



APRIL~MAY~JUNE 2020

Volume 25 - # 2

NEXT DEADLINE: JUNE 19, 2020

# co-operative

also, cooperative

**Word forms:** plural co-operatives

1. countable noun

A co-operative is a business or organization run by the people who work for it or owned by the people who use it. These people share its benefits and profits.

[business]

Most of the fresh produce in her kitchen is delivered by a farming co-operative.

The restaurant is run as a co-operative.

2. adjective [usually ADJECTIVE noun]

A co-operative activity is done by people working together.

He was transferred to FBI custody in a smooth co-operative effort between Egyptian and U.S. authorities.

The President said the visit would develop friendly and co-operative relations between the two countries.

co-operatively adverb [ADVERB after verb]

They agreed to work co-operatively to ease tensions wherever possible.

3. adjective

If you say that someone is co-operative, you mean that they do what you ask them to without complaining or arguing.

I made every effort to be co-operative.

## IT DOESN'T WORK WITHOUT YOUR PARTICIPATION

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Your **LINK** Team:

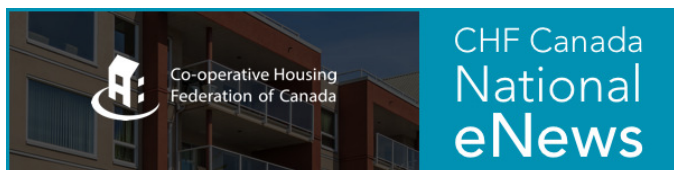
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**\*\*\* FOR UP-TO-DATE INFO ON THE  
COVID-19 PANDEMIC, PLEASE SEE**

**[WWW.CANADA.CA](http://WWW.CANADA.CA)**



### **ANOTHER MEMBER BENEFIT: CO-OP COST CUTTERS**



‘Co-op Cost Cutters’ is a group buying program for co-ops. It has been around for over 20 years as a member service of Ontario federations and as a CHF Canada member service in other regions.

The program started with five services and has grown to 20. It is available in Ontario, in seven other provinces and the territories.

The program is managed and overseen by Miriam Wohl of the Co-operative Housing Federation of Toronto. She is the central coordinator of Cost Cutters but works in collaboration with other federations.

Two new national services were recently added to the program:

- **MultiLogic** offers LED lighting retrofits. This service saves money on electricity, especially on interior and exterior lights that are on 24/7.
- **Water Matrix** does three-litre toilet retrofits. These toilets can save 50% or more on annual water costs. (In areas served by CHFT and Peel-Halton Co-op Housing Federation, Building Up is featured for this work. Water Matrix is now available to serve all other regions. Both companies install the same toilet at the same price.)

Both these services were chosen for the program because they save money on utilities and have a quick repayment period.

Co-op Cost Cutters is designed to save co-ops time and money. Miriam does all the research, checks references and vets companies so co-ops can safely use them. If a problem arises, she works with co-ops, federations and suppliers to resolve any issues. You can count on Miriam for support.

Co-op Cost Cutters is a great example of Co-operation Among Co-operatives, International Co-op Principle Six in action! When co-ops use the program, they strengthen co-op buying power.

For more information, visit the Co-op Cost Cutters website or contact Miriam at [miriam@coophousing.com](mailto:miriam@coophousing.com)

### DAVE, GOODBYE AND GOOD LUCK

As some of you may recall, approximately two years ago, there was a tragic fire in a high-rise apartment building at 650 Parliament Street. The smoke and electrical damage were extensive and the all the tenants were evacuated from their homes and forced to find alternate accommodation.

Two of the evacuated tenants were Dave, City Park's plumber, and his wife, Almaz. There was no time to get any possessions out and the issue quickly became where to live. The City of Toronto, the Salvation Army, local shelters, the TDSB, and friends and families were all used to house tenants on what was thought to be a temporary basis. However, it quickly became apparent that the temporary was morphing into the permanent as delays kept occurring and promises kept being broken. For some dispossessed tenants, there was the possibility of housing in hotels or motels. As you can imagine, this was an expensive

and somewhat dehumanizing experience.

As Dave's situation became more apparent to the Members of City Park, a campaign was initiated by Jo-Anne Kennedy and others to provide temporary housing in one of our vacant units for Dave and Almaz. It was clearly and legally established that this arrangement was temporary and no loss of revenue would be incurred by City Park.

It is now time (hopefully mid-April) for Dave and Almaz to return to their apartment. Dave and Almaz want to specifically thank the Board, Jo-Anne Kennedy, Edward Carrington, and everyone who offered furniture, bedding, appliances, and moral support during a very difficult period in their lives. On behalf of the Members of City Park, I would like to wish David and Almaz all the best in their newly renovated home. I wonder if it will be up to City Park standard?

Tom Maunder ~ 51 Alexander

### OUR BYLAWS

I was asked by some Members to do another bylaws article. Here goes. One of the common complaints is that only certain bylaws are enforced, and others ignored. From my experience, I would amend that to say that certain bylaws are enforced, and Members notice,

others take time, and others are not enforceable.

Most complaints fall into the following categories: noise, pest control (or lack of), hoarding, criminal activity, maintenance, threats. Since this is only an article and not a book or thesis, I'll address threats and criminal activity. I'll cover the rest in future articles.

