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# After School

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Volume 13 Issue 3, 2011

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## issues for Tim Hudak

**Charles Hawkes raises seven issues that demonstrate the danger of a Tim Hudak provincial government**

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|--------------------------|-----|--------------------------|-------|
| Editorial page           | 2   | Considered - Book Review | 12-13 |
| ARM Chapter 12 Survey    | 3   | Steve Fuller's Toronto   | 14    |
| The Hudak challenge      | 4-5 | ARM watches the Royals   | 15    |
| Presidential Perspective | 6-7 | EFG                      | 16    |
| The Retired Bard         | 10  | Fall Golf Tournament     | 16    |
| Curmudgeon's Corner      | 11  |                          |       |

## Calendar

**September 21 Fall Golf Tournament** See page 16 for details

**September 22 — Homecare and community care** presentation followed by lunch at Jerusalem Restaurant, 4777 Leslie St, north of Sheppard. \$15. Confirm attendance with Jim Loftus, 416 447-0811

**October 13 — Trent River Cruise.** Visit Peterborough's historic Hutchison House (built in 1836-7 and now with a book store) with ARM C12s who will take a cruise on the Trent River from there to Lakefield and back, past Trent University, with luncheon served aboard; in addition, there will be a stop on the way back from Peterborough at The Archibald Orchard & Winery, all for only \$85 including

transportation. If interested, please call Rosemarie Mohring at 416-425-6677 before September 19th for a reservation.

**October 19 — ARM C12 Luncheon. Topic TBA. 10 am**

**December 7 — Xmas party, location TBA**

**January 10 — ARM Chapter 12 2012 Golf School.** Each session will consist of one and a half hours of practice with one or two pros available to give instruction and/or pointers to participants. The 90 minute sessions will be conducted on the upper deck (21 stalls). The school runs weekly to from January 10 to March 13. The series costs \$232. Metro Golf Dome, 125 Milner Ave (McCowan & 401). Contact Jim Loftus, 416 447-0811

**March, date TBA — Curling Bonspiel**

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## Editorial Chatter

**The Royals and ARM Chapter 12** We never expected to be at the Royal Wedding, but ARM Chapter 12 has its correspondents everywhere. Rosemarie Mohring shares her story of attending the wedding of Andrew and Kate in May.

**Ian Cameron** takes on a serious read, *Death of the Liberal Class* in this issue's Considered department. When we ask ourselves the question, "Where did we go wrong?" this book provides some compelling answers. **One of our members, Glenn Miller**, provides After School with his creative work, *Dreaming Kathmandu*. Unfortunately, we cannot show you the entire work since Miller provides us with 225 pages of fascinating reading. With Jim Head's help, we managed to bring you a review, some samples of Miller's prose and the book's very colourful cover.

**Polls of voters are a little unnerving** in advance of the October 6 provincial election. Tim Hudak is showing strongly. Our political action chairperson, Charles Hawkes analyses Hudak's promises and record — a chilling read. Imagine Prime Minister Harper and Mayor Rob Ford completing a triumvirate with Hudak, a Harris scion. To do our part, we can assist the 15 candidates whom District 12 OSSTF endorses. Contact Hawkes for more information, [cahawkes@rogers.com](mailto:cahawkes@rogers.com).

**Most days, rich chocolate desserts** are not what he doctor ordered, but Stephen Fuller tempts us with an attention-getting recipe for chocolate mousse cake. Let's see, if I skip lunch for two days . . .

**This issue sees the return of Paul Rook's** popular column, Curmudgeon's Corner. As you may already recognize, Rook has a keen eye for the absurdities of our society.

**Newly elected president, Manfred Netzel**, takes over Presidential Perspective in this issue. His report on the Annual Meeting illustrates that we not only had a meeting, we had an enjoyable meeting and dinner.

**What do you want ARM Chapter 12 to be?** What kind of activities would you attend? Do you want to be involved with ARM's planning of events and services? Please complete the survey on page 3 -- the Chapter 12 Executive will be grateful to receive your thoughts on activities and participation.

