



# OCAsional News

The Newsletter of the Ontario Camping Association

June 2001

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Special Needs Roundtable:

## Camps and accessibility

Special Needs Resource Committee

The following conversation took place at the Ontario March of Dimes office in Toronto, on May 10, 2001, at the last OCA Special Needs Resource Committee meeting before the summer season begins. The participants were:

**LC:** Lyssa Caine, Camp Joshua

**SG:** Sari Grossinger, Camp Robin Hood

**BH:** Barb Hnatiak, Easter Seal Society

**NH:** Nancy Hopkins, Ontario March of Dimes

**DM:** Donna McKay, Ontario March of Dimes

**CS:** Cathy Smart, Tourism Toronto

**CS:** Owners don't tell the full story - it doesn't tell the full story when you just see the universal access sign and that's it. What does tell the full story though, is: "Oh and by the way, our entranceway is accessible, our tuck shop is accessible, our washrooms are accessible. We have one cabin that's accessible, and A, B and C buildings are not accessible. We are working towards it, it's in our budget, our business plan; however, that's what you can expect currently, as far as wheelchair users are concerned. This is what we have as far as larger print is concerned, this is what we have as far as lighting is concerned. This is what our terrain is like for people who shuffle or people who are blind." So just to tell the story and to celebrate it, to include it in all your literature, your own literature with your camp. And then to tell the story to the Ontario Camping Association, so that we can get the story across, and so we're not setting anybody up. There's no surprises on either end.

**SG:** And if they can add that into their camp's website, then they've got their story right there, specific to their camps, so the parents aren't getting any surprises, because a lot of parents, at night once their kids are asleep, that's the time they access the internet and ask those questions, and read through the literature.

See Special Needs Roundtable, page 14

## Nestlé products to remain nut-free

Nestlé Canada is pleased to announce that it will continue to manufacture Nestlé Smarties, Aero, Kit Kat, Coffee

Crisp and Mirage in a peanut/nut-free environment. This reverses a previously announced plan to cease production of these products in a peanut/nut-free environment as of January of next year.

"We have been truly overwhelmed by the emotional chord that our original decision struck with consumers," said Graham Lute, Senior Vice-President, Nestlé Canada. "Since our announcement three weeks ago, we have received several thousand letters, phone calls and email messages from Canadians, with and without peanut/nut allergies, asking us to reconsider our position. We've read every email and letter. We've listened to consumers and moved quickly to reverse our original decision. We will pursue other options to satisfy the growing segment of consumers who want peanut/nut chocolate products."

"We realize that consumers need choice and we have tried to be both responsive and responsible in meeting this need," Lute added.

See Nestlé, page 5

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The official newsletter of the Ontario Camping Association, the *OCA'sional News* is published monthly from October to June of each year. The newsletter helps to keep the OCA membership informed about developments both in and out of the Association pertaining to children's, youth, and special needs camping.

Views expressed by contributors are not necessarily those of the Ontario Camping Association.

Queries regarding submissions and letters to the editor are welcome. Please direct correspondence to:

*OCA'sional News*  
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## The view from here

One of the privileges of this position is having the opportunity to view things from a slightly different perspective. Four months into the job I have even more admiration for the tremendous talent that so many members contribute to making our camps and our staff even better so that our campers can benefit from the summer even more.

Bev oversees an increasingly efficient office which offers more services to our members and acts as the "HUB" of the Association. As Membership Secretary, Kim has several camps interested in becoming members. She is "the voice" of the OCA, often being the first contacted. Her cheerful manner and efficient expediting of our needs is much appreciated. John has been instrumental in developing the new OCA website.

In May I was at Seneca College to observe the Health Care Workshop and the Counsellor Conference. Over 500 people attended. "The Master" Ted Cole (Walden Canada) entertained and taught us with songs and stories. Then everyone went to their choice of sessions - very active, very involved. As Michael Bakker (Pickering College Day Camp) said to me about Barb Weeden's (Seneca - King Day Camp) organizational skills, "Isn't she amazing, just amazing?" Actually the whole conference committee led by Joe Richards (Taylor Statten) was amazing - a fine day for new ideas.

Earlier this week, I "observed" at a Conference 2001 steering committee meeting. In spite of his credulity about email viruses, Robin Squires (RKY) seems to have everyone moving along well. Some of the things I learned:

- If you want someone to negotiate a fine contract, call Ellen Nash (Northland - B'nai Brith)
- If you want to set up an interesting and innovative program that includes all of our kindred groups, and attract

new delegates too, get Larry Bell (Robin Hood) and Barb Weeden

- If you need a magician to figure out the numbers we need to make the Conference financially sound, call Rob Carmichael (CampBrain)
- If you need someone to introduce innovative ideas to the "Hospitality Suites", and round up an enthusiastic crew to do it, look to Todd Fraleigh (Camp Trillium)

Our camps are nearly ready to open. As I mentioned at the Counsellor Conference, a quarter of a million kids will attend our camps this summer - what an opportunity we have, individually and together, to really make a difference! On behalf of the Board, I wish every camp and every member health and happiness. As you begin your "trek" - "May the FORCE be with you."

### Board Bulletins

Our busy Board had a busy year. The accomplishments of the Association and Board over the past year include:

**Website:** we have a brand new site, with new features such as: online searchable database with expanded search criteria, online job board, and special needs section

**Ipsos-Reid Survey** in conjunction with the CCA: the results will be available in the fall; special thanks to Ellen Nash and Jill Dundas

**Public Awareness:** newspaper articles were placed in regional media, National Post, Toronto Star; we also ran Camp Day at the Kortright Centre; thanks to Duncan Robertson

**Political:** the Minimum Wage presentation was very professional; we look for positive results; thanks to Dave Graham, Joc Palm, Larry Bell, David Lever



**Waterworks:** issue seems stable for now; more concrete decisions will be forthcoming in the fall; thanks to Cliff Labbett and Lisa & Bruce Wilson (Camp Oconto), Dave Graham (Kandalore) and Ellen Nash

**Task Forces** created: Conference Evaluation and Viability; Executive Director; Our Kids Magazine

**New Camp Members:** 13 newly accredited camps, 11 new provisional camps to date. Thanks to Polly Marston (Camp Hurontario) and Kim Mitchell (OCA office)

