

# Easier national quiz

A few weeks ago the results of the Heritage Project cultural awareness survey were released, revealing how much we know about our history.

Essentially, 1,628 Canadians were asked a series of multiple choice questions on history, geography, politics and the arts, and in all cases Canadians got as many more correct answers than that chimp from the San Diego Zoo who grunts with a 500-word vocabulary.

Looking at the test scores, it seems the average Canadian knows we have a history but the majority of us feel it's top secret information released only with a special de-coder ring which comes in a box of Nut'n Honey cereal.

Fewer than six in 10 Canadians can name our first prime minister. However, my survey shows nine in 10 Canadians wish we could have him back right now, as dead and rumped as he may be.

Less than half of us know the capital of New Brunswick (thank God they didn't ask who among us care) and only three in 10 could name our governor general.

The Heritage Project was funded by liquor magnate and billionaire Charles Bronfman of Montreal. Maybe Bronfman's phenomenal success in selling booze to Canadians is the reason we don't do so good on these tests, eh? I mean who can name the first Norse Vikings to visit North America when you're nursing a perpetual hangover?

Sadly, 58 per cent of Canadians can not name one Canadian artist, 30 per cent can not name one Canadian writer and 23 per cent can not think of one Canadian event or achievement they are proud of.

This is an outrage. I say it's time we as Canadians make a deliberate effort to enhance our measured national knowledge.

I say it's time Canadians showed the rest of the world we do indeed excel in detailed examinations of our own rich heritage.

I say it's time for an easier test.



William J. Thomas

1. Who was the first Prime Minister of Canada? John A. Macdonald; Sir John A. Macdonald; Sir John "Hey Jackie Boy" Macdonald; Theresa Brewer.

2. Cindy Nicholas. Is a famous Canadian marathon swimmer? Is married to famous Canadian golfer Jack Nicklaus? Prefers to spell her name "Cindy" with an "i"?

3. Canada is a founding member of a military alliance known as: Colonialist Dogs Who Will Dine On The Marinated Vital Organs Of The Infidel Saddam; North Atlantic Treaty Organization; The A-Team.

4. Which of the following famous Canadians is still dead but occasionally can be spotted in supermarkets? Jimmy Hoffa; Elvis; Joe Clark; all of the above but sited separately.

5. Canada's national airline is (students taking this test are advised to do so sitting down to cope with sudden surprises) Air Canada. Air Canada's motto is: Try Us - You Have No Choice; Relieve Yourself Before Boarding; That IS The Lunch; Above And Beyond.

6. In 1876 Alexander Graham (MA's favorite) BELL invented: Miracle Whip; the Galapagos Islands; call waiting; THE TELEPHONE.

7. In 1981 doctors in London,

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# In defence of pigs

Pigs really need a good press agent and, not having seen any pig agents lurking in the underbrush recently, yer ole Baba is taking it upon herself to confute a lot of erroneous sayings about these particular animules.

"As dirty as a pig." Porkers are badly maligned by this too easily used catch-all phrase. Pigs, let me tell all misinformed readers, are NOT dirty. Au contraire, les cochons are tres propre. They keep their sties and yards exceptionally clean and only do their business in a designated corner, and woe betide any porker which does not abide by porker rules. It gets banished to porker purgatory immediately. The only reason pigs roll



Olga Landiak

about in the mud is to pack a layer on their very tender skins to keep from getting sun-burned. There's nothing more terrible looking than a sun-burned pig. Unless it's a sun-burned human being. Take yer choice.

"Eats like a pig." Okay, so they do make a little noise when they are eating, but so do a lot of bad-mannered humans. Eating with mouth agape is not only an unpleasant pig experience, but a human one as well. So leave us not belittle our dear porcine friends in this category until we've cleaned up our own act.

"As fat as a pig." Well, that's the whole point, isn't it? Pigs are stuffed with food so they will put on weight and produce all those lovely hams and bacons most humans so adore. You don't get much off a skinny pig. Mind you, some of those very obese Chinese and East Asian porkers one sees pictures of are something to be believed, and yer ole Baba sure wouldn't want to be near an obese human when it collapsed. Blubber is

great on whales, but on animules or hooman beings, it's strictly for the birds. Not that I've ever seen a Fat Bird either, unless it was the Christmas or Easter sacrificial goose or turkey.

