

# Laughing Day was prehistoric set amateur night

The book is two inches thick, it contains 645 pages, and I enjoy reading it. The author's name is Jean Auel and the book is called The Mammoth Hunters. She is also the author of The Valley of Horses. Her most well known book is The Clan of the Cave Bear.

The last book was made into a movie and released last fall to mixed reaction. Depending which film critic you read, it was either the best film ever made, or the worst film ever made, so there you go.

In the book I've just finished, a novel set in the days of pre-history when mammoths roamed the Earth, it deals in depth with people just like you and I: their hopes, fears, loves, birth and death. People are people, and based on her research, exactly the same as us without the technology, without the wheel, and with communal tribal living as the only way to survive.

Among the many activities the book describes was one mid-winter celebration called Laughing Day. It was one of the not very many ways to beat cabin fever before they even had cabins. Then came the rites of spring and the nomadic summer gathering of

## —Ray Baker—

all the tribes to barter, gossip and generally celebrate before the Earth Mother decided it was time for another winter of huddling together.

Anyway, she didn't really describe Laughing Day, other than mention that clothes were worn backwards and people painted their faces, but I think I have the flavour of what she meant.

All the hidden skills we still possess would be brought into play, and the inherent survival factors that only some of us can do today.

For example: Ear wiggling: How many of you can wiggle your ears, or even harder, just one ear at a time?

Nose twitching: Try dilating your nostrils to sniff the breeze. Can you honestly do a nose twitch??

Eye crossing: Well, I mean anybody can cross their eyes, right? In fact my Mom used

to say, "If you cross your eyes you will be stuck that way." Then I would uncross 'em, but here's the big test (optometrists read no further): can you cross one eye? Seriously. Try hard enough and you can. It's just will power and determination but don't practice in front of a mirror. It makes you cross eyed, and you only want one cross eye.

Okay, now that you've tried it and settled again with thick heads, you're ready for the next laugh raiser.

Eyebrow lifting: You can do this at the same time as reading this. First one, then the other, then both up and down. Now you are ready for:

Tongue touching: Go ahead. Try touching your nose with your tongue. Try again, you can do it.

And for the grand finale you can do the ear wiggling, nose twitching, eye crossing, eyebrow lifting, tongue touching all at once.

The best thing since the face lift, and a lot

cheaper too. Guaranteed to make 'em laugh till it hurts, till they're rolling on the (Earth) floor.

And that's only the first act: the crowd pleaser, the warm up.

The ugly face pulling. Now fingers are in the act. You all know the combination, ears pushed forwards and eyes rolled up in the sockets, cheeks pulled in tight.

Or the good old fingers in the sides of the mouth pulled into a wide grin, with nose pushed in.

And all this before you start the encore!

The fish lips, and popping nose. The finger-in-cheek louder popping noise. The hold-your-breath till you turn blue trick.

The bird calls. The pig grunts. The wolf howlings and the death rattle of the giant do-do bird.

Of course they had all winter to practice and they didn't have VCR's, just a friendly audience of people.

THIS WEEKS QUOTE: "We are all kids, some are just bigger than others." Me.

Ray Baker is a freelance writer. He and his family live in Penetanguishene. He is a confirmed face puller, and also pulls legs.

# Summer makes a great backdrop for No. 1 politician

by CAREY NIEUWHOF

As most Canadians will readily concede, we, as a nation, tend to put on a false mask when winter hits. For some unknown and probably very stupid reason, most of us feel it is our patriotic duty to pretend we actually love winter.

I have never been one to subscribe that brand of fallacy. I hate winter, and I make no apologies for it. The salt corrodes your car, glistening snow banks turn to black gunge within hours of a snow storm, and I believe the cold weather actually corrodes your bones.

Winter is an awful season, and if I had it my way, I'd spend the season under a sun lamp. For those of you who wholeheartedly disagree with me - hand on, and take heart in this: When the snow melts, it signals that what we have come to know as parliament will also soon come to a summer recess.

That means no more long-jaw defending himself in the House, and no more senseless bickering in that barbaric forum most have come to call question period.