**Toni Michalczuk has the perfect solution** to those "Gee-I-miss-the-classroom" blues. Encounters With Canada is a week in Ottawa for secondary school students and teachers. Check out her article about her week in Ottawa with a group of high school students from across Canada.

## Active Retired Members Chapter 12 (Toronto) Executive

|                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| President:          | Manfred Netzel 416 767-8786  |
| Vice- Presidents:   | James Loftus 416 447-0811  |
| Secretary:          | Toni Michalczuk  |
| Treasurer:          | Eric Dempster  |
| Executive Officers: | Charles Hawkes<br>Paul Headdon<br>Boris Mischenko<br>Rosemarie Mohring<br>Karma Naike<br>Neil Walker<br>Don Wright |
| Members at large:   | Ian Cameron<br>Ralph Cowan<br>Marion Evans<br>Steve Fuller<br>Julia Harney<br>Mel Herman<br>Bea Levis<br>Jim Mile  |

## After School Volume 13, Issue 3, August 2011

*After School* is the official publication of Active Retired Members of the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation, Chapter 12 Toronto (ARM C12)

Opinions expressed in *After School* are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the policies of Arm Chapter 12 or of the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation.

Submissions are always welcome but will not be returned. All submissions are subject to editing for length and style while respecting the author's intentions.

Editorial Team: Ian Cameron, Larry French, Paul Rook, Stephen Fuller, Sally Pengelley, Neil Walker

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# Member activity and participation survey

***Vision without action is a daydream. Action without vision is a nightmare – Japanese proverb. “Nothing happens unless first a dream” – Carl Sandburg***

The planning of activities for ARM members may be somewhat akin to selecting a gift for a loved one or friend. The gesture may be deeply appreciated but not the gift.

In that sense, therefore, the program planners on ARM’s Executive would deeply appreciate membership input, advice and assistance in developing and delivering a range of activities designed for small or large group participation.

Listed below is a range of activities of which at least one, hopefully, will appeal to the interest, and desire to participate, for any ARM member and family or friends. A member’s interest and willingness to participate in an activity may be indicated by placing an A, B, or C in the appropriate columns as follows:

**A=Coordinator of B=Committee for C=Participant only**

| Activity                      | A, B, C | Activity                         | A, B, C |
|-------------------------------|---------|----------------------------------|---------|
| Social-Recreational-Sports    |         | Education-Health-Financial       |         |
| Scheduled Luncheon Mtg’s      |         | Mentoring Tutoring               |         |
| Occasional Luncheons          |         | Elder Study Groups               |         |
| Café Outings                  |         | Fitness-Weight Training          |         |
| Bridge Club                   |         | Swimming-Aqua Fit                |         |
| Book Club                     |         | Health & Aging                   |         |
| Walk-Hikes                    |         | Home-Long Term Care              |         |
| Golf Tournaments              |         | Estate-Financial Planning        |         |
| Golf Indoor Training Sessions |         | Travel Planning                  |         |
| Golf Coaching Clinics         |         | Travel Tour                      |         |
| Curling-Fall/Winter Bonspiels |         | Travel Cruises                   |         |
| Curling-Occasional Player     |         | Out of Country Retirement        |         |
| Bowling-5/10 pin Alley        |         | Edu Pack Product Search          |         |
| Bowling Outdoor - Lawn        |         | Cell / Internet Plans            |         |
| Bowling Indoor – Lawn/Winter  |         | Computer Clubs                   |         |
| Tennis – Tournament Player    |         | Computer Training + Email Skills |         |
| Tennis – Occasional Player    |         | Phone Messaging To Members       |         |

Please note: Any ARM member may suggest additional activities to be included as sub-sets of those listed above.

Completed surveys may be faxed or e-mailed to: ARM Chapter 12, c/o Jim Loftus – (416) 447 0811 or loftaire@gmail.com

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# Seven Issues to raise with Tim Hudak

As the Provincial Election nears, the platform of poll-leading PC leader promises Harris-style cuts to public services

**By Charles Hawkes**

With the Ontario provincial election coming up on October 6, here are seven issues that might be raised for clarification with frontrunner, Tim Hudak. The centrepiece of his PC platform is a promise to cut taxes, leave education and health untouched, and eliminate the deficit by 2017. How consistent and credible is Hudak's approach to Ontario's problems?

