knock, build a door.

MILTON BERLE

The Cannabis Companion Guide

Is medical marijuana right for you? Find out which conditions it helps—and where further research is still needed.

BY VANESSA MILNE

ILLUSTRATION BY RAYMOND BIESINGER

CANNABIS



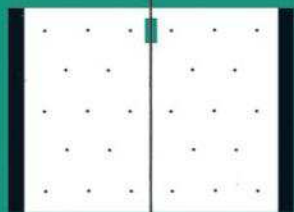
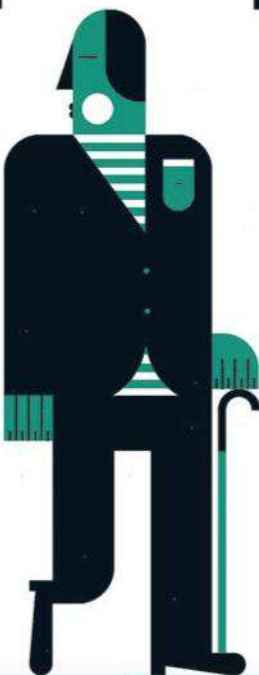
1034



PHARMACY



1036



ABOUT 15 YEARS AGO, James O'Hara began experiencing an aching pain and stiffness in his left hip, symptoms that were eventually diagnosed as osteoarthritis. The former banking executive, now 60, managed the condition with Tylenol and Advil for a while, before finally turning to a prescription drug. After a few years, one of the medication's side effects—stomach upset—became so severe that it caused what's known as refractory pain, which travelled up a nerve to O'Hara's left ear. "It was horrific," he says, and for years he relied on an ever-changing cocktail of prescription medications to combat the side effects from the first one, with varying levels of success.

The idea of trying cannabis as an alternative came to O'Hara five years ago, after several of his friends began using it for their own health problems. Despite not having smoked pot regularly since his early 20s, O'Hara experimented with recreational marijuana for pain control and eventually got a formal prescription from a cannabis clinic.

"I was shocked at how well it worked," says O'Hara, who this March became CEO and president of Canadians for Fair Access to Medical Marijuana. "With it, I could function better, and mentally, I was a lot clearer."

Almost 170,000 Canadians are, like O'Hara, registered users of medical marijuana—a number that's expected to rise after cannabis becomes legal in Canada this summer. Many of those who have tried it are enthusiastic about its benefits, but doctors and researchers point out that we still don't have enough data to be confident that it's as effective as some believe. Fortunately, evidence from studies—most of which employ cannabinoids, the chemical compounds present in the cannabis

plant—is beginning to get clearer around a number of different uses.

Here's what current science suggests about using medical marijuana to treat eight common conditions.

Five Areas Where the Evidence Is Strong

CHRONIC PAIN

In 2013, 65 per cent of Canadians using medical cannabis were prescribed it for pain related to severe arthritis. Pain relief in general is what often motivates people to try it for the first time. With more than 30 randomized controlled trials on using cannabinoids for this purpose, it's also one of the best-researched areas. The results have been contradictory, with some studies concluding that cannabis or cannabinoids work for pain, and others finding they are no better than a placebo. But more and more doctors are giving them a thumbs-up.

"[The effectiveness of cannabis] isn't proven yet, but the evidence is growing," says Andrea Furlan, senior

scientist at the University of Toronto faculty of medicine and co-chair of Project ECHO Ontario, which helps primary care providers choose the best treatments for chronic pain. Although Furlan notes that we still need larger studies and ones that look at a wider range of conditions, she says it's reasonable for people to turn to prescription cannabis for pain, especially if other treatments aren't working.

Scientists are still unsure exactly how marijuana might work to combat pain. Cannabis affects the endocannabinoid system—receptors in the brain that are connected to appetite, pain, mood and memory—but we don't know what those receptors do. However, in addition to interacting with the physical aspect of pain, it seems that marijuana may ease its psychological side, as well.

"Pain is the alarm system in our body, so it activates the emotional part of the brain," explains Furlan. "It makes you feel like you cannot wait, that you have to stop everything you're doing and fix it." For chronic pain, she says, that reaction isn't useful, because there's nothing to fix. Patients tell her that cannabis helps dull those strong emotions.

MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS

Canada has one of the highest rates of MS in the world, with about 100,000 of us living with the condition. Cannabinoids seem to help sufferers with one of the disease's core symptoms,



GREY AREA MAYBES

For many disorders, there's not enough information to conclude whether marijuana is beneficial, mainly because there haven't been enough high-quality, randomized clinical trials—the kind required before a pharmaceutical drug is allowed into the marketplace for use.

According to Fiona Clement, an associate professor at the University of Calgary, the lack of research is primarily due to the fact that medical marijuana has only been allowed for use since 2001 and has been subject to a more stringent approval process from Health Canada in order to study it. "And there's also an issue of funding," she says. "Historically, this has been an illegal industry that's not in a position to support research."

One interesting area of debate is anxiety. We know that people with anxiety disorders are more likely to use marijuana, but it's unclear whether the plant helps control their anxiety or contributes to its development.

"People report that they take it to relax, so it's natural to conclude that cannabis might help with anxiety," says Ziva Cooper, an associate professor at Columbia University. However, we are still awaiting proper clinical trials to prove it.

spasticity—stiffness that can make movement difficult and cause painful muscle spasms.

Studies examining assessments by doctors tend to find improvements so small they could be due to chance, but reports from patients have been more positive. One 2012 study, run by 22 institutions in the U.K., found that 29 per cent of patients who took a cannabis extract said their symptoms had improved, while only 16 per cent of those taking a placebo reported a positive effect. That adds up to “substantial

evidence that cannabis can help improve patient-reported spasticity,” says Ziva Cooper, one of the co-authors on a National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine report on cannabis and cannabinoids.

NAUSEA AND VOMITING FROM CHEMOTHERAPY

The interaction between cannabis and chemotherapy is another area that’s well studied. In 2015, the Cochrane Collaboration—an international non-profit that analyzes evidence around



CHOOSING YOUR STRAIN AND HOW TO TAKE IT

Medical marijuana comes in hundreds of strains with many different components, but the two we know the most about are tetrahydrocannabinol (THC)—which produces the euphoria we associate with pot—and cannabidiol (CBD), the part that seems to be behind most of the known medicinal effects. Many people who are prescribed the drug opt for strains high in CBD and low in THC to get the health benefits without the high.

