

IN OTHER WORDS

Columns and Letters to the Editor

Standing up and speaking out

I'M STARTING to see why Canada is a racist country, and why it will continue to be. It's us, the people. We do little to stand up and denounce racism when we see it.

And, we see it a lot. Here's a recent example from *The National Post*, a Conservative Toronto newspaper seemingly unaware that socially traditional ideas supported by true Conservatives do not include saying whatever you want about anyone.

The Post, in a comment section on Gov.-Gen. Mary Simon's travel spending, allowed one commenter to call her a cigar store statue – a clear reference to 'cigar store Indian.' Gov.-Gen. Simon is an Inuk from Nunavik with an impressive career as a broadcaster and advocate for Inuit rights, youth, education and culture.



JIM POLING SR.

From *Shaman's Rock*

The fact that someone would make such a racial comment about her is shocking. Doubly shocking is the fact that the newspaper allowed it to be published. Triply shocking is the fact that no one seems to have stood up publicly to condemn it.

The commentator also had racially-related words for former governors general. He said Michaëlle Jean, Canada's first black governor general, was a woke Haitian diversity hire and Adrienne Clarkson, a Chinese-Canadian, was a hypocritical scammer.

The *Post* invites "lively but civil" comment on its articles. Its owners and its publisher should be asking their editor why he wasn't doing his job in upholding the newspaper's guidelines on comments. Readers should be demanding that the comments be removed.

It's important that the media reveal spending by the governor general and that commentators criticize it when it is shockingly high. Like the \$1.1 million spent on Gov.-Gen. Simon's trip to the Middle East last year. But including her ethnicity in the criticism is straight out racism.

Racism is more frequent in Canada than most of us like to think. A few years back an Ontario Human Rights Commission survey found that 40 per cent of racialized people in Ontario said they experienced discrimination because of their race or colour.

Racialized young people in the 15 to 24 age bracket have an unemployment rate of 23 per cent, compared with 16 per cent for non-racialized youth. Also, racialized people tend to hold the lower paying jobs.

Governments and various anti-racism organizations talk about the efforts they are making to stop racism. For instance, the federal government is spending \$45 million to fight racism and discrimination. The money has established an Anti-Racism Secretariat and is funding community-based initiatives such as seminars.

Presumably that is tax money well spent and will help educate many people about racism. But truckloads of government money will not eliminate racism. More individual effort is needed by each one of us.

Most of us stay quiet when we witness racism. Someone casually makes a racial-tinged comment or a racist joke. We let it pass, afraid to be seen as condescending, or of embarrassing or shaming the speaker, who might have made the comment without fully thinking about its impact.

It might be more comfortable for everyone to simply let the comment pass, but as Dr. Martin Luther King once said "the appalling silence of the good people" is as damaging as the vitriolic words and actions of the bad.

We as individuals need to think about ways to confront racist talk without creating resentment that might make a person less likely to be more thoughtful about what they say.

Comebacks such as "that's not been my experience" or "that's a comment that makes me uncomfortable" tend to get a message across without creating embarrassment or causing an argument. Soft comebacks might even create an opening for a thoughtful conversation about racist talk.

Differences in people, such as skin color and language, create opportunities for racism. They shouldn't. People are simply people.

In the end we are all basically the same. If we look back thousands of years we all had the same ancestors.

And, if we look ahead hundreds of years, migration and population mixing likely will have us all looking and talking much the same.

Assuming the world lasts that long.



Egg-celent traditions

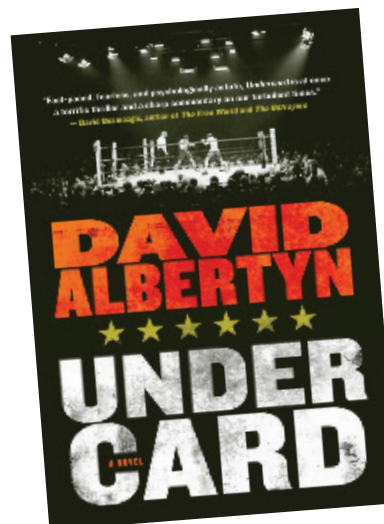
One-year-old Blythe Love of Dorset sits happily beside her Easter tree. /Photo submitted



Sprint into spring!