**Standards Committee:** over 85 visits this summer, many involving new visitors; thanks to Catherine Ross and her committee

**Standards Task Force:** now a permanent committee; our standards can be continuously upgraded; thanks to Craig Hartley (Centauri Summer Arts) and Howard Oretsky (Individual Member)

**Health Care Video and Manual:** both are receiving positive reviews; thanks to Mary Casey (Camp Big Canoe), and Pearl Bell (Camp Robin Hood) and the committee

**2000 Annual Conference:** good reports about content; financially, did better than the previous year; thanks to Joc Palm (Glen Bernard Camp) and a very fine hardworking committee

**2001 Annual Conference:** the committee membership is nearly finalized; some very fine ideas for program, participation and content have been initiated; a big "How How" to Robin Squires and his committee

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TBA



# Website update

by John Zachariah, OCA Production Secretary

Late in 2000, the OCA signed a web hosting agreement with Web Networks in Toronto; in March, we launched a new OCA website. Visitors to the site now make frequent use of our new online searchable database of OCA member camps, built by Web Networks. The search function offers visitors more search criteria than our previous online database, and also displays a greater range of information about the camps - each camp's listing is almost exactly the same as its listing in the *Camping Guide*. Check your listing for accuracy, and make sure that we have set the proper search criteria for the camp. For instance, if you run a girls-only horseback riding camp in Eastern Ontario with a price range between \$500 and \$600, go to *search for a camp* on the OCA website and choose these criteria. If your camp does not come up when you submit the search, get in touch with John in the OCA office.

Another popular destination on the new site is the online job board, introduced in January. Online help-wanted classifieds cost the same as classifieds in the newsletter: \$20 for the first 25 words, and \$15 for each additional 25 words. Member Camps can run the same ad both in the the newsletter and online at a 25% discount of the total price - which means they get one of the ads for half price.

Online ads offer new benefits to the membership: they reach more people who are looking for work; camps

can provide a link from the ad directly to their website or email address; and they can post anytime of the month or year - not just when the newsletter comes out.

We recently posted a new special needs section to the website. The special needs charts from the *Camping Guide* make up the core of this section; however, these charts will soon be replaced by new search options in the camp search section. Visitors will choose from a list of special needs when they search for a camp, and will get a list of camps (if any exist) that accommodate campers with the special need specified.

The special needs section will also offer resources for the public and the membership: information from both the OCA Special Needs Resource Committee and from other sources, and links to online resources: funding sources, community supports, medical information, etc.

Over the summer, we will develop a member's section of the site: a preview of this section can be found at [www.ontcamp.on.ca/membersite.html](http://www.ontcamp.on.ca/membersite.html). This section will contain information for OCA members: dates for meetings and events, mini-sites for OCA committees, documents and order forms. It will eventually be protected with a password distributed only to OCA members. Password-protection will mark a clear line between that part of the site intended for the public, and that intended for the membership.

To help develop the OCA website for both the public and the membership, the OCA Board recently approved the forma-

tion of a permanent Website Committee, which will have the same standing as other committees within the OCA, and which will be headed by a chair. The Website Committee will develop the OCA site the same way other committees work on the newsletter, conferences or standards. The committee's mandate covers many different aspects of the site's development and maintenance, all of which are meant to improve or facilitate communication with a broad and diverse range of stakeholders both within and outside of the OCA. If you want to get involved, call Bev at the OCA office.

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## OCA Spirit of Summer Camp at Kortright

by Duncan Robertson,  
OCA Public Awareness Chair

A big thank you to everyone involved in the Spirit of Summer Camp at the Kortright Center on May 6th. It was a big success. There were over 1,200 people there on Sunday, many of whom participated in the day by either doing our tree climb, playing one of our field games or enjoying some campfire-cooked goodies. It was a big step in creating awareness for the OCA and the nearly 300 camps that are available to the public. Thanks again to Sam Butcher (Onondaga Camp), Michael Bakker (Pickering College Day Camp), Barb Weeden and Kevin (King Day Camp), Jill Dundas, Sheri Steffler, Ester Mihkelson (Girl Guides of Canada), Kimberly and Laura (Kinark Outdoor Center), and Markus Fehr (Manitou-Wabing). We hope next year will be even better!

### Sexual Abuse Insurance

[www.jdsmithinsurance.com](http://www.jdsmithinsurance.com)  
JDS Shield Insurance Plan  
1-800-917-SAVE



## Conference Corner

Robin Squires,  
Chair, Conference 2002

Here's a quick pre-summer update for all of you about the OCA Conference 2002.

The Steering Committee has been hard at work, pulling together volunteers to plan the conference from top to

bottom and getting as much input as possible about what you'd like to see in February.

The dates for the conference are set! They are February 14-16, 2002. And I'll keep reminding you so that you can mark it in your daytimers for next year.

We'll be at the Sheraton Parkway North, which has the benefit of two different price levels for rooms. Rooms at the Best Western part of the hotel will be \$99, and rooms at the Sheraton part will be \$139 (\$149 with jacuzzi).

The conference educational streams will include:

- Introduction to/Review of Basic Camp Management on Wednesday
- Kindred Program on Thursday to be co-ordinated through Sub-Class Board Representatives
- Educational Forum on Friday/Saturday for Camp Directors/Owners/Senior Staff
- Saturday Leadership Forum for seasonal staff

Look for more details in upcoming issues - but expect a new, exciting Hospitality program for all delegates; a vibrant Exhibit Hall; the return of the AGM to the Conference on Friday night; educational sessions that look well into the future of camping; energetic and exciting keynotes; and plenty of opportunities to network with colleagues from around the camping world!

Plenty more details will come in the next issue! If you ever have any suggestions for the committee, or you'd like to help, please don't hesitate to email me directly at [rkycamp@kingston.net](mailto:rkycamp@kingston.net). The conference can't succeed unless it does the best to include your input and suggestions!

Have an amazing, safe, and happy summer, everyone!

*Nestlé reverses decision,  
continued from page 1*

"With this decision, we remain the only national confectionery company to provide a variety of popular chocolate products

manufactured in a peanut/nut-free environment."