Doctors warn against smoking cannabis, as that can cause breathing problems and might be carcinogenic; a vaporizer, which boils the buds rather than burning them, reduces those issues. Edible versions

and oils don’t have that problem, but it’s difficult to estimate proper dosages with them. For these, it’s important to start with a small quantity and wait at least two hours before having more. Cannabinoids are also available as brand-name drugs for some medical issues, making it easier to find the right type and dose.

Shelita Dattani, an Ottawa-based pharmacist, notes that there’s a misconception that marijuana is innocuous; like any drug, it has side effects. The most common are dizziness, dry mouth, nausea, fatigue, drowsiness and euphoria. That’s another reason why doctors suggest you “start low and go slow.”

Additionally, cannabis can interact with other medications, so be sure to tell your doctor that you’re using it, if they’re not already aware.

health interventions—concluded that people undergoing chemotherapy who took cannabinoids were three times less likely to experience nausea and five times less likely to have that turn into vomiting than those who had been given a placebo. In fact, those positive findings mean that, for some patients, medical marijuana could be just as effective as the traditional anti-nausea drugs currently prescribed.

The Cochrane Collaboration did warn, however, that patients reported more side effects from cannabis-based medications than with conventional ones, including feeling high, dizzy or sedated. Shelita Dattani, director of practice development and knowledge translation for the Canadian Pharmacists Association, says that's why it's not doctors' first choice for nausea. "It's adjunctive therapy," she says. "It would be used for patients who have not responded to the multitude of traditional options out there."

INSOMNIA

People frequently turn to marijuana to help with sleep problems, and there is promising evidence that cannabinoid-based medications can work for them.

So far, most of the research has looked at marijuana's effectiveness when it comes to improving sleep disturbed by medical issues like sleep apnea, fibromyalgia or MS. Cannabis seems to improve both how much sleep people get and how restorative it

is, with many patients reporting less daytime fatigue.

Although researchers are unsure why it has this benefit, some hypothesize that the tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) in marijuana—the compound that makes you feel high—acts as a sedative.

EPILEPSY

Marijuana's ability to stop seizures became famous in part thanks to a 2013 CNN documentary, *Weed*, featuring a child—Charlotte Figi—who had hundreds of seizures a week, which robbed her of the ability to walk, talk and eat. When Figi was five, her parents persuaded doctors to prescribe her cannabis oil, and the frequency of Figi's seizures dropped to two to three times a month.

Those kinds of "profound case reports" inspired more rigorous research on the effects of cannabinoids, especially in children, says Fiona Clement, an associate professor at the University of Calgary. A recent study on cannabinoid use for children with treatment-resistant epilepsy conditions reported the frequency of seizures dropping by upwards of 20 per cent—and sometimes down to zero.

Three Areas Where the Evidence Is Weak

CANCER

Stories have long swirled on the Internet that marijuana cures cancer; some

unscrupulous doctors have even built their practices around this idea. Cannabinoids have been shown to kill cancer cells in the laboratory, but that's a long way from curing cancer in real life—in other studies, researchers found that cannabis also harms crucial blood vessels, weakens the immune system or even encourages some cancer cells to grow. The evidence of its effectiveness in people with cancer is mostly anecdotes about patients making miraculous recoveries, which could be coincidental.

So far, there have only been a few very small clinical trials in this area. One found a positive effect with adding cannabis to standard chemotherapy—but was observed in a sample of only nine people with aggressive brain tumours. "I'm not a believer," says Clement. "Cannabis doesn't cure cancer."

DEMENTIA

Some studies have found that cannabinoids help remove amyloid clumps—the protein buildup in the brain that is a hallmark of Alzheimer's disease—in lab mice, and increases their ability to learn. However, human trials haven't yet been run, and it's not unusual for drugs to benefit animals and fail entirely in people.

In the meantime, other research has shown that heavy marijuana users score worse on cognitive tests while high, with diminished memory and attention, suggesting that there is still

a lot to learn about how medical marijuana could affect our mental abilities.

GLAUCOMA

The belief that marijuana helps treat glaucoma started in the 1970s, when studies showed that it lowered pressure in the eyes—one of the condition's causes, which can lead to vision loss. However, follow-up studies found that marijuana only maintained this result for a few hours, so sufferers would have to use the drug up to eight times a day for it to be beneficial.

Cannabis also reduces blood flow to the optic nerve, which can damage it and cancel out any positive effects of lowered pressure. Newer prescription medications, on the other hand, work for much longer without those issues, so doctors recommend them over medical marijuana.

AS WELL AS SUFFERING from osteoarthritis, O'Hara experiences focal seizures as a result of an old head trauma, which make him forgetful and disoriented. Since beginning to take medical marijuana, he says these seizures have been reduced by about 85 per cent. On top of that, he believes cannabis helps his chronic asthma.

"I was surprised by these unexpected benefits," he says. "For me to realize I had gone through my life not knowing that this was available to me made me quite angry. It made me ask, 'Why aren't we talking about this more?'" **R**

@ Work



🐦 @ElaineF

IN A GROUP REVIEW meeting, my boss turned to one of his direct subordinates and said, “I’m told a strong manager will admit to his mistakes. So tell us, how did *you* manage to lose so much money?”

cbsnews.com

WHEN LOOKING FOR A parking spot at his job, a friend of mine was cut off by another car. The driver jumped out, turned to him and shouted “Sucks to be you!” My friend found another parking spot and went inside to interview a candidate for a job at the company. Guess who that person was?

reddit.com

CAREER HACK FOR CODERS:

Arrange your first job in Spain. That way you’ll be Señor Developer from day one.

🐦 @JAREK000000


ONCE AT MY NEW JOB, I needed a pen. I went to the supply closet on my floor, which was locked. I asked the floor’s administrator, who told me to go to the main supply room in the basement. When I headed to the basement and asked for a pen, they told me my request had to be approved by my department head. She worked in a city hundreds of kilometres away, so I emailed her asking if I had permission to get a pen from the supply closet. I explained the situation in my first one-on-one meeting with my boss. She got up, went to her desk and grabbed me a handful of pens.

reddit.com

I CAN’T BE ON MY PHONE at work, so now I tell my boss it’s my support Twitter.