Occupancy By-Law No. 3, Article 5 – Use and Behaviour – is a good starting point. The apartments are private residences. The use of the unit may include incidental business if the business does not breach any law, bylaw, regulation, etc. Obviously, drug dealing, or criminal activity isn't included. The Management and Board have attempted on numerous occasions to have various Members evicted for such activity. The Landlord Tenant Board has not agreed so far. It doesn't mean the Board has given up. It hasn't. Vigilante justice is not an option.

Nuisance is another part of the Article. You may not permit any noise, nuisance or other act that might unreasonably disturb or interfere with other Members of the Co-op, staff, employees, or any other resident of the Co-op. The Board has, and will continue to, serve Members with a Notice to Appear, the beginning of the eviction process. Members are responsible for the behaviour of a guest. The

Member may find themselves facing eviction if guests cause damage, are abusive, obstruct or threaten anyone else.

Prohibited contact is the next subsection. This extends the nuisance Article to Members of the greater community. The subsection reinforces the ban on illegal acts in the unit. As an aside, not all accusations are well-founded. There is a Member in my building who is adamant I'm running a crystal meth lab and tells everyone that. I'm not, but it doesn't matter to this person. The Member reminds me of Miss Gulch in the Wizard of Oz for a variety of reasons. Enough said. Be careful of rumours and sentences that start with "I know....". There are several Members and guests who thrive on this. For those who watched 'Bewitched', it's the Gladys Kravitz Syndrome.

The next two subsections deal with Human Rights and Violence. For the most part, if you see criminal activity or violence, contact the Police as well as Co-op Security. The violence subsection also includes staff and employees. Violence, abuse or threats fall into this subsection.

Please report noise, possible criminal activity, acts of violence, abuse. Resolution may not happen quickly, but it isn't being ignored.

Bob Fisher ~ 51 Alexander

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"Housework can't kill you, but why take the chance"

- Phyllis Diller

### **DANGERS OF POTTING MIX HIGHLIGHTED AFTER DEATH OF NEW ZEALAND GARDENER**

The death of a Christchurch man after contracting Legionnaires' disease has his friends asking whether the warnings about the dangers of potting mix are strong enough.

Myles McIntyre, 77, of Fendalton, died last December 20 from complications from Legionnaires' disease, about six weeks after falling ill.

According to family and friends, he was well aware, as an experienced gardener, of the recommended safety measures when handling potting mix.

He would split open the bags and use the hose to wet them down well, then leave them exposed to the air before using the mix. He wore gardening gloves, but no mask.

McIntyre was a librarian for *The Press* for many years and was a key staff member during the Canterbury

earthquakes when the newspaper worked in portacombs at the printing plant near Christchurch Airport.

Bacteria can easily grow in potting mix. *Legionella longbeachae* is one species that breeds in the warm, moist conditions inside the bags.

Inhaling the spores can cause Legionnaires' disease, a potentially fatal form of pneumonia that can be more easily contracted by older people, particularly if they have existing health conditions, poor immunity or chronic illnesses.

Several dozen Cantabrians every year need hospital treatment for Legionnaires'. In 2017, 62 people in the region were admitted to hospital with the disease and 13 needed intensive care.



Sue McIntyre said her husband bought several bags of potting mix in early November for use on his vegetable garden. He had carried out his usual

precautions.

"He was always careful. I think he was unlucky.

"I used to say, 'be careful, wear a mask'. He said he was very careful and was always spraying it."

Within a few days McIntyre was in Christchurch Hospital. He was put into an induced coma for several days and suffered a heart attack. When the pneumonia from Legionnaires' cleared up, he contracted hospital pneumonia and had difficulty breathing.

McIntyre had undergone a triple heart bypass about six years ago.

Despite warnings on the bags and on shelves in some stores, Gary Day is angry about his long-time friend's death and believes more could be done to get the safety message across.

A black and white warning sign was not enough. Bags should carry a warning "equivalent to a blood-red skull above a pair of blood-red crossbones".

"I find myself in big hardware and gardening stores and feel like going up to people and saying, 'please be aware of this stuff'.

"Myles was a conscientious gardener who was well aware of the potential dangers lurking while working with potting mix.

"However, unaware that his luck was up against a stacked deck, he inadvertently breathed in what would kill him."

Day wondered if keeping bags of potting mix and compost out of the

sun might reduce the number of bacteria breeding inside.

He also suggested checkout staff should remind customers buying potting mix that it could be dangerous.

Canterbury medical officer of health Dr. Alistair Humphrey said the number of keen gardeners in Canterbury meant more here could potentially contract Legionnaires disease from potting mix and be hospitalized than in other parts of the country.

The gardening industry had been looking at ways of making safer composts.

"Composts are made in different ways by different companies. At this stage it is not clear whether, for example, adding animal matter may help. There's also heat treatment of composts."

Many people heeded the warnings, but it was easy to forget, Humphrey said.

"In quite a few cases, people say, 'oh yes I know about it, I've read the leaflets', but for whatever reason didn't think about on the day.

"Gardening is very good for us. We have to be careful about how we warn people – we don't want to put them off gardening."

The best precautions were to open potting mix carefully, wear gloves

and a mask, dampen down the product, use it in a well-ventilated area and wash hands thoroughly.

