

Editorial

A gem in the sludge

The mysterious, wondrous and even wacky workings of Canada Post have, in turn, amazed, amused and even enraged me to the point I have often gazed longingly (albeit quickly and with a side-step) at pigeons as a faster and more efficient means of delivering the mail.

Junk mail arrives, not in dribbles but in waves, while the cheque you have desperately needed for days somehow gets lost in the system.

You want to keep in touch with far-flung relatives and are overjoyed when a letter arrives postmarked Australia.

Lo and behold, the letter is from a long-lost relative scrambling to make a living in the Australian outback who claims he has finally located his 'dingbat' which went missing some years previous.

You are happy to read that your relative has recovered his livestock. But reading further, you discover the gentleman was, in fact, referring to his wife, who had run off with a Tongan Prince while your relative was tending his sheep.

Then it hits you. You don't have any relations in Australia.

You then check the front of the envelope and discover that the letter in question was not meant for you and is dated somewhere around the turn of the century.

Occasionally, however, I must admit, a gem is found hidden in the usual sludge that seems to have taken up permanent residence in your mailbox and such was the case for me the other day.

Now before I get assailed by a chorus of the new (improved?) version of 'O Canada' or someone starts running our steamed Prime Minister up the proverbial flagpole, I will admit the pamphlet I received came from the Exited Ingrates of America.

It was called 'Snooze News' and published by the Better Sleep Council. As noted in the pamphlet, the Better Sleep Council is a non-profit educational organization supported by the bedding industry. (Firmly, I trust).

Tidbits inside actually revealed it to be the Old Farmers Almanac of the 'Snore-set'.

You know that pesky tag you find on the mattress that seems to suggest dismemberment or worse if it is removed. Well, relax, the warning is not meant for the consumer. But don't necessarily run home and rip it off.

The tag identifies the manufacturer, helpful if you are making a

"As I See It"

by Colin Gibson



warranty claim. It is usually dated, again, this would help with a warranty claim but it also, obviously, tells you how old the mattress is. Experts suggest, 8-10 years is the maximum lifetime of a mattress.

There is even a test for insomniacs - try it out.

- * Do you take nearly an hour to fall asleep? (Normal sleepers take 30 minutes or so to fall asleep).

- * Do you waken frequently during the night? (You may be sleeping shallowly, failing to go through the normal stages of deep, restful, non-Rapid Eye Movement sleep).

- * Do you feel tired, groggy in the morning, as though you never rested?

- * Do you often feel excessively sleepy during the day?

The pamphlet notes that if you answered 'yes' to any of these questions and the symptom has persisted for longer than three weeks, you may have a sleep problem that requires medical attention.

The pamphlet is chock-full of other bits of information including: problems with snoring, to nap or not to nap and the dangers of sleep deficit.

As I made note of earlier in this ramble, the pamphlet came from the United States and most of the information is geared towards Americans.

However, at the back of the pamphlet is a Canadian address.

Better Sleep Council, P.O. Box 1277, Downsview, Ontario M3H 5V6.

The pamphlet I received stated that people could receive free, a 20-page booklet, 'The Sleep Better, Live Better Guide.' Also, those who request this booklet during the month of May will receive a bonus, a reprint of "101 Ways to Put Yourself to Sleep," excerpted from the book, How to Sleep Like a Baby, by Dianne Hales.

I'm not endorsing or suggesting anything, but anything free usually is worth checking into.

As I see it, anyway.

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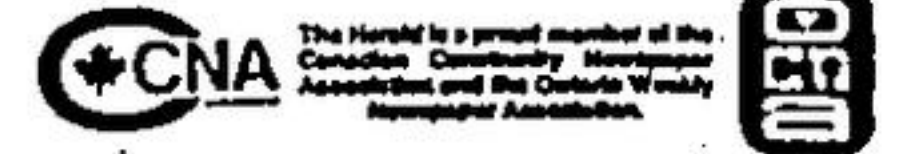
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Cheering for geriatric athletes

I've recently come to profound and unsettling realization about the ageing process.