"Peanut and nut allergies are a growing concern," said Dr. Susan Wasserman, Allergist, Clinical Immunologist, McMaster University, The Firestone Chest and Allergy Unit at St. Joseph's Hospital, Hamilton. "People with this type of condition face limited choices. So do teachers, parents and friends living or working with allergic individuals. They have to be careful too. I commend Nestlé's efforts to provide allergic adults and children with viable options."

The company's decision is effective immediately. However, because Nestlé's original intent was to allow peanut/nuts into its factory by January of next year, it had to begin changing its packaging much sooner, to give consumers advance notice. As a result, an allergy alert will temporarily appear on a limited number of product packages now in stores. The company is in the process of producing new packaging.

"We want to reassure Canadians that these products were manufactured in a peanut/nut-free environment and do not contain peanuts or nuts," said Lute. "We invite consumers to visit our web site at [www.nestle.ca](http://www.nestle.ca) or call us at 1-800-387-4636, if they have any concerns or questions."

*This press release was taken from the Nestlé web site: [www.nestle.com](http://www.nestle.com)*

## WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I SUSPECT CHILD ABUSE?

Did you know that the laws about protecting children and reporting child abuse changed April 1, 2000? Does your pre-camp training include information about child abuse prevention, recognition, intervention and your staff's legislated responsibility to report suspicions of child abuse?

A Toronto Child Abuse Centre workshop will help all camp staff to understand:

- the definition of child abuse and when to report
- who is legally responsible for reporting suspicions of abuse
- how to report suspicions of child abuse
- what to do if a child/parent discloses abuse
- how to document suspicions of abuse
- how to maintain a positive client relationship after a report has been made

The information and discussion shared in this workshop will help camps to develop proactive policies and procedures for responding to children and families when abuse is suspected. There will be time to ask questions, to better protect the children in our community.

Help prevent child abuse - you can make a difference! For more information and to arrange a training session, please contact Pearl Rimer at the Toronto Child Abuse Centre: 416-515-1100, x230. We look forward to being part of the safe and wonderful summer experience you are planning.

## The Sign of a Good Camp

*in an easy-to-use size!*

8.5" x 11" OCA Signs are available from the OCA office. Buy one for \$14.00, or two for \$25.00.

*A few large signs still available too!*

**Order yours today!**





## What you should know about West Nile Virus

### What is West Nile Virus?

- The West Nile virus is a mosquito borne virus.
- Mosquitoes transmit the virus after becoming infected by feeding on the blood of birds which carry the virus.
- West Nile Virus is not transmitted directly from person to person and there is no evidence that a person can be infected from handling infected birds.

- In rare cases, West Nile Virus can cause meningitis (inflammation of the lining of the brain and spinal cord) or encephalitis (inflammation of the brain). The elderly, the very young, and those with suppressed immune systems are most at risk for severe illnesses.
- The West Nile Virus is not new. The virus is named after the West Nile District of Uganda, where it was first identified in 1937. It is most commonly found in Africa, West Asia, and the Middle East.
- The virus was found for the first time in North America in the late summer and early fall of 1999 in New York City. In 1999, 62 people got sick and seven died from the disease including one Canadian who had visited New York City during the time of the outbreak. In 2000, 21 people got sick from the virus in New York City and the states of New Jersey and Connecticut, resulting in two deaths.

### Has West Nile Virus been found in Canada?

- To date, West Nile Virus has not been detected in Canada. However, it has been found in birds in New York State counties bordering Ontario. It is probable that it will find its way to Canada.

### What are the signs and symptoms of West Nile Virus?

- The majority (75%) of humans infected with the virus show no symptoms or may have very mild symptoms.
- Symptoms of West Nile Virus generally occur three to 12 days after being bitten by an infected mosquito.
- Some may experience mild symptoms such as fever, headaches, and body aches that are often accompanied with a skin rash and swollen lymph glands.
- More severe infections, which occur in less than 1% of infected people, may involve headache, high fever, neck stiffness, disorientation, coma, muscle weakness, paralysis and in rare cases, death.

### Is there a treatment?

- There is no vaccine against the virus to protect animals or humans.
- There is no specific treatment for the West Nile Virus. The main treatment is supportive therapy to reduce the severity of symptoms. Most people who are infected with West Nile Virus recover.
- People who are exposed to the virus can become immune to it.

### What can be done to reduce the spread of the virus?

- The most effective, economic and environmentally friendly way to prevent the spread of the West Nile Virus is to eliminate mosquito breeding areas.

### For more information:

#### Health Canada

- [http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hpb/lcdc/publicat/info/wnv\\_e.html](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hpb/lcdc/publicat/info/wnv_e.html)
- [http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hpb/lcdc/publicat/info/wnvyou\\_e.html](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hpb/lcdc/publicat/info/wnvyou_e.html)
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#### Ministry of Health and Long Term Care

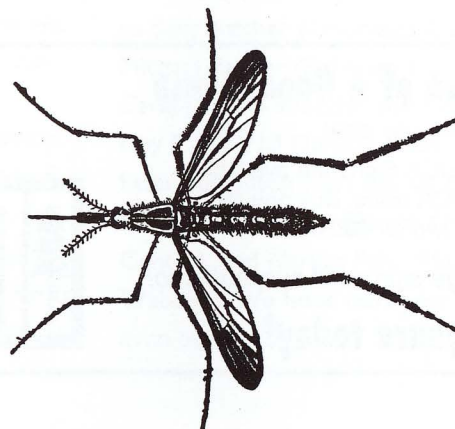
- [http://www.gov.on.ca/MOH/english/program/pubhealth/wnv\\_bul/wnv\\_mn.html](http://www.gov.on.ca/MOH/english/program/pubhealth/wnv_bul/wnv_mn.html)

#### Toronto Public Health

- [www.city.toronto.on.ca/health/west\\_nile\\_index.htm](http://www.city.toronto.on.ca/health/west_nile_index.htm)

To learn more about the transmission cycle of the West Nile Virus:

- [www.cfe.cornell.edu/risk/WNVTransCycle8-4-00.pdf](http://www.cfe.cornell.edu/risk/WNVTransCycle8-4-00.pdf)





# Ten ways to prevent skin cancer

Adapted courtesy of the Canadian Dermatology Association

1) Keep sun exposure to a minimum, especially between the peak hours of 11 am and 4 pm, when the sun's rays are the strongest.