Warmer temperatures are causing excitement for kids around the area. Pictured, Ruby and Pearl Mansfield play tag through the fields in Minden. / EMILY STONEHOUSE Staff

HCPL's Book of the Week



Calling all fans of grit, gambling, and a good up-percut! This fast-paced and acclaimed thriller takes place over just 24 hours and invites readers into the world of professional boxing with the story of Tyron Shaw, just returned after twelve years to his hometown of Las Vegas. Shaw soon discovers that two of his oldest friends are set to square off in a high-profile prizefight, and their recent histories – one an ex-con and the other a police officer who killed an unarmed teenager – are at odds with his memories of them. Soon he will be tangled up in a web of high-stakes secrets, questions, and conflicting loyalties. One of the most buzzed about books of the year, *Undercard* is a gripping and psychological page turner.

Undercard by David Albertyn is available to borrow from the Haliburton County Public Library.

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Columns and Letters to the Editor

Clowns that aren't funny

MY LAPTOP computer is driving me crazy. It's like it has been invaded by those evil clowns you see in television commercials. You know, the ones with white faces, fiery red lips, wicked red smiles and tufts of curly red or blue hair framing a bald head.

They sneak about in the shadows, concocting new ways to make life difficult. They work quietly and efficiently, grinning mischievously while driving you whacko.



JIM POLING SR.

From Shaman's Rock

They are not just in my laptop. They've also invaded my cell phone and my iPad.

Most people call clowns Bozos. I call the ones in my computer equipment Spam.

Spam, in the form of dishonest text messages, emails and telephone calls, is increasing. The Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre says that last year it received fraud and cybercrime reports totalling \$530 million in victim losses. That was almost a 40-percent increase from the previous year.

Those figures don't actually reflect the full extent of spam fraud because the centre says most people don't report spamming that is minor or just annoying.

There really is no defence against email and text spam, or the spam phone calls that come at any time of day or night. You can't stop them. If you do find ways, the spammers come up with ways around them.

I now have roughly 500 blocked spam addresses on my cell phone. However, once a spammer discovers the block he changes the address slightly and starts again.

Some of spam is not just annoying, it's downright dangerous. It can contain malicious links or attachments that infect your system with malware or viruses.

The purpose of most scams is to get at your information and use it to get money from you.

We put our email and text addresses up for sale or trade when we accept the privacy policies of services or websites that we visit. Those policies are long, painful reads that often include your agreement to your information being passed on to others. Who reads them when you simply are trying to find something simple on a company website?

Email addresses are worth money to scammers. They buy them in bulk to add to their mailing lists. A simple push of a button sends spam out to tens of thousands of innocent people and just one sucker falling for the scam makes it all worthwhile.

Phishing - pretending to be a legitimate major retailer or service - has become a favourite way for scammers to trick consumers.

Scammers copy a company logo and use it in a phony email. The message might say you have a \$45 credit from a recent purchase. Click a link, fill in your credit card or bank info and the \$45 will be deposited for you.

Retail giant Walmart has become the most imitated company. Its brand name was used in 16 percent of all phishing schemes globally during the first quarter of this year, says a study by Check Point Research, a California-based cyber threat intelligence company. That's an increase from 13 percent in the last quarter of 2022.

Other top companies imitated by scammers are the delivery company DHL, LinkedIn and Netflix. I've also blocked phishing schemes from Lowes building supplies, Costco Best Buy and a variety of pharmaceutical companies.

Scammers also hack the accounts of people you know then send you fake messages that appear to be from someone you trust.

Basically we are alone when it comes to fighting these cyber crimes. If you report a phishing attack or other email fraud to police you'll likely be told to call the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre by telephone at 1-888-495-8501.

When you call that outfit someone will take down your information and say thank you. The centre simply collects information on fraud and identity theft and compiles details of past and current scams to pass on to the general public.