[\(https://www.stuff.co.nz/\)](https://www.stuff.co.nz/)



Photo courtesy of John Gordon ~ 51 Alexander



“I meant to behave, but there were too many other options.” - Eleanor Roosevelt

## **PARKS OF TORONTO – PART I** **HIGH PARK**

High Park spans 161 hectares and is Toronto’s biggest park within the city. It’s a mixed recreational and natural park, with sporting facilities, cultural facilities, educational facilities, gardens, playgrounds and a zoo. One third of the park remains in a natural state, with a rare oak savannah ecology.

In the 80’s and then again in the 90’s I was lucky enough to live in the High Park area for short periods of time. Every evening after dinner, I would take a walk along the trails and

assorted paths, usually ending up at the Grenadier Café for a coffee or hot chocolate. Weekend mornings were also a good time to wander around the park – before all the crowds arrived for their picnics and various recreations.

In my explorations, I came to know High Park quite well – and was frequently delighted when I discovered some hidden area I had not seen before. The park always felt safe to me – there were always people around – the usual assortment of joggers, dog walkers, family groups and people just out for a walk. We were a friendly bunch and would always greet each other – sometimes stopping to chat, which in turn occasionally led to going for a cup of coffee at the Grenadier Café.

Of course, I came to know some of the more famous features of the park as well – such as **Grenadier Pond**. I would often pause to rest here for a while and take in the beauty of the location. There’s a myth that says the pond is bottomless – that its depth cannot be measured due to the amount of mud. Still, there are often people fishing here and the fish apparently are safe to eat. There have been fishing derbies and



casting contests held here. Ducks are always present, along with other



birds living by the waterside. Grenadier Pond is home to multiple species of bird and marsh wildlife. Another point of interest in the park is **Colborne Lodge** – an 1837 home built by architect/engineer John George Howard who was the first landowner of High Park. It is now a historical museum.



**High Park Gardens** - on the hill to the east of Grenadier Pond is a landscaped ornamental garden area. There is a 'rock garden' extending from the top of the hill to the pond shore. At the bottom of the hill is a large maple leaf-shaped flower bed, visible from the top of the hill. Along Colborne Lodge Road is a hanging garden and ornamental garden with fountains - the 'sunken gardens'.



Then there are High Park's **109 allotment gardens and greenhouses**. Since 1956, the High Park greenhouses have produced millions of annuals and perennials for Toronto's park system. The nine greenhouses illustrate the way plants are grown and distributed across the city. The Allotment Gardens were opened in 1974 and

offer plots to local gardeners for fruit, vegetable and flower plantings. These gardens have successfully blended with the natural Park setting and provide an enjoyable recreational activity for Toronto residents. They also provide habitat for a variety of wildlife, including birds, bees and butterflies.

High Park Zoo is a small collection of animals along Deer Pen Road. The zoo keeps American bison, Barbary sheep, capybaras, emus, Highland cattle, llamas, Mouflon sheep, peacocks, reindeer, wallabies and yaks in eleven paddocks and is open year-round. The zoo received a lot of media coverage in 2015 when a peacock escaped and was at large in the surrounding neighbourhood for several weeks before returning on its own to the zoo. A pair of capybaras kept at the zoo escaped in May 2016. Sightings of capybaras were reported all over the city - by June 28th however, both capybaras were re-captured. Due to their exploits, the two were nicknamed **Bonnie and Clyde**.



### **BONNIE & CLYDE & FAMILY**

The Japanese cherry trees in the park attract thousands of visitors every year from late April to early



May. In 1959, the first Japanese Somei-Yoshino Cherry Tree was planted in High Park, a gift from the citizens of Tokyo. In all over 2000 cherry trees were donated to Toronto.



While most of the central section of High Park is developed for picnicking, gardens and sports fields, it has a stretch of open habitat called the oak savannah. The towering black oak trees found throughout High Park are characteristic of this habitat. Many of the trees are over 150 years old. The savannah is under the special care of the City and volunteer conservationists.

**Sports Facilities** - in the central area of the park, there are two soccer fields and three baseball diamonds available for organized play. One of the diamonds is home to the High Park Braves baseball organization, providing organized baseball programs for children. There are also several tennis courts in two separate locations and in the winter an ice hockey rink is operated.

**The High Park Nature Centre** offers year-round outdoor and indoor programming to learn about nature. It has programs for parents, school-aged children as well as family walks and adult workshops and lectures. A number of programs undertake stewardship activities in High Park to preserve native plant species, including the yearly removal of invasive species such as buckthorn. The Centre also organizes nature walks in the park. In 2016, over 12,000 people took part in High Park Nature Centre programming.



**Shakespeare in High Park** - during the summer months (July 4th to September 6th), the Canadian Stage Company puts on selected Shakespearean plays in the park's Amphitheatre which seats a few hundred people. This annual event is very popular with Torontonians. The play scheduled for 2020 is 'A Comedy of Errors'.



**Grenadier Cafe** is a restaurant and outdoor patio area located in the centre of the park. The restaurant



opened in May 1958 as a dining room and coffee shop. Although the Cafe is not licensed to serve alcohol, they have an extensive menu and beverage list and the quality of the food is excellent. I often came here for breakfast on the weekend and always enjoyed their great omelets. The restaurant is owned by the City of Toronto, and privately operated under contract by the Grenadier Group.