For some reason politicians, like teachers and bobsledding instructors, give themselves a healthily long summer break. For the most part, they drop what they are doing and head for the cottage.

## —Viewpoint—

This summer (a fine season where barbeques, Blue Jays and beaches rule supreme) it would probably not be a bad idea for Brian Mulroney to take to the road and do some good old-fashioned campaigning. He, and his party, are in dire need of some sort of boost.

There are a ton of advantages to campaigning in the summer. First of all, summer is a beautiful season. I don't care how gorgeous you may think a snow covered mountain is, nothing beats a sunset on a lake while broad-leaved trees glimmer on the water. Summer makes a great backdrop for a politician who wants to become one with the voter.

In Mulroney's case, he can leave his triple-breasted 12 piece suits in the PMO and head out in a sports shirt and cotton casuals.

One of the most successful ever campaign shots came when Brian was photographed with Mila in the great outdoors during the summer of '84. He looked like one of us. He had a golf shirt on (not too loud) and stood quietly chatting with a few voters. His face was well tanned, and unlike in the House of Commons, he truly looked relaxed.

His message went over well in the summer of '84, and old Jabberjaws should use the summer of '86 to bring his Tories back up to respectability in the polls.

Believe it or not, there are other advantages to campaigning in the summer sun. Sure, a picture of Brian turning over the steaks on the barbeque looks great on the front page of the nations newspapers, but there is something more to summer than that.

The plain fact about campaign in an 81 degree paradise is that there are no Liberals around to make fun of you. One of Mulroney's biggest problems this past year was that he couldn't do anything without having the Liberals ridicule him into firing yet another minister.

Every time Mulroney opened his mouth, the Grits fired a volley of insults and accusations at him. Mulroney, never one to take criticism well, more often than not, ended up wimping in a corner licking his wounds.

By taking his message directly to the people, he has the chance to score some huge p.r. victories. The girls will be spread over this huge country. (It's pretty easy to lose 40

Liberals in a country that spans thousands of kilometres - alot easier than it is to shake them in a House that sits them side by side and less than a stones throw away.) By the time the Liberals hear what Mulroney said to a group of vacationers in BC, he'll be on his way to New Brunswick.

Besides, the press tends to pay less attention to controversy when the House adjourns.

Summer is a fine time to take the show on the road for a Prime Minister. Trudeau would take his Mercedes sports coupe into the Gattineau Hills to meet with friends of his. Being the elusive type of man he was, Trudeau would have the press guessing just what he was doing for the next three weeks.

Mulroney can keep a defuddled press busy by getting up on waterskis one day and going mountain climbing the next.

The media will love that. They know people don't want to hear about tuna or Katimavic while they're at Lake Wasleploof for a week.

Yes, indeed, summer does great things. It offers campaign opportunities for Prime Ministers, and a chance to escape the ruccess of Parliament for everyone.

If Mulroney finds himself back at 50 percent in the opinion polls in September, then he, like me, will wonder why winter was ever inventaed.

### Midland post office boss named

Midland's new postmaster starts his new job on April 7. Robert Morris comes to Midland from Ottawa, where he has been working in Canada Post's labour relations division.

John Arbour, acting postmaster of Penetanguishene for two years, has been the town's postmaster since March 3. For a time he was acting postmaster in both towns.

Arour has been a Canada Post employee for 13 years. He started as a clerk in Midland, moved to the Penetanguishene Post Office, and then became a marketing representative attached to Canada Post's North Bay divisional office, but based in Barrie.

He returned to Penetanguishene as the town's assistant postmaster.

### Scuba diving

A course offering PAD I open water certification for scuba divers will begin next month. For more information telephone Bob Hartley (361-2353).

### Preliminary hearing date set

Audrey Moore of Tay Township, who made a brief appearance in Midland Provincial Court last Monday, March 17, and again in Penetanguishene Provincial Court last Thursday, was ordered to appear at a preliminary hearing on May 22 in Penetanguishene to face a charge of attempted murder.