🐦 @BROWNDOGBLANKET

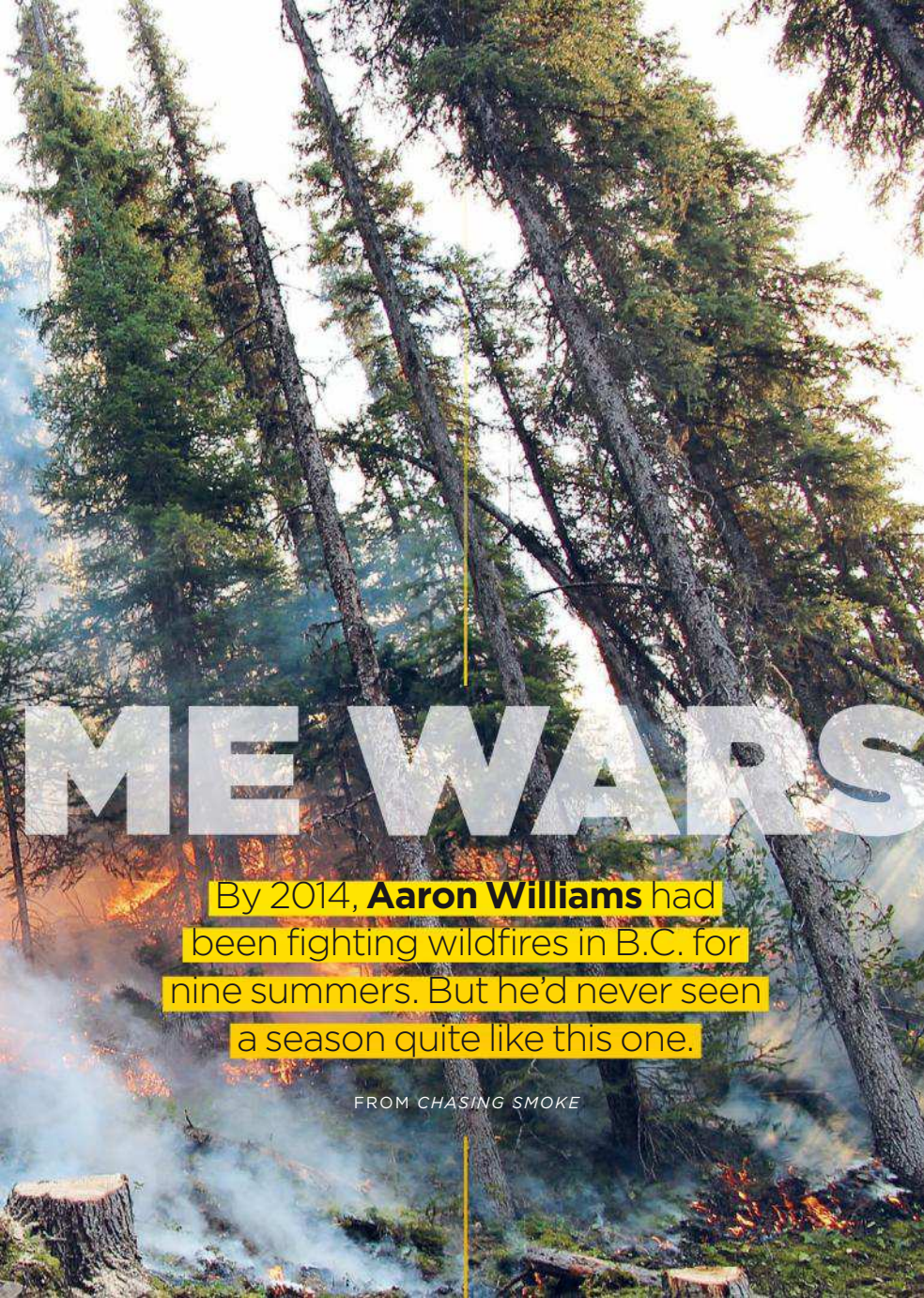
Are you in need of some professional motivation? Send us a work anecdote, and you could receive \$50. To submit your stories, visit rd.ca/joke.



EDITORS' CHOICE

FLA

*Firefighter
Dan Dykens in
August 2014.*



TIME WARS

By 2014, **Aaron Williams** had been fighting wildfires in B.C. for nine summers. But he'd never seen a season quite like this one.

FROM CHASING SMOKE

The edge of this fire is supposed to be somewhere around here, but a fire this big doesn't have edges, at least not from the perspective of two guys walking down a dirt road in the dead heat of the afternoon.

Balsam and spruce trees candle on the hills around us. It's hard to distinguish the sound of distant burning from the gusts of wind shooting across this barren logging block 200 kilometres southwest of Prince George, B.C.

Brad, a third-year crew member, and I continue along the road. We're looking for a small escape fire that has popped up on its north side, the wrong side. This breach is one of many in the tenuous containment of the Chelaslie River fire, a massive blaze in the north-central part of the province being monitored by a few dozen firefighters and a few helicopters.

Higher on the hill, we see another road running parallel to ours. Above that, trees burn. They flare up in groups of two or three, the taller balsams being the most impressive to watch. Sheets of flame unfurl from their branches, sending black smoke into the sky to join the mother-ship cloud of grey hanging permanently in the air above us. We stare at the plumes of smoke and keep walking, frequently

changing direction, trying to figure out how best to access the fire.

The walking soon becomes more like pacing. It's impossible to tell what counts as contained here, and if some bit of fire isn't where it should be, it'll take more than two of us to put it out. With this in mind, as well as other factors including time of day (late), day of deployment (last) and general morale (low), we decide to walk back to our truck.

But as we're walking, a helicopter comes out of the haze, breaking the silence. It's Dan, our crew supervisor. He radioes us from the air, saying he sees a road for us to use to get to the uncontained blaze. But we've already checked it and know it's a dead end. He says to wait there.

Ten minutes later, Dan arrives in the truck with two other crew members. He blows past the junction where Brad and I sit waiting. Seeing us as he drives by, Dan locks up the brakes, skids on the loose gravel and puts the truck in reverse. I can see from the slope of his

shoulders, the jut of his neck, that he's enjoying the drama of his entrance. The chase is back on.

We find our escape fire on the next road up from where Brad and I had been walking. The spot is in an area that was recently logged, and the fire is active, churning through whatever litters the forest floor. It anchors itself to decaying stumps and root systems or flares up in the richer deposits of brush left behind by logging. The flames are taller than we are, but there are places

2014, six days before official fall, way past its actual start in northern B.C. Our season should be over.

Still, here we are, trying to contain the biggest fire the province has seen in 30 years.

MAY 2014.

We're cutting a "fuel free," a three-metre-wide break in the timber sometimes used in firefighting. Once a fuel free is cut and the wood has been cleared off (we call this "swamping"),



The five of us work in silence.
There's laboured breathing and the
clink of tools hitting rock.

where they're less active, and from those areas we dig away at the edge of the fire, pulling it in on itself as if dabbing the edge of a wound.