*1. A promise to eliminate the HST from hydro bills, home heating bills*

In April 2009, Hudak endorsed the HST proposal as a 'great idea'; later on in September 2009 he vowed to fight it 'tooth and nail; in July 2010 when it came into effect he labeled it 'Dalton's sales tax' or the DST; then, in May of 2011, he told a reporter that in general, he accepted the GST as 'beneficial to Ontario and business'. Now in June 2011, he promises to remove the provincial portion of 8% from the HST on hydro and home heating bills. He has commented that the \$4.3 billion federal payment to Ontario to ease the transition to the HST might be a problem ('the poison pill') if the HST is partially eliminated.

*2. The health care premium issue*

Hudak first promised to eliminate the premium that brings in \$3 billion per year until an aggressive attack by Deb Mathews on February 3, 2011 to a nurses convention claimed that Hudak, if

elected, would have to slash health care spending to make up for the shortfall. The PC office issued an immediate denial of any plans by Hudak to eliminate the premium. The next week, however, Hudak told reporters that 'all options' were being considered to give tax relief including the health tax.

*3. A PC government will increase health care funding by \$6.3 billion, or 12.8 per cent by the end of its first term*

Over four years this increase works out to 3.2 per cent per year, less than the rate of Ontario inflation. The PC planned increase is also less than the Liberal increase to the health care of 4.2 per cent in 2011 and even that resulted in hospital service cuts. Hudak states that savings in administration can be found in health care such as closing local health integration networks (LHIN's). With an increase in the aging population, it is difficult to see how Hudak can avoid cuts to health care.

*4. The debt retirement charge. Hudak promises to eliminate the debt retirement charge that adds about \$6.00 to residential hydro bills*

He claims that the stranded debt (originating with the Tories when they privatized Ontario Hydro in 1999) was \$7.8 billion. He reasons that since this amount matches the total amount hydro users have paid since then, the debt has been paid off. The debt retirement charge has now become "a

cash cow” for the government. However, there is a problem with this line of reasoning, one familiar to all mortgaged homeowners: a debt also includes besides the principal, interest payments, which last year amounted to \$1.6 billion on the total hydro debt that actually actually adds up to about \$14 billion.

*5. A streamlined welfare system*

Hudak would allow welfare recipients who work part time to keep more of their benefits, but would require all recipients to be residents of Ontario for one year before receiving welfare. A lifetime ban on the worst repeat offenders of welfare fraud would be imposed.

A recent study by a national auditing firm concluded that the rate of welfare fraud was low, amounting to about 3 per cent of the Ontario welfare budget. The Ontario provincial auditor made a revealing comparison to this rate of fraud. He reported that, in 2002, of 763,000 corporations, 355,000 or 50 per cent did not file income tax returns. Hudak also gives no figures as to the number of repeat welfare offenders in Ontario, or the amount of money that would be saved by a lifetime ban.

*6. Prisoners would be required to perform 40 hours of manual labour, cleaning up public places.*

Such a program would be costly and difficult to introduce. Jails are designed so that a relatively low number of guards can monitor a large number of

prisoners. Outside, extra guards would be required in parks and neighbourhoods where citizens would feel threatened by convicted criminals. Two thirds of the 2,700 prisoners in provincial jails are awaiting sentencing and thus would be ineligible for such a program. Other inmates have mental problems which make them unsuitable for such work. Rival gang members would have to be segregated from

each other on work gangs. The Harris government dropped a similar program in 2002 because of these problems.

*7. In 1995, this pledge was made: Total spending will be reduced by 20 per cent in three years, without touching a penny of Health Care Funding,” the Common Sense Revolution*

*proclaimed.*

“This plan guarantees full funding for health care, law enforcement, and education spending in the classroom.”

Tim Hudak served as a junior minister in the Harris government. He was there when Harris closed over two dozen hospitals, laid off 6200 nurses, provoked the largest teacher work stoppage in Ontario’s history, destroyed Ontario’s non-profit hydro system thereby causing continuous increases in rates, sold highway 407 for a song, and cut welfare rates

What guarantees can Hudak make in 2011 that he will not initiate policies similar to those of his mentor?

