BEST COLUMN WRITING

There were some spectacular columns and the breadth of issues covered was impressive and to be hoped for. The top three, in my estimation, best and most creatively served their readers.

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DAVID HARPER
The Equity

...e gift of ...ng thanks
...RIS JUDD

Continued from page four

I have a friend that worked at Health Canada and once had a complaint from a woman because her family became sick with salmonella poisoning from eating turkey. After considerable conversation with the upset lady, the question was asked, "how did you thaw out the turkey"? The response was, "same as I always do, in the toilet bowl and I flush it every half hour to keep the water fresh." This is obviously not the way that Health Canada recommends. A doctor friend of mine did recommend placing the frozen bird on a clean tray in front of a fan and allowing the air from the fan to thaw the bird, rather than use the microwave! It amazes me every year that the chain stores can sell turkey for such a low price. (Have you ever bought feed for turkeys?) We should be so grateful to be able to celebrate Thanksgiving with such a spread and realise that most of the world's population can only dream of finding the bare essentials to maintain life! A few years ago, wild turkeys were introduced into Pontiac County and became very prolific. We often see flocks of 50 or 100 wild turkeys in farmer's fields and they don't eat grass. (They should introduce them to the third world countries.) The turkeys however do a great job cleaning up after a combine has passed in grain, bean, or corn fields and the farmer was surely grateful for what he harvested.

We should be thankful for living where we do in the world. Our farmers don't have to dodge bullets or put up with army tanks tramping their wheat crops like they do in the Ukraine. Our citizens don't have to mob in the streets like they are in Hong Kong, just to gain the right to vote. We don't have to worry about our girls being herded off like cattle and held for ransom like in the Middle East. We don't worry about tornados like they have in Nebraska. There is no extreme flooding in Pontiac. No prolonged drought like Africa. We have a health care system that treats everyone equally and has kept us free of fearful diseases. We can watch a sunset without a skyscraper spoiling our view. Our worst smell is cow manure, not exhaust smoke. (So far no one has died from exposure to the smell of cow manure.) Our display of coloured leaves in Pontiac is envied the world over. The music of the Valley is known the world over and here we take it for granted.

Thanksgiving church services are this Sunday and the special decorations in the churches are not only spectacular but a reminder of some of the things we should be thankful for. I can remember as a kid the beautiful display of sheaves of corn and grain, the vegetables, the branches of fall leaves, freshly canned preserves, apples, cherries, grapes and many more remembrances of the past year's harvest!

When we say "thanks" at church or at Thanksgiving dinner, let's remember those less fortunate than us! And say a word for the farmers that produced the food too.

Chris Judd is a farmer in Clarendon on land that has been in his family for generations. gladcrest@gmail.com

Fair Comment

THE EQUITY is pleased to publish opinion articles advancing debate on issues of public interest, providing they are based on fact and do not reflect ill will or harmful intent. They should be written exclusively for THE EQUITY and not have been published elsewhere. Please provide submissions of 600 to 1,200 words for consideration by Monday morning, seven days in advance of the week of intended publication, to editor@theequity.ca.

Cuts to health care – Unintended consequences
By Carl Hager

News that Quebec will be cutting three billion dollars from its health care budget over the next few years is startling. Mr. Couillard's announcement is a stark reminder that Quebecers have not had a serious discussion over the fate of its universal health care system, prior to these latest government initiatives.

THE EQUITY should be thanked for bringing this re-organization to our attention. Follow-up stories on a continuous pace with more detail about the changes to come are needed to keep us informed about our universal public health care system.

Should we be worried about this intended "fix"?

The aim of this "fix" is to save billions of dollars. Will premium savings be the result? Will patients find better service be found in the way health care is delivered?

Major organizational changes may have unintended consequences. This is not to say nothing should be done. But first, let's listen to the people and hear what they have to say about the services they need.