A helicopter buckets another spot nearby, coming in and out of focus and earshot, disappearing into the smoke to refill with water at a nearby lake. The group of us, five in total, works in silence on different sections of the escape. There's laboured breathing and the clink of tools hitting rock.

Our bodies and clothes are filthy, our hands blackened and calloused. The smoke cloud is starting to descend toward the ground. It's September 16,

we'll dig "a hand guard" down the middle. A hand guard is a trench about 30 centimetres wide and five centimetres deep. With the right bird's-eye view, a completed fuel free and hand guard should look like a highway through a forest—a swath of cleared trees with a path right down the centre. In theory, a fuel free and hand guard should be enough of a break in fuel to slow or stop a large fire.

The whole process, from felling trees to bucking them up to clearing the debris to digging a hand guard, is an insane amount of effort. And we're leaving the worst of that work—the

swamping and guard digging—for the rookies to do during their training week.

What's more ridiculous than the labour, though, is that we're cutting down perfectly healthy trees to teach our recruits the value of work for work's sake. But this is what makes us better.

It's my ninth season. I have two arts degrees and no hard skills. I'm 28 and I'm still on the Telkwa Rangers unit crew. The last two seasons I've left my home in Halifax and my girlfriend, Sue, to come back to firefighting. I met

"I don't know," I said. "We probably do maintenance on our oxygen tanks."

I didn't know that oxygen tanks were in no way part of the forest firefighter's equipment. Using an oxygen tank when fighting a forest fire would be like using a football to play basketball.

With no oxygen tanks needing maintenance, what *did* we do in our downtime? We have lots of it—we usually only work on fires for about half the summer. When we're not firefighting, we do "project work," which ranges



Using an oxygen tank when fighting a forest fire would be like using football to play basketball.

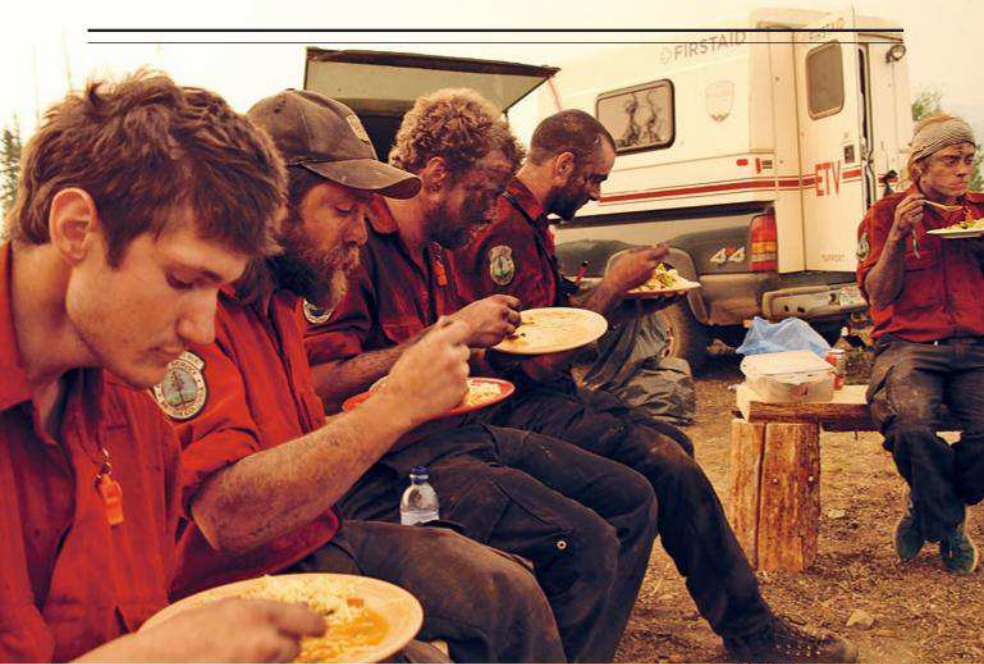
Sue in B.C. between my second and third seasons, and since then we've spent most summers apart. It wasn't so bad in the beginning, but with Sue now permanently working in Halifax, it's getting old fast.

WHEN I INTERVIEWED to be a firefighter in March of 2006, I didn't know anything about the job. I came from Prince Rupert, B.C., in a rainforest so wet it could repel napalm. My lack of knowledge was evident throughout the interview and was most obvious when the interviewer asked, "What do you think we do in our downtime?"

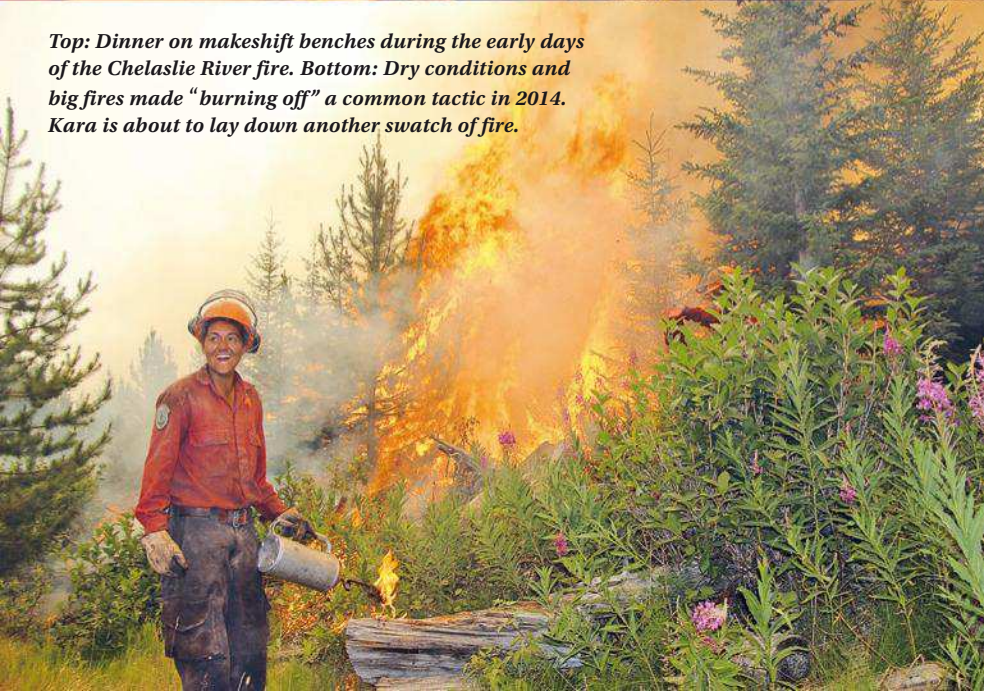
from cutting firewood to brushing forest service roads to laying bricks.