An outdoor organic produce market operates next to the Grenadier Café during the summer weekends. In addition, twice a year, plant sales are held at the Cafe to raise money for conservation activities. The plants are native to Ontario and cultivation of the plants is encouraged to preserve the species.

**Barbara Hall Park** located at 519 Church Street, north of Wellesley, was renamed after Toronto Mayor Barbara Hall. Ms. Hall is a human rights advocate, staunch supporter of Gay Rights and the first mayor of a major city to walk in a Pride parade during her term of office which lasted from 1994 to 1997.



Locally referred to as 'Gay Park' it offers a wonderful and relaxing green space and includes an area for kids and a big sand lot for dogs. It contains a unique Aids memorial with plaques indicating the names of those Torontonians that died, along with the dates of their deaths. At night it has a beautiful canopy of lighting in the form of a rainbow flag. Besides offering city green space, it's also inspirational. A neat little gem in the downtown core.



Ursula Carter ~ 51 Alexander

### 11 SIMPLE WAYS TO IMPROVE YOUR MEMORY

Whether you want to be a *Jeopardy!* champion or just need to remember where you parked your car, here are 11 things you can do right now to turn your mind from a sieve into a steel trap.

### *1. Concentrate for 8 Seconds.*

These days we're all about things being faster. That's why this advice is invaluable: When you really need to remember something, concentrate on it for at least 8 seconds. That can seem like a long time when you're running around trying to get a million things done, but it is worth it. Studies have shown that 8 seconds is the minimum amount of time it takes for a piece of information to go from your short-term memory to your long-term memory.

### *2. Don't Walk Through a Doorway.*

We've all walked into a room and suddenly realized we can't remember why we needed to be there in the first place. Don't worry, you're not getting more forgetful—chances are it was the act of walking through a doorway that made you go completely blank. Researchers found that participants in both virtual and real-world studies were far more likely to forget what object they had just placed in a container if they were asked right after walking through a doorway than if they carried the object the same distance in a single room. Scientists have yet to figure out why, but something about entering a new place seems to restart our memory.

### *3. Make a Fist.*

If you're having trouble remembering things at work, get a stress ball. The act of clenching your fist, if done correctly, can

significantly improve your ability to recall information. Studies show that if you are right-handed, you should make a fist with your right hand before you try to memorize a piece of information. Then when you need to remember it, clench your left hand (the process is reversed for lefties.) Be sure to hold that position for a little while though; the study that discovered this had the participants squeezing for a good 45 seconds before letting go.

### *4. Exercise.*

At this point we should just accept it that science considers exercise the cure for absolutely any problem, and memory is no different. The physical act increases alertness and oxygen supply to the brain and may even increase cell growth in the parts of your brain responsible for memory. One study found that right after light exercise, women were able to recall things better than they could before working up a sweat. And while a quick jog can help you out right now, it is even more effective over the long term. A different study found that women who kept fit over six months significantly improved both their verbal and spatial memory.

### *5. Sleep.*

At some point in high school or college, almost everyone has tried to pull an all-nighter before a big test (or so pop culture would have us believe). But even if you left your cramming until almost the last minute, it is more beneficial to get a



good night's sleep than to study until dawn. Studies have found that the processes your brain goes through while you're asleep actually help you remember information better the next day. Your brain is bombarded with stimuli when you're awake, and it uses the time you are asleep to process everything. That's when it gets rid of unnecessary information and doubles down on remembering important things, like all that stuff in your biology textbook. Sleep is when it consolidates that information into a long-term memory. If you stay awake, your brain can't go through this process.

#### *6. Use Crazy Fonts.*

We're all font snobs to some extent. When it comes to books, newspapers, or the internet, we want everything to be clear and easy to read. But researchers have discovered that one of the best ways to remember something you've read is to read it in a weird font. The size and boldness make no difference, although the harder it is to read, the better. When something is unfamiliar and difficult to read, you are forced to concentrate on it more, allowing you to remember it easier. Large, bold fonts may actually hurt your ability to remember, as studies found that when asked to memorize a list of words, people predicted they would recall bold words easier than non-bold words, and therefore studied them less, leading to the opposite result.

#### *7. Chew Gum.*

If you need to remember a piece of information for around 30 minutes, try chewing gum. Studies have found that people do better on both visual and audio memory tasks if they are chewing gum while they do them. Just the act of chewing seems to keep people more focused and improve concentration. But if you have a pop quiz sprung on you, leave the Juicy Fruit in your pocket. People who didn't chew gum did better on very short memory tasks, while masticating helped people stay alert during longer ones.

#### *8. Write Things Out.*

These days it's far more common to type up almost all the writing you need to do on your phone or computer. Shopping lists are saved on your tablet, phone numbers and email addresses under your contacts—it's hardly necessary to remember anything anymore. That is, until you forget your phone and realize you don't remember if you need to pick up bread and eggs. In the future, if you want to recall something, write it out in longhand. It doesn't matter if you never actually read back what you wrote: Studies have shown that just the act of writing something out allows you to recall it in a way that touching a keyboard does not.

#### *9. Know When to Turn the Music On—and Off.*

Many people like a bit of music playing while they work or study.

And listening to music *before* you start reading something you need to remember does indeed give you better recall. But once you start work, take out those ear buds. Researchers have found that listening to almost any noise, including music, while studying is a distraction, and you will recall less of what you read in the future. It doesn't matter if you love the music or hate it; it has the same distracting effect as someone yelling random numbers at you. It might seem strange at first studying in complete silence, but science says it pays off in the long run.