While the Minister of Health proclaims that these cuts are to management, it does not take a rocket scientist to figure out that there are not going to be three billion dollars worth of savings by cutting some managers. So what else is getting cut? A skeptic might ask, what else is being gutted?

The government is moving on budget cuts, on job cuts, and on direct front line services to the population, after deliberating with consultants. Have they heard from the people about what they really experience and need in health care?

The challenges to the health care system are immense. Demographics show that in about a year there will be more senior citizens, aged 65 and over, in Canada than young people—those aged one to 18. Senior citizens require more visits with their doctors, they require longer, costlier and more extensive care.

In our area we have the Municipality of Pontiac currently surveying its citizens on the services seniors need. At least this is a recognition of a changing social reality. Services needed to stay at home with adequate home care visits by outreach personnel are needed when it becomes difficult living at home. While this consultative process is going on, it will be interesting to see what seniors in this municipality identify as their priorities.

Solutions such as making home care more accessible and available have been suggested as one element of change. Or building residences that cater to the elderly in a respectful and civilized way without having it cost them an unaffordable arm and leg.

Unfortunately these solutions are not put forward in the provincial re-structuring plan just proposed.

It doesn't help that the federal Conservative government is cutting by half what it transfers to the provinces starting in 2016, further adding to the province's financial pressure on providing quick, efficient and good health care.

The idea of Quebec streamlining administration costs is an appealing one. Too much money going to CEOs and upper management personnel means that fewer dollars are available to hire nurses, doctors, technicians and attendants. But does anyone know what impact the Shawville Community Centre will bear with this centralization and re-structuring? Has anyone heard that more nurses will be hired? Or doctors? Or have we heard instead that when two people retire, only one will be hired to take their place?

It's been said that only old people should pay for their health care costs, because young people are healthy and don't need it. Short-sighted views such as this may proliferate. But the way our society is consuming unhealthy sugar, salt and preservative laden foods with high calorie values, without the exercise required to keep in shape, the pressures on hospitals will soon see much younger people requiring major health care services. Preventative care services are a facet of health care delivery that needs more impetus.

Services such as the volunteers of TransporAction Pontiac help bring people to their medical appointments. In some European areas mobile trucks bring food and other necessities round to small rural towns and centres which may not otherwise necessarily have access. Mobility is a huge effort for many of our senior citizens.

One of the more difficult aspects of interpreting and understanding these cuts to mid-level administration is the impact cuts will have on local services. For example how will the services of the Shawville Hospital be affected if the board of governors making important service decisions resides in a centralized urban location, dominated by those who run the urban hospitals in Gatineau?

A solution is to make sure we keep ourselves well informed. Many entrepreneurs see the health care system as a hot bed of private profit, carving out chunks out of the universal system we have now. While such solutions may benefit some people, it surely will negatively affect others less capable of paying.

Think of how much better our emergency service experiences (which, by the way, are pretty good in Shawville) would be if we had more accessible walk-in clinics to take care of the day-to-day but bothersome illnesses. Instead, the lack of enough good day to day facilities means a severe impact on emergency services.

Fortunately the health care system in Quebec is very good. In Canada, indeed in most of the western world, health care is a huge operation, complex in its organization. Ours is one to be appreciated and protected.

Making changes must be founded on a sound plan, that works, that people support and understand. It needs to bring direct services that are needed and delivered when they are needed. In the meantime we must be vigilant, supportive of progress when we see it, but critical of poor solutions.

Carl Hager, is a retired educator, a community activist in the Mun. of Pontiac.

POLITICALLY SPEAKING Question Period: senseless showboating?
DAVID HARPER

Paradoxically, real solutions to deeply-embedded societal problems are for the most part quite straightforward. Our current epidemic of obesity could be dealt with through more exercise and attention to daily food intake; poverty could be eliminated through establishing a guaranteed annual income (GAI), which would actually save taxpayers money by eliminating the huge variety of government support programmes and tax credits.