The first of this year's project work is burning brush piles near the Telkwa Fire Attack Base. This is called fuel management, an ongoing project. Every summer we cut down dead trees and limb low-hanging branches on green trees. Afterward, we pile them up in one spot and, when the conditions are right, burn the piles. This is to stop "fuel loading"—that is, the accumulation of too much burnable stuff on the forest floor.

The size of the project is beyond comprehension, and as far as I know,



Top: Dinner on makeshift benches during the early days of the Chelaslie River fire. Bottom: Dry conditions and big fires made "burning off" a common tactic in 2014. Kara is about to lay down another swatch of fire.



fuel management hasn't been proven to actually stop fires. More than a decade into it, we can still see our fire base from where we've been picking up sticks.

At lunchtime, I sit with Kara. There are bonfires burning all around us. We're seated on decaying logs, bits of broken glass from teenagers' old bush parties glinting in the sun.

Kara is a second-year who grew up in Smithers, B.C. She's in her mid-20s and has just finished university. Her mom is from Papua New Guinea and

and my eyes are raw. The tree I'm leaning on moves in the wind, and I can feel the roots under my feet lifting me up and down a little, like I'm standing on a dock hit by a boat's wake.

THE HOTTEST MONTH of the year has arrived and we haven't made one extra dollar yet.

Because July is also the halfway point of the season for many crew members, it's a natural time to compare stats. One deployment is about



Near the end of the day,
my arms are burnt, my nose is running
and my eyes are raw.

her dad is from Germany—an unusual combination in her blindingly white hometown. She's at ease in the testosterone-heavy environment of the unit crew (there are usually three or four women on the Rangers' crew of 20).

That afternoon, the wind is strong and the blue smoke is thick among the young pine trees. We're in the heat constantly, chucking green rounds of wood onto the piles, rounds weighed down with water and sap. Each pile hisses with the sound of water being squeezed out of wood. Near the end of the day, I stop and lean on a tree. My arms are burnt, my nose is running

average at this point, two is good. To the best of my knowledge, three have occurred only once in the history of the Rangers, in 1998. Zero fire days by July 1 has happened before, but not for at least 10 years.

Crews in other parts of the province aren't doing anything, either, a comforting thought in the petty realm of inter-crew jealousies. There's money at stake, after all. On average, a unit crewmember can expect to make about \$5,000 in a two-week deployment.

With 30 unit crews spread across the province, though, there are bound to be discrepancies. One crew that always

seems to kill it is the Fort St. John Rhinos. Fire season comes early in northeastern B.C., peaking around the summer solstice, when the near 24 hours of daylight dries out the forest. The Rhinos are also in oil country, so most fires are close to industry activity.

July is the beginning of the end of the fire season for the northern half of the province, but the southern half—Prince George and lower—is just starting up. Areas like the Okanagan and the Kootenays tend to start burning at

it until he sees a blue wisp of smoke out his cab window later in the day.

It's all liable to happen now.

BACK IN MAY of 2006, the Rangers were called to a fire near Vanderhoof, B.C. The snow had been gone for only a couple of weeks, but a warm spell meant everything dead from the previous fall was cured and ready to burn.

On our way to this fire, we were held up by a section of road that had mysteriously turned into a grey slurry, only



It's not heatstroke hot, but we're at that point when fires will burn even if it seems like they shouldn't.

this time. If it's a hot year, every crew from the north, including the Rhinos, will migrate south.

For now, we're still making base wages—\$1,200 every two weeks. It's not heatstroke hot, but it is definitely warming up, and we're at that point when fires will burn even if it seems like they shouldn't.

Lightning will pass over a lonely mountain in an evening squall and leave embers to smoulder overnight, waiting to be truly born in the sun's heat the next day. A spark from a bulldozer blade will shoot into the finest of lichen and the operator won't know

passable in four-wheel drive with the pedal to the floor.

At first we thought it was just spring melt. But then we realized what we were seeing was a consequence of the mountain pine beetle infestation. For millennia, these beetles kept forests in check, killing off older trees and leaving their dry husks to nurture the soil or burn up in rejuvenating wildfires. But in the mid-'90s an infestation of the beetles grew so big it eventually killed off forests covering a fifth of the province's land mass.

One reason beetle populations got so out of hand was climate change;



*Top: Smoke in the distance, not in the firefighters' lungs. A rare clear ride on the Ootsa Lake barge.
Bottom: An Electra plane drops retardant on the Chelaslie River fire.*



they thrive in warmer temperatures. Another was overambitious forest firefighting. For the better part of a century, the policy was to fight any forest fire, no matter how remote. This meant that a greater number of mature pines—the beetle’s primary target—would be potential fodder for the next big infestation.

I remember standing next to that bit of road, trying to wrap my head around how this plague had caused the entire water table to rise; how there

part of an effort in recent years to let wildfires burn free when possible.

DESPITE ATTEMPTS to let the blaze be, three weeks after Nancy’s call, the ministry sends us to what is now known as the Chelaslie River fire.

We drive south from the town of Burns Lake, crossing François Lake on a ferry. Another two hours of driving and we’ve reached a second water crossing. This one will take us to the south side of Ootsa Lake and the western



Our presence here will have as much impact as getting rid of a single car would on global warming.

weren’t enough living trees to sop up spring snowmelt.

After a few years, beetle-killed trees shed their needles. There are billions of these ghost pines in the interior of B.C., desert-dry standing sticks of firewood.

This was the state of the forest in the Ootsa Lake area when, on July 8, 2014, at 6:23 p.m., Nancy Dogleon, one of only a few people still employed as a fire lookout in B.C., made a call to the Northwest Fire Centre. Lightning had started a fire in a remote area. For several days, the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development left it alone,

flank of the fire. When the barge reaches the opposite shore, its ramp drops like a drawbridge and we drive off into a remote wilderness, seeking out the edge of a massive inferno.

We try to get our bearings on where the fire ends, but every time we gain a new vantage point there’s a new horizon of smoky edge.

The only clear message we get is how undermanned this fire is. Its 50,000-hectare (and growing) size is split into two halves. To the east, unit crews are working from a fire camp. On the western half, we’ve joined a few contract firefighters and two managers

from the ministry. In short, we have two-dozen people with which to monitor 250 square kilometres of fire. Our presence here will have as much impact as getting rid of a single car would on global warming.