Forget about those claims that a man truly knows he's growing old when he starts getting fed up with those whining juveniles on thirty-something, or when he grows indignant at media images that stereotype bald people.

Nope. You know you're REALLY over the hill when you discover you've started rooting hysterically for geriatric athletes.

It goes without saying that being a sports fan isn't nearly as much fun when you're over 30.

As a kid, you idolized those Glorious Men who performed majestic feats on Hockey Night in Canada. As you grow older, you suddenly realize: half those Glorious Men are 18.

A man in his mid-30s can't idolize 18-year-olds. He should not be rooting rapturously as they swoop down the ice. He should be tipping them generously for parking his car.

It's even worse when the HNIC announcers begin delivering one of their periodic odes to one of the Ancient Warriors who remains in the game - a grizzled veteran, older than Time itself, compensating for long-faded skills through wisdom and guile...

You find yourself nodding gravely, marvelling at the fact that a man can keep playing hockey with one foot in the grave. And then you find yourself realizing: hang on. This guy's five years younger than I am.

Somehow, there's not much joy in exclaiming: "Harold Snepps does awfully well for a guy who's almost my age."

To enjoy sports properly, you've got to remain a kid. This was brought home to me a couple of weeks ago when The Love of My Life and I went to an NHL

Weir's World
by Ian Weir
Thomson News Service



I nodded, basking in the glow of having become a Somebody.

In any case, all of this explains my ambivalent response to the most notable sporting phenomenon of the past five years: the advent of the geriatric hero.

On the one hand, there's something vaguely pathetic about it all. But on the other hand

There's now the Seniors Tour of golf, featuring ... wait for it ... MEN IN THEIR FIFTIES! This spring, there's been Jim Palmer - an ex-athlete who, incredibly, continued modelling underwear well into his forties - attempting a comeback at age 46.

And in just a few weeks, George Foreman - fat, bald and 42 - will actually fight for the heavyweight boxing championship of the world.

A Foreman victory is probably too much to hope for. After all, the guy's eight years older than I am. Since he's that old, we can't even be sure the nurses will wake him in time for the fight.

But oh, the sheer joy of having older heroes to root for.

Go for it, Aged Gentlemen. Bring on the anabolic prunes.

Write us a letter!

The Herald wants to hear from you. If you have an opinion you want to express or a comment to make, send us a letter or drop by the office. Our address is 45 Guelph Street, Georgetown, Ontario L7G 3Z6.

All letters must be signed. Please include your address and telephone number for verification.

The Herald reserves the right to edit letters due to space limitations.

Poets' Corner

This poem was written for my nephew who served in the Persian Gulf on HMCS Terra Nova. This is an excerpt from the Truro News for Tim Feeley.

Doris Bouley,
Georgetown.

THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME

There's snow on the ground
There's a chill in the air
The lights are all flashing
But we're not all here.

Our men and women
Were sent overseas
To protect our dear country
From Hussein's crazy schemes.

We think of them often
In the tension and heat
We pray God to watch
o'er them
Till again we can meet.

The stockings are hung
By the chimney with care
In hopes that our "seamen"
Will be safe over there.

They sit by the radar
But they're not alone
Our love is there with them
But "There's No Place Like Home!"

By Scott Nelson
Dedicated to AB Tim Feeley
(Truro, N.S.) "Terra Nova" Persian Gulf.

THE TRUTH

I have a feeling, friend of mine,
That you have thoughts inside
your head -

And you don't want to say the words,
So you're showing me instead.

Yes, friend of mine, I have a feeling,
There's something you want to say -

But you're hoping you won't have to,
Cause you hope I'll turn away.

I think you're hoping I'll lose interest,
And will cease to call one night,
Be honest with me, friend of mine,
And tell me: Am I right?

B. Brooke, Acton