Homelessness would likewise become a thing of the past as rentals became manageable for everyone; drug cartels and their associated violence and corrupting influence could be dealt with by legally regulating all drug sales. Since money is the main factor in domestic discord, the GAI could reduce marital friction decisively. Not least of all, through a simple change to the voting system in Canada to a more representative one, we could have governments that functioned to the benefit of all of us.

Will any of those direct solutions to deliberately politically complexified problems ever see the light of day? Will they ever be discussed openly and honestly by our Parliamentarians? You may have found yourself losing all hope of achieving any of those lofty goals if you had tuned into Parliament's daily Question Period during the past few months; the past many years, if truth be told.

As with so many things in Canada, even our Parliamentary system is based on British notions of justice and fair play. Question Period, as with so many direct-to-public British imports, however, has lost something of its essence in the translation to these shores. Indeed, quite a bit more than just 'something': the central purpose of that whole special exercise in responsible government has been lost through the gradual transfer of controls to the direct authority of the prime minister.

Question Period is not a time for questions to be bandied about willy-nilly between the government and the opposition parties, with no real purpose to the questions asked other than to provoke an inscrutable response delivered in the most outlandishly partisan manner possible followed by a rejoinder in kind. It may come as a complete surprise to most Canadians, numbed into sullen acquiescence by the endless, senseless showboating that passes for political discourse these days, Question Period is an intentionally designed opportunity for the Loyal Opposition, as they are quaintly known in other parliaments, to hold the government-of-the-day to account. Period.

Question Period was meant specifically to allow members of Parliament, the people's representatives, to question government policies and priorities, and for the government to respond as ably as permitted by legal and other conditions to those queries.

It was never intended to provide the government an opportunity to ask their own questions of the other members of Parliament. Never. It was designed as a one-way street. It was never meant to convey the two-way freight that now clownishly masquerades as debate, often to the horror of watching schoolchildren, who would never be permitted that sort of delinquent classroom behaviour. They would be obliged to endure detentions, even suspensions, if their bad behaviours persisted.

Small wonder that so many Canadians, young and old alike, have become so disenchanted with the current state of political discourse in this country, where so-called 'attack ads' constitute what passes for debate of principles, policies and plans for the future in this country. Small wonder, too, that the notion of compulsory voting is being tossed about by a majority of the population of voting-age these days. Politicians of all stripes will ignore this growing dissatisfaction among Canadians with how they are governed at their peril.

David Harper of Bryson taught politics at Cambrian College in Sudbury in the 1970s and worked on Jack Layton's campaign's during the 1980s. He has had a life long interest in politics from his days as a young Conservative and later as a young Liberal when he attended Carleton University in the 60s.

Letters to the editor

We love letters from our readers. Short letters are more likely to be chosen for publication, but the use of any material is at the discretion of the editor. The editor reserves the right to edit to meet space requirements, for clarity, or to avoid obscenity, libel or invasion of privacy. E-mail letters are accepted at news@theequity.ca and must bear the complete name, address and daytime phone number of the writer. Mailed letters are accepted at 133 Centre Street, Shawville, Quebec J0X 2Y0. Faxed letters are accepted at 819-647-2206. The address and phone number will not be printed. Opinions in the letters published do not necessarily reflect the opinions of THE EQUITY.

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MCA is looking to hire a representative in the Shawville area to work on behalf of Hallmark merchandising cards in Giant Tiger. We are looking for an individual who is energetic, reliable and flexible. The individual should be detail oriented, highly organized and possess good communication skills. You must have a camera, computer and access to internet.
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THE WAY WE WERE

Continued from page four

100 Years Ago

Oct. 8, 1914

Local news: The C.N.R. bridge over the Ottawa River above Portage du Fort having been completed, tracklaying is now proceeding with fair progress on this side of the river and on Sunday the rails were within a short distance of the crossing near Stark's Corners. In a short time it is expected Bristol Corners will get a view ... and it is believed that the whole French column from Royce northward to Arras is moving eastward against the German positions. It is the same operation that has been tried repeatedly for the last three weeks in an attempt to reach the German line of communication and either encircle the German army for the right wing, or force it to fall back to Belgium and Luxemburg.