2) Use a sunscreen liberally, and reapply every two hours when working, playing or exercising outdoors. Sunscreens with an SPF (Sun Protection Factor) of 15 or more, containing UVA as well as UVB protection, are recommended to prevent sunburn, skin cancer and premature aging.

3) Beware of clouds, since up to 80 percent of the sun's harmful rays can penetrate haze, light clouds and fog.

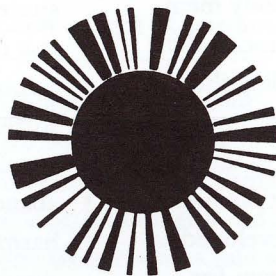
4) Wear appropriate clothing during prolonged periods in the sun, including a hat, long-sleeved shirt, and pants.

5) Beware of reflective surfaces: snow reflects 85 percent and water up to 100 percent of the sun's damaging rays. As much as 60-80 percent of UV radiation is transmitted through the first 30 cm of water in a pool.

6) Examine your skin, and your children's, regularly for any

changes in moles, freckles or skin discolourations.

7) Avoid tanning salons and sunlamps: the ultraviolet rays they emit can cause sunburn and premature aging of the skin, reduce the immune system and increase the risk of skin cancer.



8) Protect children by keeping them out of the sun or minimizing sun exposure. Sunscreen should only be used on babies six months and older.

9) Teach children and teenagers sun protection. Damage caused by sun exposure over the course of a lifetime and one severe childhood or adolescent sunburn will double the risk of developing skin cancer later in life.

10) Protect your eyes: too much UV radiation (from the sun or tanning beds) can cause wrinkling around the eyes and cause long-term damage to the eyes. When you are in the sun, wear sunglasses with UVA and UVB protection. If you choose to use tanning beds, always wear eye protection.

**Slip on a Shirt! Slap on a Hat! Slop on Sunscreen!**

## Canadian Camping Comes to Japan

by Steve Doubt,  
Shikoku Canadian  
Global Camp

Shodoshima Island, in the Seto inland sea of Japan, is famous for its olive trees, so-men (a type of thin noodle) and as the setting of the renowned Japanese novel and movie *Twenty-Four Eyes*.

This summer, the island will become the home of the Shikoku Canadian Global Camp, a unique attempt to bring the traditions, goals, philosophy and benefits of Canadian camping to Japan. During an era when many Japanese feel that their traditional educational system is failing, amidst a faltering economy and increasing generation gap, many parents here want alternatives.

Traditionally, camps in Japan have

been places to experience nature, be outdoors and learn camping skills. The experience lasts two or three days, and all activities involve the whole camp group, with little or no individual choice. SCGC hopes to introduce North American concepts of individual growth, through co-operative learning and leadership.

Whereas traditional Japanese camps strive towards an awareness of nature, SCGC hopes to encourage an awareness of self by encouraging creativity, self-confidence and independence.

The idea to establish a Canadi-

an style camp was the project of Toshiyuki Umehara, the President of JR Shikoku, and Chikako Naosaki. Naosaki-san is a Japanese national, who grew up in Japan and now lives in Toronto. As a teenager, she attended the Canadian Adventure Camp, and her

See *Canadian Camping in Japan*, page 12

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# Child protection: everyone's responsibility

Pearl Rimer, Program Manager, Public Education & Training  
Toronto Child Abuse Centre

On March 31, 2000 amendments to the Child and Family Services Act (which contains the legislation that protects children in Ontario) came into effect. The goal of these amendments "is to promote the best interest, protection and well being of children."

To successfully protect children, community members must follow through on their legal and moral duty to report suspicions of abuse. Only by fulfilling this responsibility can the child protection system act in partnership with services within the community to investigate and protect children/youth and support families.

The Toronto Child Abuse Centre has developed an award-winning comprehensive training program for community service providers entitled Making A Difference: The Community Response To Child Abuse (see announcement on page 5). Key components of the Making A Difference Program are discussed below.

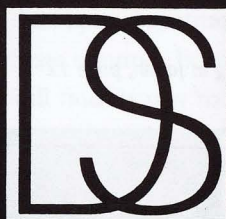
## Duty To Report

The legislation specifies and describes 13 situations that constitute reasonable grounds to suspect that a child under the age of 16 is in need of protection:

- physical harm and negligence in caring for a child
- risk of physical harm
- sexual molestation or sexual exploitation of a child
- risk of sexual molestation/sexual exploitation
- failure to ensure appropriate medical treatment for a child
- a child's suffering serious emotional harm as demonstrated by certain symptoms
- risk of such emotional harm
- refusal to access needed treatment for a child who suffers from a mental, emotional or developmental condition
- abandonment by a parent
- harm inflicted by a child to another person or property because of inadequate supervision
- failure to access necessary treatment for such harm

Anyone who has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is being abused or is at risk of abuse is required to report immediately to a Children's Aid Society. Those who suspect abuse must report directly to the CAS, and cannot rely on another person, such as a supervisor, to make the report on their behalf. Direct reporting limits potential inaccuracy, and allows a Children's Aid worker to ask clarification questions directly to the person who is concerned about a child.

"Reasonable grounds" are what an average person, given his/her training, background and experience, exer-



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cising normal and honest judgment, suspects as abuse. "Reasonable grounds" do not mean that a person has to be sure that a child is in need of protection; he or she is responsible for reporting suspicions of child abuse, not for proving whether or not child abuse has occurred. If an individual has concerns or doubts regarding a suspicion of abuse, the best option is to consult with a Children's Aid worker who is in a legal position to decide if a report should be made. No one else is in this position, and therefore it is inappropriate to ask anyone else to help decide if a report should be made. Consultation with a Children's Aid Society should also occur before informing a parent/caregiver that a suspicion of child abuse has been reported, as such action could jeopardize the child and/or an investigation. It is the responsibility of a Children's Aid Society to investigate, with police where necessary, gather evidence, assess the child and family's situation, and respond appropriately.