### 10. Visualize.

One of the weirdest and most effective ways to remember something is to associate it with a visual image. This can be taken to an extreme, where you can recall a huge number of pieces of information just by building up a detailed visual image in your brain. Let's say you wanted to remember that J.K. Rowling wrote the Harry Potter books. Rowling sounds like bowling, so visualize a bowling alley. Now add to this image a hairy potter. This hirsute man, his hands covered with clay, gets up to *roll* the ball down the lane. From there you could add other bits of information, for example the names of the different Harry Potter books. Eventually you have a place in your head full of information that you can access at any time. It sounds bonkers, but science says it works.

### 11. Doodle.

If you are sitting in a boring class or meeting, don't be afraid to start drawing hearts and flowers in your margins. While it can look like doodlers are paying less attention than non-doodlers, in reality the act of drawing is helping to keep their brain active. Just sitting there when you are bored makes it easier for you to tune out and as a result you will remember less information. In studies, people who were given a doodling task while listening to a boring phone message ended up remembering 29 percent more of what was on the tape than people who just sat still and listened.

*(Written by Kathy Benjamin. This article was originally published on November 16, 2016, by Mental Floss).*

## RGI AND ARREARS

Members who are paying Market housing charges may apply to receive Rent Geared to Income (RGI) assistance. The Co-op does not have the authority to make the change. The Members must apply to Housing Connections. The approvals are based on a variety of criteria such as: eligibility, length of time living at City Park, current income, etc.

At this time, the City will consider one household in that situation for every external RGI applicant that moves into City Park. There are currently 41 households in City Park that have applied to go from Market to RGI. The timelines are not predictable. The office works closely

with the Consultant in Housing Stability Services. What can be done is being done.

The office does not make up the rules. The City of Toronto and the Province of Ontario set the guidelines. If you want to know how to calculate the housing charges, read chapters 4-6 of the RGI Guide on the City of Toronto website. It is not just 30% of your income. Shelter costs (rent as an example) do not include Sector Support, satellite. Those extras are not covered by the RGI subsidy.

Those Members should notify the Co-op office immediately if they applied to go from Market to RGI. The likelihood of arrears is great. Office staff will be able to work with you if they know the circumstances. Surprises are not a good idea since the Member will go into arrears and risks losing their home. The office can look at a Performance Agreement to pay off the arrears. One thing the office may not do, is forgive or ignore the arrears.

Every arrear has an impact on the Co-op's finances. Currently, the level is approximately \$60,000. That \$60,000 could be put to better use than being an uncollected debt.

Contrary to popular rumour, Members rarely go into arrears on purpose. Losing a job, not submitting paperwork and losing RGI, a personal matter or a misunderstanding are usually the

causes of the arrears. It is embarrassing and frightening for the Member. However, there are Members who damage their units, pull fire alarms, hide income.

The Co-op has asked the City of Toronto to allow two member households applying to go from Market to RGI for every external RGI applicant. The answer was not a 'no' but a 'yes' is extremely unlikely.

Please don't rely on what is said neighbour to neighbour or in the centre lawn area or over a coffee. Ask at the office, contact the City of Toronto, send an email or letter to the Board. Remember, the goal is not to evict for arrears. The goal is to find a way to keep Members housed and not have arrears.

**Bob Fisher ~ 51 Alexander**

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Courtesy of Nick Franco ~ 31 Alexander



## **VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!**

Great news! City Park is opening a Resource Centre which will provide computers for Members' use and a mini library for avid readers. The space selected is at 31 Alexander Street on the first floor – near where the laundry rooms are located. The library will contain assorted books to appeal to a wide range of readers' tastes. We hope to have the space open sometime in May provided the 'physical distancing' order is lifted.

We currently need more volunteers so we can keep the Centre open and available to Members 5 days per week. Responsibilities of volunteers include keeping bookshelves organized and properly alphabetized to ensure that patrons can find the books they want, as well as generally assisting Members on computers. Also, the books will be treated before being shelved to ensure they are free of bugs. The shifts will initially be regulated to 2 ½ to 3 hours – perhaps three afternoons and 2 evening slots. Of course, that may change once we establish which time of day is best suited to Members.

I think we're really fortunate to be able to have a library on the premises – no matter if it's small. Reading books gives people a chance to better themselves and enjoy themselves. There is something in being a 'reader' that is quite empowering.

So ... if anyone is interested in the rewarding experience of becoming a volunteer at the Resource Centre, please contact Ursula Carter @ [animoverite@gmail.com](mailto:animoverite@gmail.com).

Ursula Carter ~ 51 Alexander

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"More people would learn from their mistakes, if they weren't so busy denying them" - anonymous

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## **DID YOU KNOW?**

'Dressed to the Nines' meant that you were rich enough to literally purchase the entire nine yards it took to make a tailor-fit outfit (including a vest, jacket etc.).

'Close but no cigar' – During Carnivals in the 1800s, cigars were rewarded as prizes for winning carnival games.

'Carbon copy' – Before photocopiers were a thing, copies were made by sliding a piece of carbon paper between an original document and blank paper. It's also what 'cc' means in your email.

'At the drop of a hat' – Instead of a gunshot to indicate that a race had started, in the 1800s it was customary to drop a hat to signal the start.

