



Appointment with Pohlman

Thoughts In Passing

By Ralph Pohlman

I have a couple of topics that floated to the top of the barrel today, so I'll have a go at both of them for you.

First off, changing names

I see where the New Democratic Party, usually called the NDP, is thinking about changing its name. Of course it did that once before. I grew up in Saskatchewan when the party was called the CCF (the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation – bet you didn't remember that) and which existed from 1933 to 1961.

And it wasn't all that long ago that our present government demanded that its members refer to it as the New Conservative Government. Just remember; they change the name to change the image – but nothing changes.

All this has got me thinking about various name changes.

The name Whitby Psychiatric Hospital, or maybe it was The Mental Health Centre, described the place very well, but it is now Ontario Shores. So what does that mean? It sounds like a resort, or maybe a nursing home.

Of course none of this is new. I remember when the government had the War Department, but that became politically unacceptable, so it is now the Defence Department. Remember, the name changes but nothing changes.

Hospitals have been doing this for a while to the point where it's hard to keep track. Patients have become clients, or is it consumers? The head nurse becomes the nursing manager, or the unit manager or whatever. That is mostly because the squatters in administration have to show that they are there and doing something.

Folks are no longer retarded, they are intellectually challenged. I would guess that means they can also be height challenged (short), financially challenged (broke) or even fitness challenged (fat).

By and large, these word plays are called euphemisms, meaning phrases used to avoid telling the truth, or saying something directly. For example, people don't die, they "pass away", "pass on", or "kick the

bucket". I'm not sure exactly what bucket that would be.

In fact, there are so many euphemisms for death that I've often thought we could categorize them according to occupation.

Here are a few:

Writers and editors could "make the big deadline" or "be deleted".

Singers could "join the choir invisible".

Baseball players could "get traded to the Angels".

Jockeys could be described as having "crossed the finish line".

Clothing Designers could "go permanently out of fashion".

And I could think of a few euphemisms that guys might use for impotence, now referred to everywhere on TV as ED or erectile dysfunction. There was a time, not too long ago, when this would have been a no-no on TV, but that was before Viagra, the world's most profitable medication.

How about "Like shooting pool with a rope"?

My second topic is winners wear red.

I like the look of the official sweaters for Canada's Olympic Hockey Team. What I especially like is the big red maple leaf.

I recall a study published in the journal *Nature* a few years ago stating that sports winners were more likely to wear red than any other colour. It reminds me of the scarlet tunics once worn by the British army and Tiger Woods' red polo shirt, worn on the last day of the tournament. The colour seems to tap into the deep-seated sub-conscious responses that associate red with aggression and fitness.

Colour has long been associated with changes in human mood, emotion and aggression and with competitive and sexual interactions among animals. But this is the first time scientists have shown evidence it influences scores in human contests (pun intended).

Maybe that was the thinking behind my father's advice in my single days, many years ago, that "When you go to a party, always look for a girl in a red dress."

Motorfest 2009 A Car Buff's Dream

On Sept. 19 from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., more than 500 street rods, antique, classic, muscle and custom cars will be displayed on the sweeping lawns of Novopharm on Main St. at the west end of town.

There is no admission charge to the show, and each registered driver will receive a free lunch. This year's special feature car is a 2002 Le Mans raced LMP Panos Mugen driven by Canada's John

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Proceeds from the event will go to Teen Challenge Canada, a 12-month, faith-based residential drug and rehabilitation program which offers spiritual, academic and vocational training. For information visit www.teenchallenge.ca.

For more details on Motorfest call 905-640-3202 or visit www.motorfest.ca.



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