There's little direct action any government agency can take. We are all on our own on this one. The best any of us can do is be very watchful and cautious, don't open anything that looks the least bit suspicious and if a company wants something from you, give them a call or go into one of their stores.

letters to the editor

Wonderful Woodlands

To The Editor:

Re: *A Walk on the Wild Side*, Aug. 2

Thank you for your very interesting and comprehensive article telling the story of the dedicated and caring work carried out by the staff at Woodlands Wildlife Sanctuary. We are so fortunate to have this organization in our County. They allow us to rescue injured and orphaned animals and to know we have a safe and experienced rehab facility to take them to in a timely manner.

To learn more about the rescue, rehabilita-

tion and release work at WWS, just go to their website: www.woodlandswildlifesanctuary.ca. As Woodlands does not receive funding from any government you can also read about how to donate money and supplies. They appreciate the many donations from both, local organizations, and individuals, and rely on them to keep functioning and nurturing their varied and numerous animals, and to support the work of their hard working and passionate volunteers.

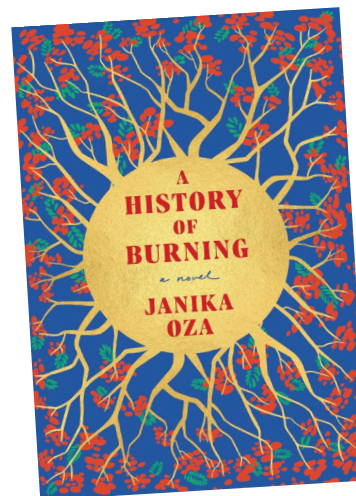
Barbara Bohlin
Drag Lake



Minden Matters

Volunteers gathered to serve food to the 900 individuals who attended the Ground Zero Rally and Home Town Concert on Saturday, Sept. 26 at the Minden Fairgrounds. "The event was a success," said Patrick Porzuczek, one of the organizers of the day, "we kept the awareness alive. Because this is not only a fight for Minden, this is a fight against all the hospital closures across Ontario." /EMILY STONEHOUSE Staff

HCPL's Book of the Week



India, 1898. Pirbhai is the thirteen-year-old breadwinner for his family when he steps into a dhow on the promise of work, only to be taken across the ocean to labour on the East African Railway for the British. With no money or voice but a strong will to survive, he makes an impossible choice that will haunt him for the rest of his days.

A profoundly moving debut novel spanning India, Uganda, England, and Canada, about how one act of survival reverberates across generations of a family and their search for a place of their own.

A History of Burning by Janika Oza is available to borrow from the Haliburton County Public Library.

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Harvest time and hungry kids

AND SO we enter the time of plenty. Crops ripen in fields. Apple trees hang heavy with fruit. Autumn is the time of plenty of food. The time of harvest and satisfaction knowing we have the food we need for lean months ahead.

Yet as we enter the time of plenty the number of children returning to school with hungry stomachs continues to increase.

Statistics Canada reports that in 2022 almost 1.8 million Canadian children lived in households that could not afford the food needed for healthy living. Almost 11 per cent of households in the Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Pine Ridge region were food insecure in 2022, the region's district health board reported earlier this year.



JIM POLING SR.

From Shaman's Rock

Food banks say that visits to their facilities have increased by as much as 20 to 30 per cent in the last year. Feed Ontario, a collective of hunger relief organizations, says that roughly one-third of all visitors to Ontario food banks are under 18 years of age.

Feed Ontario also says that Ontario food banks were visited more than 4.3 million times during the 2021-22 year, an increase of 42 per cent over the previous three years. The number of visits in the first nine months of last year increased 24 per cent.

Also, the number of first-time visitors increased 64 per cent since 2019.

Child hunger is not just about a kid not having enough to eat now and then. It is a problem that affects our entire society for years into the future.

Hungry children can't focus properly on classroom lessons or on learning life skills. When they don't absorb lessons they have trouble later getting a job needed to support themselves and any family they might have in the future.

The result often is even more families with not enough food for healthy living. It is a cycle of more hungry children unable to escape the cycle of poverty and resulting food insecurity.

Hungry families and hungry children lead to numerous social problems, including crime.

Research shows a correlation between food insecurity and violent crime. One U.S. university study concluded that for every one per cent rise in food insecurity, violent crime rates increased by 12 per cent.