'Pull out all the stops' – This originated from back when organists would literally pull the stops from every pipe on an organ in order to play at maximum volume.

**‘Best foot forward’** – When bowing to nobility, a gentleman would literally put his best foot forward, extending his leg to take the bow.

**‘In the nick of time’** – Through the 18<sup>th</sup> century, businessmen often kept track of debts owed (and interest that built on loans) by carving nicks on a ‘tally stick’. When someone arrived to pay off their debt before the next nick was carved, they’d save that day’s worth of interest – hence, ‘nick of time’.

**‘Burning the midnight oil’** – In a time before electricity, candlelight or lamp oil was used for lighting. When you stayed up late to work, you literally burned the lamp oil at midnight.

**‘Jump on the bandwagon’** – In the mid-1800s, circuses would parade around town before setting up, with bandwagons leading the parade. They drew large crowds, and politicians started renting space on the bandwagons to get face time with an audience.

**‘Get off your high horse’** – Before cars, owning a horse was sign of prominence, since nobility and high-ranking military officials were primarily the ones who owned them. Getting off, meant to humble yourself.

**‘Mad as a Hatter’** – In the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, hat-makers (Hatters) often went insane as a result of

mercury poisoning, a side-effect of manufacturing felt hats.

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### Seeking the Ordinary

Why do we so often seek out the extraordinary when the perfectly ordinary is just what our spirit longs for

Sitting quietly watching and hearing the wind move through the trees

A smile returned from a perfect stranger, surprised to be noticed

A beautiful winter landscape or a sudden summer rainstorm

Just having some time in life to sit and think, and to *be*

The stillness of meditation or an unexpected phone call from a dear friend

A safe lodging for the night and food for the morning meal

Do we really need anything more



## Being With the Body

There can be so much judgment,  
non-acceptance, shame,  
and even dissociation  
from the body  
particularly as it ages

At times it can seem like  
we treat the body  
like our worst enemy

But imagine loving the body  
even as it ages  
just like it was probably first loved  
as a tiny infant

Of course we are no longer  
a small child,  
and even as we age  
the body does continue to change  
moment to moment,  
but we may be able to attend to  
and care for the body  
like it was our best friend

Endless streams of goodwill and  
kindness  
can be showered upon the body  
without any expectation  
in return

A monk once explained that  
after his shock at a cancer  
diagnosis,  
he realized that his body  
was just doing what bodies do

Today we can send  
constant care and support  
to the body  
just as it is

And perhaps especially  
to those body parts  
that are particularly challenged

Renewing our dear friendship  
with the body  
each day  
one breath at a time

John Pollard ~ 31 Alexander

## COVID-19, SELF-ISOLATION AND ME

Until the last few weeks, my  
retirement had been, among many  
other self-indulgences, a smooth mill  
pond of late breakfasts caused by  
equally late nights of television  
watching. It was so comforting to be  
able to wallow in *The Dead Files*, *The  
First 48*, and reruns of the  
inestimable *Vera* without the sword  
of Damocles called regular  
employment with regular hours  
hanging over my head. If motivated, I  
could read my latest Nordic noir all  
night, do laundry in the late  
afternoon in empty rooms, and avoid  
the 4:30 p.m. stampede to the  
mailboxes. All that bliss is now  
evaporated thanks to the  
coronavirus.

I have lived through epidemics  
before: child polio, the thalidomide  
scare, HIV/AIDS, tainted blood,  
H1N1, and SARS, but somehow this  
one, COVID-19, is different. Why? I  
am front and centre in the high  
risk group based on age and  
underlying medical conditions. I  
have been told to self-isolate. Now,



in all fairness, this not a particular hardship for me as I am an only child and quite like my own company. But, in addition, I can't stand within 6 feet of others; I must keep surfaces clean; I must learn how to order in.

My day has taken on a new complexion, new pattern. When I do finally wake up, I drink my morning coffee in front of the television watching CNN, the new drug of choice. Alysa, Jim, Polly, Wolf, and Sanjay all kick in with their take on the news cycle while, in the lower right corner of the screen, my retirement nest egg becomes even more scrambled. A few phone calls to check up on neighbours, shopping list to volunteer caregiver, dealing with emails, and, finally, an internet search on the various websites giving out information on and suggestions for dealing with Covid-19. My committee work can be done online and my exercises can be done in house.

What do I miss? Harassing the employees of Loblaws and Shoppers. Walks. The City Park benches and the speculation as to who is being taken away in the ambulance. I am trying to ensure it is not me.

At least, this time around.

Tom Maunder ~ 51 Alexander

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## THE FIVE DEADLIEST HABITS TO AVOID AS YOU GET OLDER

Bad habits are tough to break.

Even when they're truly detrimental to your health, certain activities can be difficult to give up. Whether it's smoking, regularly indulging in sugary beverages, or binge drinking, there are a handful of practices that experts have linked to an early death.

Before suggesting that these activities were harmful, researchers studied big groups of people over long periods of time.

In one of those studies, published last year in the American Heart Association journal *Circulation*, scientists found troubling links between high intakes of soda and an early death. And in a large review of two studies published in the same journal last year, researchers pinpointed five habits that appeared to be tied with a significantly shorter lifespan.