The sharing of any information related to a suspicion of abuse with any staff members, staff in training, members of the Board of Directors, volunteers, and campers and their families should be done in consultation with a Children's Aid Society. This includes any worrisome behaviour that may have occurred between campers; discussing the details of such behaviour violates the privacy of children and families. Once a report has been made, it is important for the Camp Director and the Children's Aid Society to plan together for how to most effectively respond to the situation in a way that will support the child/youth and family, reduce the potential for additional trauma and meet all legal requirements. This includes when to notify the families involved about the report. It is critical to remember that the Children's Aid

worker takes the lead role in this process.

The legislation now clarifies that even if a previous report(s) has been made to a Children's Aid Society, if additional suspicions arise, further reports must be made. This ongoing duty to report allows a Children's Aid Society to respond to protection concerns and to evaluate the most effective intervention in light of any new information.

In Ontario, a consultation call or report can be made to a Catholic Children's Aid Society, Jewish Family and Child Service, a Children's Aid Society, or in some areas Native Child and Family Services. All Children's Aid Societies can be called anytime of the day or night. Information on how to reach the nearest Children's Aid Society can be found in: the emergency numbers page at the front of the white-page telephone book; the alphabetical (business) listing of the white-page telephone book; or by calling the local police department.

While all people have the duty to report, the CFSA continues to include an offence for professionals who fail to report, with a fine up to \$1,000 upon conviction. All persons making a report of suspected child abuse in good faith are protected from civil action. In addition, the CFSA states that the duty to report suspicions of child abuse overrides the confidentiality or privilege in any other provisions. Therefore, a confidence cannot be kept if it is related to a suspicion of child abuse. (The only exception to this is the lawyer-client relationship.) These statutes emphasize that the health, safety and well-being of children is the greatest priority.

### ***The Hesitation To Report***

One phone call can save a child from serious harm, perhaps even death. It

may be the most important intervention that can be done for a child and yet, it is not done nearly enough. There are several reasons why individuals, including camp staff, hesitate or fail to report suspicions of child support.

It is common for people to have difficulty believing that child abuse exists in a family with which camp staff have had a positive ongoing relationship, or where no obvious indicators or risk factors are present. It must be remembered that child abuse occurs among all socioeconomic groups and family structures. In fact, it is not uncommon that abuse is discovered in families where the possibility of such would not have been considered.

Questions like "What if I am wrong? Am I overreacting? Shouldn't I have proof? Will my action throw the family into unnecessary chaos?" may plague someone, but doubts should never prevent anyone from consulting or reporting. In some cases, there are no physical injuries indicative of abuse or a child has not given a clear disclosure of maltreatment. Waiting for further evidence to clarify concerns may have devastating consequences for the child and family. Consulting/reporting to a Children's Aid Society may be the catalyst whereby the family receives the intervention necessary to stop the violence, and support that facilitates change before long-term consequences occur.

Camp staff may hesitate to report suspicions of abuse for fear that they may have to face an emotional situation with a parent. Maintaining a positive client relationship where there is a suspicion of abuse is a concern for all camp staff. It is helpful if the Parent Handbook includes a section that clarifies for families that reporting to a Children's Aid Society is a binding legal

*See Child Abuse, page 13*



## R & D at Summer Camp

by Carol and Wayne Campbell, Hila Science Camp

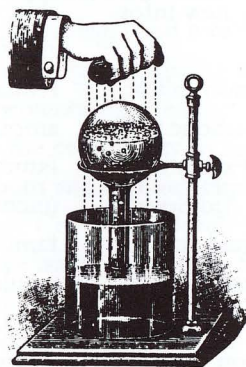
Hila Science Camp, in the Upper Ottawa Valley, offers children an opportunity to develop skills in science and technology while taking part in research and development projects. We believe that scientific skills and knowledge develop quickly when learned in context, that is, developing skills while working on an exciting project or increasing knowledge while solving an intriguing mystery.

With our summer camp we have an opportunity to develop this type of experiential learning. Research & Development has been a large part of Hila's program since its inception in 1984. Over these 16 years, campers have assisted in the design of ultra light aircraft, natural insect control, biochemistry, remote electronic sensing, diving robots, computer games, model rocket launch systems and space studies.

To develop skills and an interest in biochemistry, campers at Hila have been involved in a project to collect a variety of local plants and then separate and collect DNA from each species. Understanding this life-shaping molecule may lead to cures for serious diseases and to new knowledge about the origins of life on earth. A technique for extracting DNA was developed at Hila: you can try this at home - just follow the instructions at [http:// hilaroad.com/camp/projects.html](http://hilaroad.com/camp/projects.html).

Astronomy is a big part of the camp's evening program. Variable stars have interested astronomers for centuries. These stars periodically change brightness, perhaps because a planet orbits in front of them, blocking light. Computers make it possible to study and analyze these stars at summer camp. Check out Hila's web site for images of the variable star Beta\_Lyra, an eclipsing binary. Research like this may lead to discoveries of planets and perhaps extraterrestrial life.

Humans have been documenting and recording the world around them for thousands of years. This summer,



campers at Hila will continue this important work with digital cameras, GPS units and the internet. Campers are creating an archive of detailed images of Canada's forests, wetlands and urban areas complete with precise locations and times. As we change the environment we live in, these "postcards from the past" will become of increasing scientific interest.

Taking part in activities like this can be a positive, life shaping experience. I know my interests in astronomy, nature and technology are all traceable to experiences I had when I was young. An afternoon with a great uncle who kept honeybees, an evening with a family friend who had a telescope, a father who built model aircraft - these experiences triggered a life-long interest. We are trying to create experiences like that at our camp. Many of Hila's former staff and campers have gone on to careers in science and technology, focusing their lives on the compelling problems and intriguing mysteries that surround us.

Marc Auger, a former camper and counselor at Hila, left this testimonial on the camp's Internet Guest Book: "A long time ago I was a camper and a counselor at Hila and thanks to the camp I have built and driven three race cars through school. The skills I learned and developed through Hila have helped me work as a mechanical engineer for Daimler Chrysler as well as a design engineer for GM. Due to the thirst for knowledge I developed at Hila I am back in school pursuing a Master's in Mechanical Engineering."