"As stupid as a pig." No way, Jose. Some pigs are incredibly smart. Like some hoomans. Maybe that is why some pigs are keeping hoomans for pets these days. Or is it the other way around? Hard to remember sometimes given the state of some hooman beings today.

Did you know that pigs almost took over the world? No, no, not in Orwell's "Animal Farm", though that was a lot of fun even though it didn't

present porkers in the best of lights what with that awful pushy and opinionated Comrade Napoleon trying to run things. No, we are referring to the phenomenon of puppeteer Jim Henson's Miss Piggy who, if not exactly conquering the world, at least took it by storm.

What a Day for the Porkers! Their bad image and bad public relations were wiped out in an instance. Porkers in every shape and form became the darlings of the toy world, and real world as well, as porker pets began to give the reigning meows and bow-wows a run for their money. Pig-a-mania was the order of the day! If those wierd Mutated and Teen-aged Turtles hadn't come along, they'd still be high up there in the popularity charts.

And did you know we have an awful lot of 'piggery' in our language? How about pigtail, pig weed, pig iron, pig boat (that's a sub., in case you don't know), piggy bank, piggyback,

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# Northern Grits make a wish list

Backbench opposition members facing a majority government have a tough job. They're elected for four or five years just like the government, but they don't have the same clout. They're expected to deliver for their constituents, particularly on individual problems. When it comes to policies and platforms, they're free to dream about when they might be in power, and make up wish lists.

That's the situation for northern Ontario's six Liberal MPs. Bob Nault from the Kenora-Rainy River riding chairs the northern Ontario Liberal caucus. The group made a week-long flying trip through Sudbury, Kapuskasing, North Bay, Timmins, Elliot Lake, Sault Ste. Marie, and Thunder Bay in February, hearing from northerners about our "wish lists" to fix the region's ailing economy.

Their conclusions have now been issued in a report, called "Northern Ontario Speaks Out". They make 28 recommendations, mostly directed at

Ottawa. If the Grits get their wish list fulfilled, we would have:

- no more GST or 15% softwood lumber tax
- lower gasoline taxes in the north
- full funding restored to the COFRDA (Canada-Ontario Forestry Resource Development Agreement) which provided many millions of dollars to forestry research and silviculture, but which was not renewed by Ottawa
- a pro-active federal ministry of tourism
- more engineering graduates trained to enter the mining and mineral exploration business
- a restoration of the tax incentive known as "flow-through shares" to bolster mineral exploration
- a restoration of the Northern Ontario tax allowance for communities which are losing it



NORTHERN INSIGHTS

by Larry Sanders



- a broader mandate and more money for regional development programs like FEDNOR
- a decentralization of decision-making to the regional and municipal level for many programs

But the Liberal's most interesting recommendations have to do with our own money - the dollars that are tied up in retirement savings plans (RRSPs). Canadians love to save. According to Statistics Canada, Canadians save more dollars per capita in low-risk deposits than any other industrialized nation. We don't buy shares or stocks as individuals - but our pension plans do.

The Grits want to put some of that money to work diversifying the economy of northern Ontario, as well as improving the environment. RRSP funds, according to the Liberals, should:

- go into a special fund "to assist mining companies meet the environmental standards required in mine rehabilitation"
- be put to work in northern Ontario like they are in Sweden, through an "industrial investment fund"

Those proposals are a real challenge to northerners to put our money where our mouths are. Are we willing to take some of our hard-earned pension money and put it to work in our own backyards? Do we believe in our own economic situation enough to perhaps take a slightly lower rate of return on our investments in the first few years, operating on the optimistic belief that we (or our heirs) might get a greater return later on?

The idea of community-based investment funds is not entirely new. Hearst has had one for years - with Ontario and Ottawa matching every dollar put up by local investors. The fund is administered locally, as part of

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