Here's an overall look at what scientists have concluded are the most harmful habits for your health:

*Drinking sugary beverages and eating processed foods:*

Drinking soda, juice, and other heavily sweetened beverages appears to take a heavy toll on our bodies.

In fact, a new 34-year study of more than 118,000 people suggested that the more sugar people drank, the more likely they were to die from problems such as heart trouble. However, as with many nutrition studies, this one merely involved observing people over time. That means the research could not definitively conclude that sugary drinks are bad — it could suggest only that they might be.

If you're worried about your drinking and eating habits, there's plenty you can do to counteract the problems tied with sugary drinks. Aside from simply avoiding soda and juice, a growing body of research suggests that a meal plan focusing on vegetables, protein, and healthy fats has key benefits. Those include losing weight, keeping the mind sharp, and protecting the heart and brain as you age.

The best diets (and the ones linked with the longest life) involved high intakes of vegetables, nuts, whole grains, healthy fats (such as those from fish and olive oil), and low intakes of sugary beverages, such as soda and juice, processed sweets and breads, red and processed meats, and trans fats and salt.

### ***Smoking:***

Smoking kills. No other habit has been so strongly tied to death.

In addition to cancer, smoking causes heart disease, stroke, lung

diseases, diabetes, and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, which includes emphysema and chronic bronchitis, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Smokers inhale burned tobacco and tar along with toxic metals, such as cadmium and beryllium, and elements such as nickel and chromium — all of which accumulate naturally in the leaves of the tobacco plant.

So it's no surprise that studies find that abstaining from cigarette smoking for life is linked with living longer. If you've already smoked, the research still has good news: Both quitting and cutting back have also been linked with positive outcomes related to life expectancy.

"Smoking is a strong independent risk factor of cancer, diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, and mortality," researchers wrote in one study. "And smoking cessation has been associated with a reduction of these excess risks."

### ***Sitting for long periods of time:***

In general, staying sedentary for lengthy periods of time seems to be awful for your health.

But getting up every once in a while, to do regular cardio exercise is an all-natural way to lift your mood, improve your memory, and protect your brain against age-related

cognitive decline. In other words, it's the closest thing to a miracle drug that we have.

A wealth of recent research suggests that cardio — any type of exercise that raises your heart rate and gets you moving and sweating for a sustained period of time — has a significant and beneficial effect on the brain.

"Aerobic exercise is the key for your head, just as it is for your heart," according to a recent article in the Harvard Medical School blog *Mind and Mood*.

Most research suggests that the best type of aerobic exercise for your mind is anything you can do consistently for 30 to 45 minutes at a time.

### *Being overweight or underweight:*

People who weigh above or below average appear to face a slightly higher risk of death from a range of causes, according to a large recent study that assessed peoples' weight using a measure called the body mass index (BMI).

Researchers like to use BMI for quick assessments of large groups of people. Generally speaking, a BMI of between 18.5 and 24.9 is considered within the 'healthy range' for adults over age 20, according to CDC.

And people who fell within that BMI range tended to outlive their peers who fell outside it, the study found. In other words, people who had BMIs that were either above or below the 'healthy range' lived shorter lives than people with BMIs that fell within that range.

That said, BMI is far from a perfect means of gauging your overall health.

The 1830s-era measure does not take into account a number of key health factors, including overall body fat, gender, muscle composition, or the amount of fat you're carrying around your middle.

This measure, also known as abdominal fat, is emerging as a key alternative to BMI because of its strong links with heart health and diabetes.

### *Drinking heavily:*

It's been tough to pin down the precise relationship between drinking and overall health. A little bit of alcohol (such as one or two drinks per day) seems to be ok. More than that, however, and the benefits appear to vanish.

The most dangerous types of drinking are heavy drinking and binge drinking.

Defined by the CDC as eight drinks or more per week for women and 15 drinks or more per week for men,



heavy drinking has been tied to a host of negative outcomes, including an overall shorter life expectancy. Binge drinking, or having four drinks if you're a woman and five drinks if you're a man within two hours, may be equally or even more harmful, studies suggest.

Other problems tied to heavy drinking and binge drinking include cancer, heart disease, respiratory disease, and injury.

([www.businessinsider.com](http://www.businessinsider.com))



"Be selective in your battles, sometimes peace is better than being right." - Buddha Group



"If women ran the world, we wouldn't have wars, just intense negotiations every 28 days."

"You're only given a little spark of madness. You mustn't lose it."

– Robin Williams



DEAR CRABBY:

CRABBY SOLVES ALL

16/03/2020

Dear Crabby,

In my considered opinion, the world is going to Hell in a hand basket. What is the evidence for this epiphany? Riding the elevator from top to bottom each morning in my building at peak times of usage, I am forced to endure elevator chit-chat. Mother always admonished me for eavesdropping, but, really Mom, it is hard to resist. I have to admit to having a certain curiosity about and hope in what my fellow Members' opinions might be on the issues of the day. Alas, I wait in vain for any pithy insights into melting icebergs, the fires in Australia, Indigenous blockades, or the fact that Jennifer Anniston is now 50. For the last several weeks, the focus of attention was the new toilets. "Installed yet or not? Did Security accompany the installation? Is your crapper too high or too low? Can the bathroom door be shut? I would have appreciated a glow-in-the dark seat. Are there any with soundtracks?"

And so, I reach the basement comforted to know our priorities are in place.