She is being held in custody. The woman has been charged in connection with an incident earlier this year in which it was reported a Tay Township man, Wm. Murray, suffered stab wounds.

### Spring cleaning fire prevention

Spring is traditionally clean-up time around the home: the place where two-thirds of all fires occur.

Town of Midland Fire Chief Hal Belfry urges everyone to make their residence a safer place, by clearing out the winter's accumulation of newspapers, oily rags, paint tins, rubbish, and other fire hazards.

### Midland police record a busy February report

As listed in February's activity report, presented last night at a meeting of Town council, Town of Midland police officers laid a variety of charges through the month of February, including 27 under the Criminal Code of Ontario, four under the Liquor Licence Act, and 87 under the Highway Traffic Act (including 70 to speeding motorists). One hundred and sixty-five charges were laid under the town bylaws, and 197 tags were issued last month for parking violations.

### \$50,000 grant request received

Austin Matthews and James Worts, representing the Midland YMCA, have been told by the Town's finance and general government committee that the YMCA request for \$50,000 will be considered when the 1986 municipal budget is being assembled.

Minutes of the meeting of the YMCA representatives with the committee include the information that 63 percent of the YMCA's members live in Midland, and that Collingwood,

Barrie, North Bay, and Cambridge municipal governments have given the YMCA's in those centres financial assistance.

### Publishing date for Weekend

The Huronia Weekend will be publishing this week only on Thursday because of Good Friday. Advertisers, carriers and correspondents are being reminded of the above.

Meanwhile the management and staff of this newspaper hope you'll have a happy and safe Easter Holiday Weekend.

## —North Simcoe—

### —News briefs—

#### Building permits are on the rise

Since Jan. 1, 12 building permits have been issued by the Town of Midland, for a total value of \$286,150.

As detailed in the report submitted to Town council last night, seven permits (total value \$25,650) were issued last month.

During the first two months of 1985, 13 permits were issued for a total value of \$121,700.

#### Water, water everywhere!

Earlier this month the Ministry of Natural Resources issued a flood warning to communities along the shore of Georgian Bay.

It is expected that unusually high water levels may put low lying areas, in villages like Port McNicoll and Victoria Harbour, at risk during this year's Spring thaw.

Although we sometimes seem to have too much, Canada is a country with an international reputation for its abundance of fresh water.

The average volume of water flowing from from this country's drainage basins to the oceans is estimated at 3.5 million cubic feet per second.

#### Caring for animals at Centre

Despite a busy schedule of 88 complaints and occurrences investigated by Huronia Animal Control Centre in February, only six animals had to be destroyed humanely, by animal control officers.

Nine animals were redeemed or returned, and six remain at the shelter, according to the official report presented last night at a meeting of Midland Town council.

#### Secure premises against theft

Town of Midland police officers were busy during February with the routine, after-hours patrol of unoccupied homes and businesses.

Their monthly activity report, issued last night at a regular meeting of Midland Town Council, noted 16 premises found insecure and vulnerable to thefts.

Property valued at a total of \$33,162 was stolen last month. Police recovered property valued at \$29,076.

#### \$22,231 and counting for ShareLife

It was announced over the weekend at St. Margaret's Roman Catholic Church in Midland that a total of \$22,231 had been raised through Sharelife contributions at the Roman Catholic Church.

#### A trace of snow

Early-riser woke yesterday morning to discover another trace of snow had dusted their autos and front lawns bringing this winter's total snowfall to date to 527.6 centimetres or 207.7 inches.

Meanwhile most snow has already melted throughout residential areas in Collingwood.

#### No traffic fatalities police report

Although the Midland Police Force monthly activity report for February, issued at last night's meeting of Town council, listed 10 people injured in traffic accidents, there were no fatalities recorded.

Police officers investigated 20 reportable and 17 non-reportable mishaps on local highways.

#### Kick off those wintery blues

With dry sidewalks clear of ice and snow, light footed shoppers in Midland Town Centre were happily shedding their heavy winter boots all week.

Running shoes reappeared on countless feet, while women especially enjoyed the first opportunity to return to the flattering shoe styles of Spring and Summer.