WE'VE SET UP CAMP at an abandoned log-sorting site at the edge of Ootsa Lake. At five a.m. I wake up and poke my head out of the tent. The lake is calm and dark purple in the pre-dawn light. It's cold, and I decide to stay in my sleeping bag until a flurry of alarm clocks goes off at six. In the confines of the tent, I put on as many clothes as are available before wriggling out the door. Once outside, I hurry to put on more clothes. I eat cold breakfast cereal with the bowl in my lap, alternately warming each hand over boiling dishwater. There's no ceremony in this meal, no coffee, no fire inviting a few minutes of staring before we get ready.

Our best option for beating the cold is to get to work. We set up hose on a long cat guard—a wide strip of exposed dirt left by a bulldozer in an attempt to stop fires—built before we arrived. In the distance, the fire is threshing huge tracts of forest with algorithmic efficiency. The dry conditions and the fire's aggressive behaviour at this hour are good indicators that this workday will be cut short. We stand around on the guard, baking in the hot sun. Later, we're pulled

back to the trucks, as there's nothing useful we can do.

That evening, we sit around the fire in the gathering smoky dark, enjoying enormous servings of steak. Yesterday we were so clean we looked like actors cast as firefighters. But after one half-assed day of work we resemble the iron grill that dinner was cooked on.

THE FIRE ACTIVITY we saw from a distance yesterday ended up challenging the stretch of land we were hosing. The next morning we discover that an escape has burned into debris from an old logging operation.

Partway through the day, help arrives in the form of an old excavator jostling down the cat guard. In the cab is a tall man well into his 60s. He's sitting down but still a presence. When I reach up to shake his hand, he grabs it like a bear swiping at a fish. I press back, but my bony fingers barely register against his. He introduces himself as Carl. I ask him what he does when he's not working fires.

"Well, I'm tired, not retired," he says. He tells me he owns a ranch just off the François Lake ferry dock, where he lives with "the wife."

Carl owns a bunch of equipment, and during fire season he contracts himself and his machinery out to the ministry. His jeans are worn thin, as is his denim shirt. The chest hair poking out from his shirt looks like it could plane wood. I want to know more about his life.

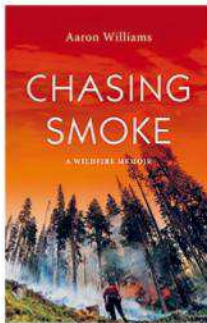
“So is it just you and the wife at the ranch?” I ask. I’ve already built a vision of it—eggs for breakfast, farm work all day, maybe he watches the news with the wife in the evening.

“Yeah, it is,” he says in a satisfied tone.

The sample size is small, but people living on the south side of François Lake seem to be from a different time altogether—a time of fire lookouts, primitive machinery, a rifle behind the front seat.

We return to camp in the evening to find our tents coated in ash. There’s a patch of blue sky visible directly above the lake, but all around us in the middle distance, smoke rises up from the forest. Its movement looks like the slow billowing of a theatre curtain.

We’re completely alone here, and it’s firefighting at its best. No management, no eyes in the sky, no rules. It’s a massive fire and us.



Editors' Choice

BY MID-JULY 2014, there were more than 3,000 people fighting fires on the west coast, only 1,600 or so of them employed by the provincial government. Help came in from across the country and as far away as Australia. During the summer and early fall of that year, 1,424 fires consumed more than 3,590 square kilometres of B.C.'s forests.

The largest fire of the season was the one near the

Chelaslie River, consuming 1,330 square kilometres. Three months after being discovered, it was 75 per cent contained but still burning.

Matters did not improve following Chelaslie River. The 2017 fire season devastated almost 8,950 square kilometres of land and produced the Elephant Hill fire, the largest-ever single blaze in the province. Managing the destruction required 3,900 people on the ground and \$316 million in funds from the B.C. government. **R**

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TIME MANAGEMENT

Better three hours too soon
than a minute too late.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

GET SMART!

13 Things Lifeguards Wish You Knew

BY MICHELLE CROUCH

ADDITIONAL RESEARCH BY ANNA-KAISA WALKER

ILLUSTRATION BY CLAYTON HANMER



1 Avoid talking to lifeguards unless it's absolutely necessary. They're supposed to listen politely, but chit-chat is distracting. When staff are on the stand, they're scanning the area and taking head counts every minute or so.

2 Lifeguards are only human. It's rare, but staff can fall asleep on the job. Staring at the water in the bright sun can be mind-numbing, and the combination of heat and dehydration is a recipe for fatigue.

3 Lifeguards may be the first line of defence, but parents need to pay attention to their charges, especially when trained staff aren't on the scene. More than a third of drownings of children under five happen when caregivers are present but distracted, according to the Lifesaving Society.

4 Don't equate standing with safety. Many parents feel comfortable leaving their two- and three-year-olds in half a metre of water where they can touch the bottom. But

with their top-heavy bodies, toddlers can't necessarily right themselves if they lose their footing. "Always stay within arm's reach," says J.P. Molin, communications manager of the Lifesaving Society's Ontario branch.

5 Drowning doesn't look like the flailing and splashing you see in the movies—it's often silent and swift. Lifeguards are trained to spot the subtle signs, which can include an upright posture, mouth bobbing in and out of the water and a glassy-eyed stare.

6 It doesn't matter if no one's seen any lightning—if you hear thunder, you'll be ushered from the pool and indoors for at least 30 minutes. That's how long Environment Canada recommends keeping swimmers out of any body of water after the last rumble.

7 Some lifeguards are very young. They can be certified to work at public pools and beaches starting at 16, with wading pool attendants as young as 14.

8 Still, it's no joe job. Lifeguards undergo up to 100 hours of training by the time they start, and more for beach, water-park and managerial positions. They participate in emergency simulations multiple times a year and must recertify their credentials every two years.

9 The job involves more than saving people. Lifeguards might also need to perform first aid for minor cuts and bruises and manage the pool filtration system.

10 Never come to the pool with bare feet. The virus that causes plantar warts thrives in moist environments. Other skin infection-producing viruses and bacteria, like MRSA and *molluscum contagiosum*, also lurk in locker rooms and on personal items. Always sit on a clean towel and wear shoes or flip-flops.

11 Researchers at the University of Alberta estimate that an average-sized public pool has up to 75 litres of urine in it—something to think about before you splash with your mouth open.

12 Another reason to avoid swallowing water? A 2017 U.S. study found that one in four adults reported that they would swim within an hour of having diarrhea, and 52 per cent rarely or never shower before going for a dip.