## Welcome to our provisional camp members!

Brockville Y Adventure Day Camp  
Campfire! Children's Summer Bible Camp  
Chilawee Trails Camp  
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## Learning Stories

by Darryl Reiter, Children's Technology Workshop

We don't use insect repellent and there are no iodine crystals here. Not even a paddle. We have padded chairs, air conditioning, high-speed Internet and play with Lego. A lot. That's what participants at The Children's Technology Workshop look forward to during a week at our five-day summer camp program.

Why Lego at camp? Aside from the science and technology reasons that we've been promoting for years, Lego allows us to develop a "Learning Story" with each of our campers. Seymour Papert, an MIT technology professor who studies how children learn, coined the phrase to help describe the learning process. Papert is the author of "Mindstorms," a pioneering book on computers and children's education. A learning story is a "case study" into how someone went from A to B through the learning process. Learning stories detail the pitfalls, errors, "ah ha!" moments and realizations a learner goes through. Learning stories take experiences from the present as well as from our past.



At The Children's Technology Workshop, our staff create plots that focus on different themes. These stories use technologies such as computers, video conferencing cameras, palm pilots, a variety of software, hardware and Lego. A participant at our summer camp program who chooses the "Mission to Mars" story will be involved in creating robots with Lego, documenting using digital cameras, making a website or other presentation media and creating animations for and about the mission. The process the child goes through during the evolution of the mission is both a learning story – the method of how they attained the final project through trouble-shooting, testing, research and development of devices, and an activity in story telling.

The goal of the curriculum is to pique the interest of young boys and girls in the areas of science and technology but to not isolate these from the humanities and social studies. At the same time we want to teach children fundamental life skills through the application of current technologies such as computer technology, global positioning, hand-held computing and software applications.

These learning stories are each focused on the interests of the individual participants, who are actively engaged by being a part of the plot. Children experiment, problem solve,

think critically and work collaboratively with others. The creative nature of the program promotes learning and thinking, and indeed, how to learn and have fun. Paramount to the success of all our camp programs is the evidence in these last two concepts.

Learning stories are not isolated to computers and children's education. All camp directors and instructors should apply the concept in their own environment. Using the current activities that your own campers are engaged in, think about the story behind the process. Retell the stories, document them, and learn from them. Learning stories are love stories, adventure stories and exploration stories. Guide your campers through the learning process by teaching them how to tell their own learning story at camp every day.

*Darryl Reiter is the owner of The Children's Technology Workshop, an applied technology workshop where children invent, create and build with technology. Darryl is a former science teacher and director of information technology.*

## Are you thinking about selling your camp?

You may be concerned about what will happen when your camp changes hands. I am an interested buyer who wants to purchase an established camp, and continue the traditions and programs that the previous owners had put in place.

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needs of the group, but the needs of the individual, are recognised.

In August of last year, three delegates from JR Shikoku spent two weeks in Ontario, touring several OCA camps, taking notes and affirming that a Canadian style camp was exactly the sort of experience they wanted to provide for the youth of Japan.



The JR team has since thrown itself full force into the camping community, attending the International Camping Conference in Tokyo last fall, where Jeff Bradshaw, the Director of Camp Wenonah, helped them set out the objectives of SCGC. Since then, members have attended Armand Ball's camp management workshop and a Project Adventure workshop, and intend to become involved in several of the training sessions offered by the Japanese Camping Association. Through their partnership with Camp Wenonah, SCGC hired three Canadian staff, including me; I will lead the programs and train the staff this summer. As the Canadian Director of SCGC, I arrived in Japan at the end of March and immediately began to lay out the program, staffing needs, training program and everything else that is required to set up a camp. The other two Canadians will function as program co-ordinators leading the bulk of the programs, and guiding the Japanese counsellors through-

experience there eventually led to her dream of establishing a similar camp here in Japan; a camp where not only the

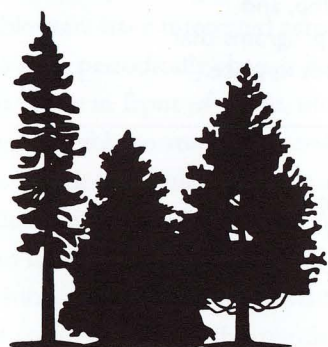
out the summer.

This year will serve as a trial run, during which the staff will learn the mechanics of Canadian camping, providing them with the skills to teach others in years to come. I am excited to see how the very unique culture of Japan adapts to an energetic, Canadian style camping environment. I am sure that in the future, as Japanese and Canadian cultural and camping traditions grow together, the result will be quite impressive. Whatever the outcome, it will certainly be unique.

The "cabins" are in fact tatami rooms. In space-efficient Japan, campers will sleep side by side on futon mattresses, kept in the closet during the day, and laid out across the floor of the room by night. From 4:30 pm until dinner is bath time. Campers can bathe and soak in the warm Japanese bath, a calming institution of Japanese society.

Communication at the camp will be a mix of Japanese and English, with language improvement opportunities offered in both. Building a co-operative, creative, active environment offering individual choice to campers of all nationalities, we hope that this is the beginning of a system that will help to promote growth within the unique character of each camper here in Japan, as it has done for so many years in Canada.

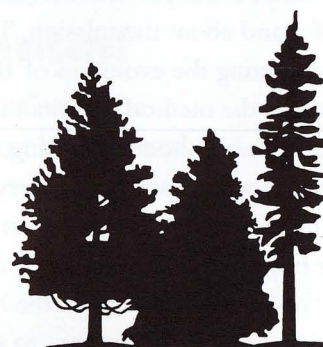
*Steve Doubt, a veteran staff member at a number of Canadian camps, has recently begun a new role as Director of new Camp in Japan through his alumni involvement with Camp Wenonah in Ontario, Canada. Steve shares some of his thoughts about the upcoming first season of the Shikoku Canadian Global Camp.*



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# PFDs: To Wear or Not to Wear? ...that is the question!

Catherine Ross, Chair, Standards Committee

At the OCA annual conference in March, the Standards Review Task Force, which has been meeting for a year, presented a session on possible changes to the current standards. When the task force completes its work, the Board will vet the revised document. The proposed Revised Standards will then be submitted to a vote of the entire membership.

At the conference session, the standard which caused the most heated discussion was PB1: Do all persons in all boats wear PFDs at all times? At present, this is a recommended standard. After considerable deliberation and debate, the Task Force is recommending that this become a mandatory standard.