None.

**The Ontario provincial auditor . . . reported that, in 2002, of 763,000 corporations, 355,000 or 50 per cent did not file income tax returns**

# ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2011

ARM Chapter 12 holds “A damn fine meeting”

By Manfred Netzel

“That was a great meeting... and the food wasn’t bad either.” When was the last time that you heard this remark by anybody in the education

health benefits, trips and recreational activities and an enlightening PowerPoint presentation on the current financial crisis by a top Canadian

Auto Workers’ (CAW) economist, Jim Stanford. There was also tribute paid to our outgoing Chapter President Karma Naiké for her dedicated leadership and passion that she brought to the job. And, of course, the catered in-house buffet dinner at the hosting Latvian Centre wasn’t bad either.

Without repeating the entire agenda, it is useful to report on the strong and consistent message delivered by our OSSTF leaders at the

provincial and local levels about the imperative for all supporters of public education to commit as much time as possible in the concerted action plan to prevent a victory by the Tim Hudak-led Conservatives in the upcoming October 6th Ontario election. The recent political trends amongst Toronto and Ontario voters that saw both Rob Ford and Stephen Harper win election and gain seats could repeat itself in the fall if organized opposition is not effective and tar-



Incoming president, Manfred Netzel, expresses ARM C12’s appreciation to outgoing president, Karma Naiké

business?

Well, if you had been at the ARM Chapter 12 AGM on June 8th, you would have heard it yourself or maybe even shared that opinion. Although not an impartial observer myself, I do think that on the agenda there was something for everyone, ranging from political action reports from OSSTF President Ken Coran or District 12 Executive Officer (and former PAC Chair) Paul Kossta, to reports about pensions,



**OSSTF President Ken Coran addresses ARM C12 AGM**

geted.

OSSTF is encouraging its members, active and retired, to promote and actively support in their campaigns the 15 Liberal and NDP MPPs in Toronto that the federation has endorsed. We must not see their num-

bers decline in the face of an aggressive and buoyant Conservative campaign. Needless to say, the local Ford Machine and the federal Tories will be pulling out all the stops to bring about a victory for Tim Hudak. Can you imagine such a scenario?

Since you and I vividly remember the Blue



**Chairperson Paul Rook keeps the Annual General Meeting moving well**

Plague of the Mike Harris years in the 1990s, we cannot in good conscience allow a repeat of this political landscape for either our family members and friends currently in the education sys-

tem, nor for the rest of Ontarians employed in the public sector. In fact, when Hudak was running to replace John Tory for the PC leadership in 2009, one of his biggest campaign advisors



**Jim Stanford, Canadian Auto Workers economist, made sense of the economic crisis we face**

was none other than Mike Harris! As retired educators, we should feel a moral duty to help derail the Conservative agenda because we already know that it will attack public services and those who provide them in the pursuit of privatization and greater imaginary efficiencies in the delivery of those services. As your new Chapter 12 President, I am committed to mobilizing the Executive and membership to participate as effectively as possible, in the OSSTF political action strategy for the October election. Will you be there as well?

If you don't live within the boundaries of the City of Toronto, the goal must still be the same even if the dynamics of your local community are different from the City. Please contact me, Charlie Hawkes, Ian Cameron or Don Wright if you need more information or are willing to assist with the Chapter's role in the OSSTF Political Action Plan. I can be reached at (416) 767-8786 or by e-mail: [mnetzel@sympatico.ca](mailto:mnetzel@sympatico.ca)

# Encounters With Canada

A week full of activity, learning and fun in our nation's capitol

By Toni Michalczuk

Having just spent a most enjoyable, informative week in Ottawa as a Teacher/Monitor for the Encounters With Canada program, I felt I had to share my experiences to encourage other energetic retirees to offer their services sometime.

Encounter With Canada is a program begun in the 1980s to help foster bilingualism, cross-Canada culture and knowledge about our government and Canadian institutions. Students in grade 11 who apply to attend the one week program are often sponsored by their schools, Ministries of Education or local legions. They stay at the Terry Fox Centre in dorms and get to know other students from across Canada.