13 Your actions can save a life. If someone needs help, grab anything that floats. A frantic drowning victim will claw and climb on you in an attempt to get out of the water, pushing you under. Instead, throw something buoyant to them. **R**

That's Outrageous!

YOU'VE GOT MAIL

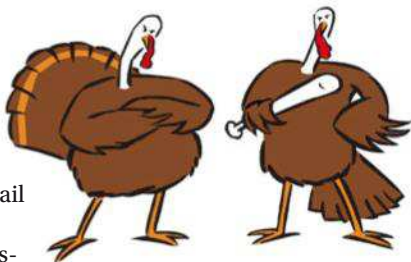
BY IAN DOWN

POULTRY IN MOTION

In December 2017, a crew of hooligans threw mail service in Rocky River, Ohio, into disarray. The culprits? A rafter of eight to 10 wild turkeys who pecked at the postal employees and disrupted mail service to nearly 30 homes. Carriers employed multiple tactics to scare the birds off: one resourceful worker even resorted to blasting an air horn. After several weeks, animal control, along with the Ohio Division of Wildlife, stepped in. Using loud noises, they routinely chased the ruffled ruffians out of the neighbourhood, giving carriers time to do their jobs—and sending the message that no fowl goes unpunished in Rocky River.

THROW ME A DRONE

Sometimes you accidentally get a letter intended for your neighbour, and sometimes you accidentally get drone parts belonging to the U.S. government. That's what one man learned when a mysterious package



landed on his doorstep in May 2014, containing what appeared to be a set of wings and a remote controller.

According to UPS, the package's original label fell off during shipping, which could have caused the mistake. So, rather than showing up at a government-run marine sanctuary in Massachusetts, the package ended up at a New York residence. Thankfully for UPS, the receiver sent them back—no rescue mission required.

FIRE AND WATER

If you think your current job has you drowning in work, don't send your CV to Vanuatu Post, an underwater post office that lies three metres below sea level off the coast of Efate Island in the Pacific. There, visitors can dive down and send special waterproof postcards to their loved ones. If that seems too mundane, Vanuatu Post has a mailbox next to an active volcano. And you thought your inbox was about to explode!



“Does your bladder leak
underwear fit this beautifully?”

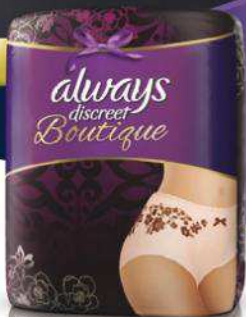


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NEW



Always Discreet Boutique. Fits closer. Keeps you drier, too.*

*vs. Depend Silhouette Small/Medium. Depend Silhouette is a trademark of Kimberly-Clark Worldwide.

Brain teasers

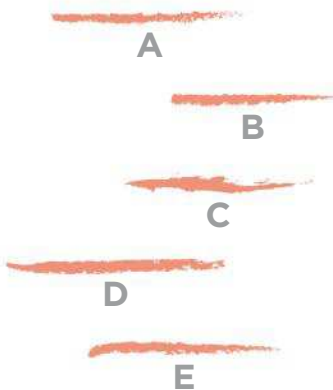
Challenge yourself by solving these puzzles and mind stretchers, then check your answers on page 111.

FOUR-BIDDEN

(Moderately difficult)

Place an X or an O in each empty cell of this grid so that there are no four consecutive Xs or Os appearing horizontally, vertically or diagonally. There's only one solution. Can you find it?

○	○					X	○
				○			
	○	○		X			
	○		X		X		
		X	X				○
○		○		○		○	
○		○		○			X
	○				X		○



THE LONG AND THE SHORT OF IT *(Easy)*

The current heights of five growing girls—Jane, Juanita, Jasmine, Jin and Jacqueline—were marked with chalk on a wall, as shown.

Can you figure out which line indicates the height of which girl based on the information that follows?

- Jin is taller than Juanita but shorter than Jane.
- Jacqueline is shorter than Jane and Jasmine but taller than Juanita and Jin.
- Jane is taller than Jasmine.

FAMILY RELATIONS *(Easy)*

Carmela receives a text message from an unfamiliar number, so she texts back: “Who is this?”

The strange response: “It’s one of your female relatives. Your mother’s mother is my father’s mother-in-law.” Even assuming that this information is true, it doesn’t help Carmela pinpoint an individual, since there are two relationships it could describe. What are they?



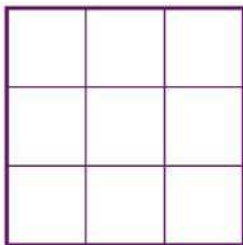
ARITHME-PICK *(Moderately difficult)*

Place one of the four basic arithmetic operations (+, −, ×, ÷) in each box to make a correct equation. Symbols may be repeated, and you don’t have to use all four. All operations are performed from left to right, ignoring the mathematical order of operations. The result at each step must be a positive whole number. What’s the equation?

$$3 \square 6 \square 2 \square 6 \square 5 = 3$$

MAKE IT WORK *(Difficult)*

Arrange the whole numbers from 1 to 9 in a three-by-three grid so that all of the following conditions are satisfied:



- The numbers in the right-hand column add up to 7.
- The numbers in the left-hand column add up to 16.
- 3 doesn’t share a row, column or long diagonal with 1 or 4.
- The numbers in the bottom row add up to 20.
- There is a row that contains only prime numbers.

Trivia Quiz

BY PAUL PAQUET

1. Paul Doumer and Marie François Sadi Carnot were the only presidents of which country to be assassinated while in office?

2. What fictional character was based on Vlad Tepes, a real medieval prince?

3. In 2007, immunologists suggested that which organ is actually an emergency reserve of gut bacteria?

4. Which British prime minister often derided opponents within her own party by calling them “wets”?

5. Originating in Algeria and Tunisia, the *deglet nour* is a popular variety of what fruit?

6. On which day of the week do Muslims come together for a prayer called *Jumu'ah*?

7. A byte has 256 possible values. Therefore, International Programmer's Day is on the 256th day of the year, which falls in which month?

8. Although he won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1993, who remained on the USA's terrorist watch list until 2008?

9. The inventor Thomas Edison helped to make William Kemmler the first person executed in what manner?

10. Which country did Queen Wilhelmina lead through the First and Second World Wars?

11. Who is the only person appearing on post-colonial Indian bank notes?

12. Martin Winterkorn resigned as CEO of what car company after it was caught fudging diesel-emission readings in 2015?

13. Which Nirvana tune was named the most iconic song of all time by researchers from Goldsmiths, University of London?

14. What 1994 prison drama depicts an inmate hiding a rock hammer in his Bible?



15. Which classically defined type of female singing voice has the lowest range? Examples include Cher, Sarah Vaughan and Amy Winehouse.