125 Years Ago

Two fatal cases of typhoid fever have occurred at Renfrew.

It is with much regret that we announce the death of Sophia, daughter of William Mee, Esq., of Clarendon, after a painful illness on Monday last. The deceased was twelve years old. Her remains were interred in the new burying ground here on Wednesday.

The old church at Vinton has been demolished.

A large plate glass light was placed in the front window of Shaw's new building on Thursday last.

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34, rue Victoria, Shawville, QC
Des soumissions cachetées intitulées Déblayage seront reçues au 34, rue Victoria, Shawville, Québec jusqu'à 16h30, mardi le 21 ...

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Antiques, Furniture, Glassware, Collectibles and Garden Equipment
170 Milton - Stewart Ave., Glasgow Station, Ont. - Travel 417 west of Arnprior 16 kms, turn right exit 254 McLean Drive/Glasgow Station, then ... Watch for auction signs.
Saturday, October 18 at 10 a.m.
Having sold our property and moving to a retirement residence, the following will be sold:
Antiques - Ash ... 2 rocking chairs; 4 church pew ... display rack; ... thimbles, spoons, bells; old table top radio; tobacco cutter; quilts; misc.

2

SONNY ORR
the Nation

rez notes

Free-range slaughter
by Sonny Orr

Recently, a young Inuk woman started plucking her gift from home, a goose, on a train in Montreal's métro. This was recorded on a cellphone and uploaded to the Internet. It went viral for all the wrong reasons.

Eventually, the young woman came forth to explain that she's an Inuk simply practicing her traditional food preparation. This story riled me as I remember the days spent in the south, months on end without real food that didn't come in a package.

Kraft dinners and cheap hams, day-old bread and 10 pounds of mayo with nickel pickles and sardines. That was the fare back in the day when monthly rations of funds went to the rent and left little for food. This is the common situation for many people from the north who crave for foods rich in nutrients that are also culturally and palate satisfying. Kudos to her, I say.

Other unfortunate students studying in southern cities would often salivate at the sight of the Canada goose, just walking within reach of hungry hands. One time, at the end of the month and payday still a week away, students called each other to see what was left in their pantry. One had some breadcrumbs, one had an onion, what to do?

Desperate, one young lad snuck up to sleeping geese in the park and coaxed them with some of the crumbs, a few calls and snatched an unsuspecting goose! He quickly killed it and hurried back to the others. They had enough for a stuffed goose! Another hungry student showed up with carrots and a feast was under way.

Seeing such abundance of food hanging around in an area where they are considered pests may be an answer to a problem for many people. Harvesting the pests and allowing the people from the north to process those geese for food may work for those in need of such solutions. Something to mull over, I guess. I just hope that the southern population doesn't discover how good they taste.

I guess the young Inuk and her spectators may be on to something. What if the métro became a showcase for all kinds of food preparation techniques from around the world? I guess the population may become more aware of how their chickens are processed, or how long it takes to kill a pig or even lay an egg. The world of food does not start from a package! It comes from the land around the area and even from other lands from around the world! Bu... does spreading peanut butter on a jar... sandwich while traveling to work o... school or wherever on the métr... deserve the same coverage as a goos... being plucked?

Perhaps authorities should st... food from being exposed in pub... areas. Maybe the world will be a bett... place? Naaah! Who cares, as long ... someone enjoys the food. It sho... remain what it is – food. Not so... orgiastic display of bloodletting that ... public always wanted, but someth... that any good woman from the no... would know right off the bat, it's be... when it's cooked over a fire.

3

STEVE BONSPIEL
The Eastern Door

TIÓHTON TSI NIIORA'WISTONTE
What are you doing to learn the language?