Currently, 83% of our camps adhere to this standard. There are 218 member camps in our association that offer boating as part of their program. In their most recent standards visit, 182 of these camps answered yes to PB1 while 36 answered no.

Both the Canadian Red Cross Society and the Life Saving Society strongly endorse the wearing of life jackets.

The aim of the Red Cross Water Safety Program is to prevent water-related injuries and fatalities. The twelve-level AquaQuest Program teaches participants to PREPARE, STAY SAFE, SURVIVE by making WISE CHOICES. A recurring component of the graduated levels is the inclusion of PFD education. AQ5 has the candidate demonstrating how to be a safe boater by selecting and putting on an appropriate PFD and know-

ing why a whistle should be attached.

The LifeSaving Society is dedicated to saving lives through drowning prevention. In the Canadian Life Saving Manual, under Behaving Responsibly When Boating, the first item listed is wearing a lifejacket.

In The Drowning Report 2000 Edition, a profile of drowning and water-related deaths in Ontario, we read that "not wearing a PFD continues to be a major problem for pleasure boaters. About 2/3 of 1998 recreational power boating (74%) and canoeing (61%) victims were not wearing PFDs when their fatal incident occurred, which usually involved capsizing."

Some camp directors argue that it is unnecessary for a strong swimmer to wear a life jacket if the lake is calm and the water warm. Maybe, with the exception of the qualified canoe trip leader who tipped out of his solo canoe on a warm August evening on a calm lake while practising running prys. He quickly panicked as his water-soaked jeans and shoes dragged him down. Fortunately another canoeist from a distance recognized the danger. When we cite exceptions to the rules, we risk some young people, who believe themselves to be immortal, making poor choices.

For others, wearing a lifejacket has become a habit. As one young staff person describes it, "Putting on my life jacket in a boat is the same as putting on my seat belt in a car."

It won't work if you don't wear it!

*Child Abuse, continued  
from page 9*

requirement where there are concerns for the safety, well-being or protection of a child. It is also pertinent to include information on the limits of confidentiality, and that informing parents of any calls to a Children's Aid Society are done in consultation with authorities.

Although the fears and hesitations to reporting are understandable, they do not outweigh the risk of future abuse to any child. Childhood victims have limited opportunity for protection and must rely on others to speak for

them. Approach reporting decisions from the child's perspective, always doing what is in the best interest of the child. Although it is difficult to grapple with a suspicion of child abuse, remember that abuse is unlikely to stop without outside intervention. Individuals, including campers, who have

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**Camp staff may hesitate to report suspicions of abuse for fear that they may have to face an emotional situation with a parent.**

demonstrated worrisome physical and/or sexual behaviour, if not addressed appropriately, could continue such abusive interactions with others.

Camps must ensure a safe environment that protects the health, well-being and protection of the children in their care. This includes supporting all staff in responding to any suspicions of abuse, both legally and morally. Participant feedback on the Making A Difference Program has been positive. After participating in the training, individuals were more confident in their ability to both identify and report child abuse.



NH: You don't put the story for every camp on the OCA website, it's just when you follow the link, and then you find that.

CS: So, really, we need to get buy-in from the membership of the OCA: first of all, let them know that part of their sites are really accessible, really great; second thing is: to start celebrating that in print.

DM: Yes, and educate camps not to be afraid, that if they aren't accessible, it's not the end of the world - that at least they are somewhat, and they're trying to work towards it.

LC: It's not that they may not be accessible, it's just that they don't realize they are accessible to certain people.

NH: You know Jay Lake campground over in Minden? In their brochure, they did exactly that: they did a little insert that goes in their brochure, and it's totally friendly: this is accessible, this isn't. Our tuck shop isn't, but we'd be glad to go in and get you whatever you need.

SG: Yeah, we can say to the camps: These are the points when you're writing your friendly walk-through. We suggest every camp write this friendly walk-through, and we're going to give you the actual points to do it. We can break it down to say, "this is what you need to think about when you're writing your little blurb, and it shouldn't take very long because it's just answering some questions.

CS: So basically, they're doing a self-audit. And I always encourage people, if they can at all, to get them-

selves into a chair, to go around their site. And that'll really drive the message home big time. And we can be bold - we can say, "Look, members, get yourself a chair. Get to Doncaster and spend the 25 bucks or whatever it is to rent it for the day, if you're really serious about this" - it's a huge learning experience. I mean, I can't tell you how many hoteliers I've trained now who have been in chairs and said, "Oh my God, I didn't realize this was so challenging."

### At Camp

SG: For our younger kids, sometimes we use wagons; so when the kids are at camp, the wagon's waiting as soon as they get off their bus, if mobility's an issue for walking longer distances, sitting on a wagon, and another child can always come in, so there's always a peer that wants to be with them, and encourages that social interaction, but they've saved their energy to actually participate in those activities. And then you don't necessarily need to use their wheelchair. Sometimes we have kids come with their Batmobiles to camp. So they use either adapted bicycles or trikes at camp, that stay at camp for the length that they're at camp, and that helps with their mobility around the campsite, and then they're able to spend their energy at the activities.

LC: They wouldn't have their wheelchair?

SG: Some of the kids that don't need their wheelchair for their support for doing fine motor activities - there are some kids who use their wheelchair more for longer mobility issues, and

those are the kids to which we'd say, Do you have a bicycle or a wagon that we can use? For a child that

needs a wheelchair for support as well, then that is when you look at the mobility - like using a Wheeltrans in the area to get them to and from camp. And sometimes kids will have a power chair and a manual chair. So sometimes you can say to a family, Can you bring up your manual chair for the time that they're staying at camp, and at home, use your power chair in the evening, is that OK?

LC: We did that too. We actually partnered with one of the conservation areas. They have actual all-terrain wheelchairs which are very sturdy, and they were more than willing to lend them out to us so that a child could attend the day camp. Sometimes we picked it up, or they brought it by - whatever. But they showed us how it went - it is a manual chair. It's just a lot bigger, and it was able to get through our forests a lot better. And we worked with them, and it worked out really well.