ANSWERS: 1. France. Doumer was killed in 1932 and Carnot in 1894. 2. Count Dracula. 3. The appendix. 4. Margaret Thatcher. 5. The date. 6. Friday. 7. September. 8. Nelson Mandela. 9. The electric chair. 10. The Netherlands. 11. Gandhi. 12. Volkswagen. 13. "Smells Like Teen Spirit." 14. *The Shawshank Redemption*. 15. Contralto.



Word Power

Think clearly and focus intently as you unravel the meanings of these unusual adverbs from the English language. As with every quiz, the goal is not to do great but to do well. Enjoy!

BY ROB LUTES

1. hence—A: from this time.
B: in the past.
C: in a circle.

2. singly—A: musically.
B: with extreme heat.
C: separately.

3. betimes—A: at regular intervals.
B: always.
C: early.

4. widdershins—
A: counterclockwise.
B: with great pain.
C: swiftly.

5. thus—A: in this way.
B: only if.
C: officially.

6. athwart—A: out of view.
B: from side to side of.
C: menacingly.

7. notwithstanding—A: meekly.
B: in spite of this.
C: with the body reclined.

8. aloft—A: on a wide platform.
B: up in the air.
C: lightly.

9. cap-a-pie—A: from head to foot.
B: rhythmically.
C: covertly.

10. alfresco—A: taking place outside.
B: in water.
C: on a rooftop.

11. slantwise—A: suggestively.
B: with insight.
C: at an angle.

12. erstwhile—A: formerly.
B: currently.
C: rarely.

13. deedily—A: in a friendly way.
B: industriously.
C: with great anticipation.

14. nigh—A: near in time or place.
B: quietly.
C: close to the ground.

15. forsooth—A: in truth.
B: in confusion.
C: in anger.

Answers

1. **hence**—[A] from this time; as, The new documentary is set to be released five months *hence*.

2. **singly**—[C] separately; as, Tourists wandered the heritage site *singly* and in groups.

3. **betimes**—[C] early; as, Paolo was up *betimes* and enjoyed a leisurely walk to work.

4. **widdershins**—[A] counterclockwise; as, The amusement-park ride turned clockwise, then *widdershins* with equal speed.

5. **thus**—[A] in this way; as, Raisa deftly outscored her younger opponent, *thus* securing the gold medal.

6. **athwart**—[B] from side to side of; as, Fallen trees lay *athwart* the narrow road, making passage impossible.

7. **notwithstanding**—[B] in spite of this; as, Though some members opposed it, the council followed the plan *notwithstanding*.

8. **aloft**—[B] up in the air; as, Following the team's victory, the coach was held *aloft* by his players.

9. **cap-a-pie**—[A] from head to foot; as, When he arrived home from the hunt, Edgar was dressed *cap-a-pie* in camouflage.

10. **alfresco**—[A] taking place outside; as, Eloise and Harry dined *alfresco* and watched the Tuscan sunset.

11. **slantwise**—[C] at an angle; as, Helga opened the blinds and the evening light spilled *slantwise* into her study.

12. **erstwhile**—[A] formerly; as, There were *erstwhile* seven towns dotting the now-abandoned island.

13. **deedily**—[B] industriously; as, Imani worked *deedily* through the week to complete the report.

14. **nigh**—[A] near in time or place; as, Peaches felt the air cool as evening drew *nigh*.

15. **forsooth**—[A] in truth; as, Dawkins was barely fit, *forsooth*, to lead anyone into war.

VOCABULARY RATINGS

7-10: fair

11-12: good

13-15: excellent

Sudoku

BY IAN RIENSCHÉ

Brain teasers:

Answers

(from page 106)

FOUR-BIDDEN

o	o	o	x	o	x	x	o
o	x	x	x	o	o	o	x
x	o	o	o	x	x	x	o
x	o	o	x	x	x	o	x
o	x	x	x	o	x	o	o
o	o	o	x	o	o	o	x
o	x	o	o	o	x	x	x
x	o	o	x	x	x	o	o

THE LONG AND THE SHORT OF IT

A = Jane.

B = Jasmine.

C = Jacqueline.

D = Jin.

E = Juanita.

FAMILY RELATIONS SISTER OR FIRST COUSIN.

ARITHME-PICK

$$3 \times 6 \div 2 + 6 \div 5 = 3$$

MAKE IT WORK

6	8	1
3	5	2
7	9	4

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

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

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



Quotes

BY CHRISTINA PALASSIO

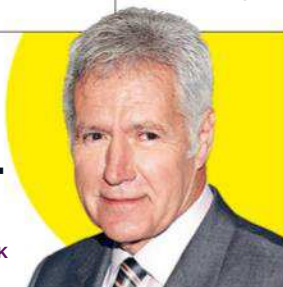


FOR ALL THE TALK OF FEMINISM AND [PURSUIT] OF WOMEN'S RIGHTS, THERE IS NOT GENDER EQUALITY IN THE BROADER CONTEXT OF PARLIAMENT HILL. MICHELLE REMPEL

Just received a text that started with "Good afternoon, Mr. Buff ..." and I gotta say...did not hate it.

BRENT BUTT

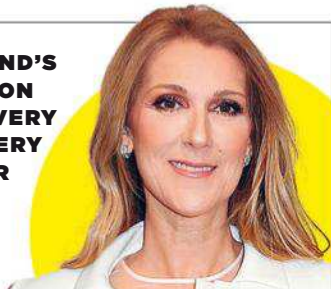
WE SEEM TO BE SO HARD SET IN WHAT WE CALL OUR PRINCIPLES, WHICH ARE NOT SO MUCH OUR PRINCIPLES BUT OUR PREJUDICES. LET'S TRY TO GET BEYOND THAT. ALEX TREBEK



One thing I've learned is that sometimes we don't realize how strong we actually are. **MALIN ACKERMAN**

I SHAKE MY HUSBAND'S HAND AND KNOCK ON WOOD WITH HIM EVERY NIGHT, BEFORE EVERY SHOW. EVEN AFTER HE'S GONE, I STILL TALK TO HIM.

CÉLINE DION



Legitimately, the meanest thing you can do to a person is to land a plane and then not let them off it.

DEBRA DIGIOVANNI



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