Signed, 'Deeply Disappointed'.

18/03/2020

Deeply Disappointed,

I took the opportunity of checking the files on you and discovered that several NTA's have been issued against you for elitism. Elitism must be expunged wherever it rears its pointy head and the co-op is anonymous in this. So, here are my suggestions to protect your sensibilities while on the elevator: reinforced earmuffs, travelling at off hours, a quarantine sign to ensure no one gets on, hiring a particularly vicious Pomeranian or walking. Socrates is no longer with us. It is now all about Dr. Phil and the demented housewives of Rochester.

Crabby

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**WANT TO FALL ASLEEP FASTER?  
MILITARY PILOTS USE THIS HACK  
TO SLEEP ANYWHERE IN 2  
MINUTES OR LESS.**

*If it works for most people in combat zones, it will work for you.*

For most of us, getting enough sleep isn't a life-or-death kind of thing. Sure, we might make poor decisions, but our being sleepy at the marketing meeting tomorrow is not going to get someone killed.

During WWII, though, the U.S. military quickly got hip to the fact that if fighter pilots didn't get sleep, their poor decisions had dire consequences. Their mishaps included errors that resulted in their being shot down--or shooting down guys on their own side.

Helping combat pilots get good rest fast became a priority.

So, the military brought in naval ensign Bud Winter to develop and test a scientifically designed method of 'teaching' sleep. Winter was previously a successful college football coach who had collaborated with a psychology professor to form techniques to help athletes relax and excel under pressure.

The relaxation hack Winter designed worked: After just six weeks of practice, **96 percent of pilots could fall asleep within 120 seconds**. Even with distractions like gunfire in the background. Even after drinking coffee. Even sitting up.

If it works for combat pilots, it will work for you, regardless of how stressed you are about that meeting tomorrow.

Here's how to do it:

**1. Get into a comfortable position.** Obviously, if you're in your bed, this is a non-issue. But if you're out and about, get into the most comfortable position that's feasible (i.e., lean

your seat back if you're in your car; find the most comfortable chair in the conference room if you're napping at work).

### 2. Relax your face.

This is key to the whole thing. You have 43 muscles in your face, and they're a big part of how your body knows whether you're stressed.

When you fully relax your face, you send a physiological signal to your body that all is well. It's safe to sleep. So, close your eyes and relax your whole face: forehead, cheeks, tongue, and jaw. Let it all go slack. You'll notice as you do this that your breathing naturally starts to deepen and slow.

Now make sure your eyes are fully relaxed. You have six muscles in your eye sockets; feel them all go limp.

### 3. Drop your shoulders.

Let them get heavy, and then let them go completely, as if they were falling down toward your feet. Let the back of your neck relax and go limp. Take a deep breath and let it out slowly, releasing any remaining tension there (most people store most tension in their shoulders, necks, and jaws).

Now your arms: Feel them get heavy and relax, starting with your dominant side. If you're right-handed, start with your right bicep and feel it relax. If it's not, tense it

fully and then let it go slack. Repeat the process with your hands.

### 4. Let your legs go limp.

Feel your right quad sinking down, getting heavier and heavier. Next your right calf, ankle, and foot. Repeat on the other side.

### 5. Clear your mind for 10 seconds.

Now that you've fully relaxed your body, all it takes to fall into a deep sleep is to turn your brain off. (This is like that moment after you switch your cellphone off when it takes another few seconds for it to fully power down.)

What you really want to avoid are any thoughts that involve movement ('I've got to pick up that dry-cleaning tomorrow'; 'Did I remember to put out the recycling?'). These thoughts actually prompt involuntary movement in your body. You don't realize it, but just thinking about something causes micro-contractions in certain muscles.

Winter has some tips for what to 'think' of instead--and remember, you're holding this for 10 seconds straight:

First, we want you to fantasize that it is a warm spring day and you are lying in the bottom of a canoe on a very serene lake. You are looking up at a blue sky with lazy, floating clouds. Do not allow any other thought to creep in. Just concentrate on this picture and keep foreign thoughts out, particularly thoughts



with any movement or motion involved. Hold this picture and enjoy it for 10 seconds.

In the second sleep-producing fantasy, imagine that you are in a big, black, velvet hammock and everywhere you look is black. You must also hold this picture for 10 seconds.

The third trick is to say the words "don't think . . . don't think . . . don't think," etc. Hold this, blanking out other thoughts for at least 10 seconds.

And that's it. When you have a fully relaxed body and a mind that's still for 10-plus seconds, you will fall asleep, period.

Remember that the pilots practiced the method over and over, and 96 percent of them achieved success after six weeks of practice. These weeks of practice are a worthwhile investment, because once you have it down, you can nap and sleep anywhere, which will dramatically improve your quality of life.

Sweet dreams.

([www.inc.com](http://www.inc.com))



## WHO REMEMBERS THESE?



## SUBMISSIONS TO LINK

All Members are encouraged to submit material of interest to the Membership for consideration in LINK. All submissions must include your full name, building and apartment number. Kindly attach original unformatted MSWord docs to your email or type your article within the body of an email and send to: [CityParkLINK@gmail.com](mailto:CityParkLINK@gmail.com)



for reading this issue of LINK. If you are about to throw it away,

kindly take it back to the rack at the front door so another Member can read it. Much appreciated from your friends at LINK.