STEVE BONSPIEL
THE EASTERN DOOR

In the newspaper business we try to space out certain topics from week to week so readers always have something fresh to read about, won't get bored, and can directly relate to what we're writing about.

This week's topic is our cherished Kanien'kéha language, and it is something we could easily write about every week, because it is so important to us and, hopefully, equally as important to you.

There are many different ways you can look at the state of our language in Kahnawake and across the Mohawk Nation.

There are negatives and positives, of course, with the biggest negative being how few speakers we currently have, and the little ...portance we put on learning ... other tongue.

... this week's issue, our front ... all in Kanien'kéha, to go ... with a news article and ...'s piece, translated into the language from English by Akwiratékha Martin.

It is part of Cultural Awareness Month (CAM) and it's something *The Eastern Door* has executed and stood behind for the past three years, since CAM's inception.

It's our way to help promote the language, but we wonder: who is watching and supporting those efforts?

Feedback can be sparse – people only usually comment directly if they see you in the grocery store or at the post office – and we're hoping when people pick up the paper it is with pride, not frustration, from not being able to read it.

Fewer than 10 percent of Kahnawakehró:non can read in Kanien'kéha; that is today's sad reality.

Many years ago, everyone would have been able to read the front page, comment, joke about it, and move on as if it were a normal part of the beginning of the weekend.

In 2014, however, that is far from the case. People have turned away from it and some have even vowed NEVER to learn it, out of fear, ignorance or stupidity.

So how do we fix that?

The two-year Ratiwenahní:rats Immersion Program is one way to teach community members our language.

It has produced a large number of speakers and teachers, who then pass on their knowledge to others in the community.

Its success can be weighed like this: if it didn't exist, there would be less people who feel comfortable using conversational Kanien'kéha. Thus, by those standards, it's a positive thing.

Students may not come out as fluent speakers, but the progression is such that they represent a new crop of community members who sacrificed and worked hard to try to get a firm grasp on the language, and they realize the importance that comes with acquiring that knowledge.

They can hold their heads high knowing their contribution to the local promotion of Kanien'kéha is a solid one, with great intentions and excellent results.

Other ways, including local language nests and tapping into the wealth of knowledge by spending time with our elders, hiring a personal tutor or joining a class, can help to push your proficiency higher than it is now.

It's important to take small steps. You will never be fluent unless you first stumble in, and become frustrated with, learning HOW to become proficient.

And that's okay. It's all part of the learning process.

They say there are no stupid questions; well there is no shame in making mistakes when you are making a concerted effort to connect to your identity.

There are many excuses why we shouldn't learn Kanien'kéha: we're too busy, we are embarrassed with how low our proficiency is, we don't see the need.

But challenging yourself to learn will be rewarding far beyond those excuses.

If you are able to pass on whatever knowledge of Kanien'kéha you have to your children and grandchildren, ensuring their success in the future in retaining their language – isn't that worth more than any excuse you can come up with?

So what if your pronunciation is off and you don't know the word for bird or house, the point is you will only learn and retain those words if you make the effort to – and laugh at yourself if you say it wrong.

It's all part of the process and it is NEVER shameful to learn to speak your language. It is, however, shameful not to at least TRY to learn more than you know now.

You don't have to enroll yourself in an intense course to become fluent, but you should always be striving to learn new words, understand more of what our elders are saying in the coffee shop, and push yourself to new heights.

Ask yourself a simple question: Do I want to grow old and never give myself the chance to learn Kanien'kéha, simply because I couldn't fit it into my schedule or because someone laughed at me for trying?

The answer is evident, but it's up to you to take that next step and halt the decline of Kanien'kéha in Kahnawake.

Tóka' iah í:se thahsá:ronke' nonkwawén:na, ónhka ká:ti' enión:ronke'?

***Judge**: Frank Touby, Editor and Associate Publisher, The Bulletin, Toronto, ON • Number of entries in the Best Column Writing category: 18*

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