In the words of Pearl Buck, author of the internationally acclaimed novel *The Good Earth*:

"A hungry man can't see right or wrong. He just sees food."

Hungry people are not only perpetrators of crime, they sometimes are victims. Statistics Canada has reported that more than one in seven Canadian adults who were victims of crime from 2016 to 2018 lacked consistent access to enough food to live an active, healthy life.

There is no shortage of individuals or organizations trying to alleviate hunger among children and their families. Food Banks Canada says it supports a network of 4,750 hunger relief organizations across Canada.

There are many other hunger relief groups such as the St. Vincent de Paul Society collecting and distributing food for those in need.

All the good work being done to feed the hungry is not enough. It fills some bellies temporarily but does little to eliminate the causes of food insecurity.

Many experts say that the way to attack poverty and hunger is to work at limiting the inequalities we have in income, wealth, gender and race. Unimaginable fortunes are being made by the world's super rich while common working people face deteriorating benefits.

Simply put, the gap between the rich and the rest of us continues to widen, assisted by poor governance and corruption.

Oxfam International, a global movement fighting poverty, says common people must work together to challenge the concentration of wealth and power in the hands of a few.

"We can demand an end to patriarchy, white supremacy and neoliberalism," it says. "We can change the rules on tax to make sure the richest pay their fair share. We can demand more spending on public health and education. We can demand fair wages for everyone."

Whatever.

All I know is that it is a total outrage that we still have children going to school hungry and relying on school breakfasts and lunches to provide their basic nutrition needs.



Snap, crackle, and pop

A sudden heat wave caused some spectacular lighting across the region this past week. Pictured, a lightning bolt shoots across the sky at Panorama Park in Minden. /CODY EVANS Special to the Times

Haliburton County privatization bus to Queen's Park

Our bus is over half full. We need your help to fill the bus for the Rally on Monday, Sept. 25 at noon to represent Haliburton County and greet the Legislature on opening day.

If we don't stand together to protect our public health care and say no to privatization now, we are going to lose our public health care. Together we can make a difference!

Some generous donations will reduce the \$55 per person cost based on being full. We have complimentary seats to assist in everyone being able to attend this momentous day. You must reserve your seat by Tuesday Sept. 19 with a \$20 deposit. Please contact Bonnie Roe at 705-457-6579 or email hhlct-coalition@gmail.com.

Ride in comfort on a Coach Canada bus

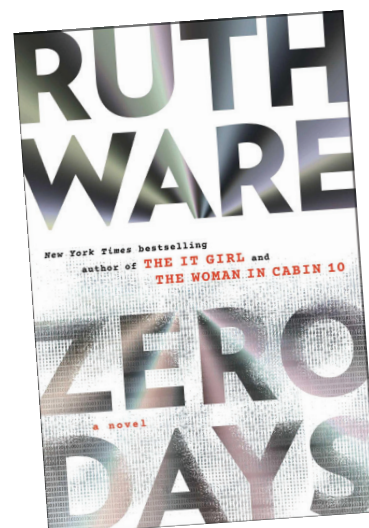
with a washroom. We will provide morning snacks. Please bring a lunch and drinks. Bring a collapsible chair if you need it and a sign.

New stops/times added:

- Minden Community Centre, board at 7:30 a.m./departure 7:40 a.m. (NEW TIME!)
- Fenelon Falls, board at 8:20 a.m. (140 Lindsay St., near Home Hardware)
- Lindsay Mall Main Entrance, board at 8:45 a.m.
- Arrival Queen's Park, approximately 11 a.m.
- Return bus from Queen's park, board at 1:45 p.m., departure 2 p.m.
- 5 p.m. arrival in Minden

Submitted

HCPL's Book of the Week



Hired by companies to break into buildings and hack security systems, Jack and her husband, Gabe, are the best penetration specialists in the business. But after a routine assignment goes horribly wrong, Jack arrives home to find her husband dead. To add to her horror, the police are closing in on their suspect—her.

Suddenly on the run and quickly running out of options, Jack must decide who she can trust as she circles closer to the real killer in this unput-downable and heart-pounding mystery.

Zero Days by Ruth Ware is available to borrow from the Haliburton County Public Library.