BN: One of the big things that we're doing this year, one of our priorities related to parents, has to do with a three day plan; so looking at the first three days of camp, and identifying every day what kids' parents need to be called. From a formal standpoint, to say, "This is happening," and "You're the expert - this is not working: give us more information." Much more formalized than we've done before. And I think that the real important piece in that is helping the younger staff feel like it's OK to say, I don't know how to do this - it's not working. It's not like this whole reflection on them: "I'm not qualified, I didn't pay attention in training" - you know, that anxiety thing that happens for young staff. We're not the experts. We have these kids for two weeks or four weeks. The parents are the experts; they've figured out all this stuff. Let's call the experts.

CS: And the kids are the experts.

***I always encourage people, if they can at all, to get themselves into a chair, to go around their site. And that'll really drive the message home.***



BN: How do you do this at home?  
What does Mom do when you have a headache?

SG: But the other side is getting that fresh new staff and saying to them, You come with your own perspectives. And so sometimes, even the best experts haven't thought of every angle there is to it. And sometimes getting that fresh new person says, Here's a new direction. So we always try to stress that with our first year staff, so they're not feeling as uncomfortable.

DM: Do you offer a chance for the camper and parent to come up before? Because often, for a child with disabilities, the transition, if it's a new experience - it might help initially to come into the camp, to see the camp.

SG: We offer the pre-camp open house, where they can actually come up and see the counsellors, or even, we say, if you're driving down in the area, do you want to come and play in our playgrounds; and our playgrounds have been made accessible - now the playground companies in the States have to have that accessibility side to things. So camps should be aware when they're ordering new playground equipment to try and make it as user friendly for everybody. But our site manager has come up with going to second-hand stores - I guess these second-hand maintenance stores - so he's actually bought handrails and things that would have been very expensive to go to a Shopper's Drug Mart to buy. So he's adapted a lot of our bathrooms just with these re-use things. But our swings too - he's bought old tumble forms and covered them up, and now they're supportive swings in our playgrounds that cost next to nothing.

BH: One of the things that we did this year was put in pocket doors on bathrooms, because our old cabins are . . .

they're old, and they're not built for big chairs. And they're not expensive. I think they're about six, seven hundred

bucks each, that would immediately make it accessible for a kid to go in and close the door.

SG: How about where the kids fall into the toilet? People who don't have enough support - and they fall in. It used to only be, you could buy seats in a specialized store for a child, they used to build up the ring in the toilet, so that it was smaller. And now they have, at Home Depot - you can buy these toilet seats commercially, where the little piece, the little reducer ring, flips up when an adult's using it, or goes down when a little kid's using it. And at Canadian Tire, you can buy the little stools that have friction on them, so that for someone who doesn't have great balance, when changing, we encourage the kids to use those for changing . . .

NH: You know you were saying you wanted to send this thing around to all the camp directors? Well, what about at a later date, send them a one page notice - did you know you can buy this flip-flop thing at Home Depot . . .

CS: A resource list

NH: . . . because that reinforces the idea that you can go to these places, and they're not expensive - because these are great ideas.

CS: We go to the reuse centre all the time to take things in and to pick stuff up for our home, and it's phenomenal what you can get there - you can get almost brand new window frames for next to nothing.

LC: Even taking that one step further -

**We're not the experts. We have these kids for two weeks or four weeks. The parents are the experts; they've figured out all this stuff. Let's call the experts.**

when you're handing stuff out, maybe eventually down the road what we should be

doing is looking at not only our standards - what we have outlined and our upcoming new standards that are going to be coming out next year - but also the standards visitors. They're the ones who are going to be going out on a regular basis to camps every two to three years. Why not train those standards visitors who are going out?

SG: They have the one-night training for all visitors - we should ask to have a part of that meeting to be able to review how important it is.

CS: And, listen to this - I'm just going to go into a meeting at 1:30 this afternoon to receive a checklist or an audit list - I'm working quite closely these days with the Ability Foundation, and we're working on . . . So, when you get to that stage, come to us, and we'll be able to train these people. Because right now, I'm gathering people in the community who are going to go out and do audits of our membership, so we will certainly extend that to the Ontario Camping Association.

LC: As a visitor's going in, why not take a few minutes of their time - they'll be looking around anyways.

CS: It's a huge safety issue - and it will also pull the owners and directors: "Oh I thought this was up to code." No it's actually not, but don't panic, you just need to pay attention to it.



## Classifieds

**Camp Nurse:** Camp for children with diabetes requires RN's/RPN's for 2-8 weeks. June 30 to August 26, 2001. Pre-camp orientation provided. Ontario registration required. Contact: Monica Glaab RN. DNE. 29 BlueForest Crescent, RR#5, Guelph, ON, N1H 6J2, 519-822-2922. Mary Perez RN. 10 Chatterson Dr. Ancaster ON L9G 3X2, 905-648-5148.

**POSITION AVAILABLE:** On-site assistant - facility manager/couple required for private residential outdoor education centre/summer camp located near Alliston, Ontario. Full time/part time duties may include some or all of the following depending on skills and/or interests: liaison with visiting groups, food preparation, maintenance, instructing outdoor education, cross-country skiing, cleaning. Call Ken 705-435-4479 to discuss possibilities. Mansfield Outdoor Centre Box 95 Mansfield, Ontario. L0N 1M0, 705-435-4479 or FAX 705-435-3370 mansfield@sympatica.ca

**RECREATION COUNSELLORS** needed for live in summer Cottage Program for developmentally disabled. REENA: Fax: 905-763-8272, email: hr@reena.org

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Kidventures - Bob Hayward Branch  
Kidventures - Centre Branch  
Marshes and Moccasins  
Camp McDougall  
Camp Trillium - Rainbow Lake  
Toronto Montessori Day Camp - Caledon/King Campus  
Camp Woolsey

with youth and an understanding of the issues they face are essential. A background in some of the following areas would be an asset: Group Leading, Leadership Development, Experiential & Outdoor Education, Knowledge of inner city issues and community resources, Trip Leading, Risk Management. Summer contracts range from 2-8 weeks with option of year-round weekend employment. \$2600-\$3800 for the summer. Please contact: Vicky Boomgaardt, Director of Programme Services, Trails Youth Initiatives, 15635 Warden Avenue, Newmarket, ON L3Y 4W1. Phone: 905-836-0100, Fax: 905-898-0741, email: vicky@trails.ca.

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