Six teachers are needed per week to oversee the well-planned and organized activities, forums, discussions, tours and visits that take place in the centre and around Ottawa. Use of both official languages is encouraged and even those who speak only one of the languages try to use the other official language as often as they can.

The program runs from September to April under the following themes:

- Politics in Canada
- Science and Technology
- Canada Remembers
- International Affairs
- Law
- Medicine and Health
- Youth Forum
- RCMP
- Arts and Culture
- Ecology and Environment
- Journalism and Communication
- Sports and Fitness
- Vimy - Canada's Coming of Age

The theme of my week, February 26-March 5, 2011, was Politics in Canada. There were 84 students from across Canada and six Teacher/Monitors. Most of the students came from BC, the Maritimes and Quebec. There were only three students from Ontario because, unlike ministries in other provinces, Ontario's Ministry of Education no longer supports or sponsors this

program.

We visited Parliament Hill and sat through Question Period. The behaviour in the House was quite an embarrassment. Students questioned how any work ever gets done with all the bickering and interruptions. Students also had the opportunity to spend time with their local MPs.

Back at the centre, guest speaker Judge Springate was most informative and entertaining.

Other places we visited during the week were the RCMP Headquarters and Police College, the stables housing the horses from the famous Musical Ride, the Supreme Court where we participated in a mock trial, Rideau Hall, the Royal Mint and Laurier House.

At the centre, students in their groups worked on projects, debates and discussions on the following topics:

- Bilingualism in Canada
- Diversity, Human Rights and Multiculturalism
- Canada's Role as Peacekeeper
- Canada's Capital Think Tank

MPs Justin Trudeau and Mauril Belanger, as well as members of the Parliamentary Intern Program came to speak to the students, keeping them engaged and interested. Major Wayne MacCulloch shared his experiences as Peacekeeper in Kosovo and Afghanistan and led a discussion about our peacekeeping role. Later in the afternoon he led a very moving memorial tribute to our fallen soldiers. Students recited a special prayer and placed candles on the veterans' graves.

Evenings were spent learning yoga, African dance or trying out giant trampolines. We also attended a ballet, a symphony concert and a dramatic presentation at the National Arts Centre. One evening was devoted to visiting the Museum of Civilization for guided tours, experiencing Native music and dance and watching the film *Everest* on the Imax screen.

Skating on the Rideau Canal, snowshoeing in the park and taking part in the Haunted Walk were also great experiences. Students had to group together according to their provinces and present a skit highlighting their

provinces and territories.

Strong friendships developed over the week as students got to know one another more closely. Every activity encompassed the use of both French and English and often provided much humor. The students from the West knew very little French or none at all. They felt they really never got the opportunity to learn or use French. They were quite surprised to learn that many of the Francophones had the same problem with English.

If you feel inclined to learn more, go online and search Encounters With Canada. All the information you need can be found there. You will have a wonderful time as a Teacher/Monitor, working with incredible young people. Your transportation will be taken care of. Your living quarters are at the centre in a private room complete with TV, computer and bathroom. You get

some time off and attend all tours and events at the expense of the centre.

Since many boards of education no longer pay for supply teachers, classroom teachers don't apply to attend as they did in the past.

I attended as a Teacher/Monitor several times in the 1980's and 1990's before amalgamation, when the Etobicoke Board encouraged teacher participation and sponsored students from each school every year. Alas, this is no longer the case and it is especially difficult to get students and teachers from Ontario to attend. It is a shame that the most populated, wealthiest province can no longer offer support that all the other provinces across Canada do.

You can enjoy a week in our beautiful capital city, get to work with some incredible young people, and practice your French. Go for it!

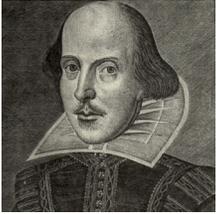
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## Fall Golf Tournament

Join your friends on September 21 for 18 holes and a good lunch  
Details on Page 16



Jim Loftus, golf tournament organizer and fund raiser, prepares to tee-off at the Spring Golf Tournament.



The Retired Bard

# Glenn Miller's *Dreaming Kathmandu*

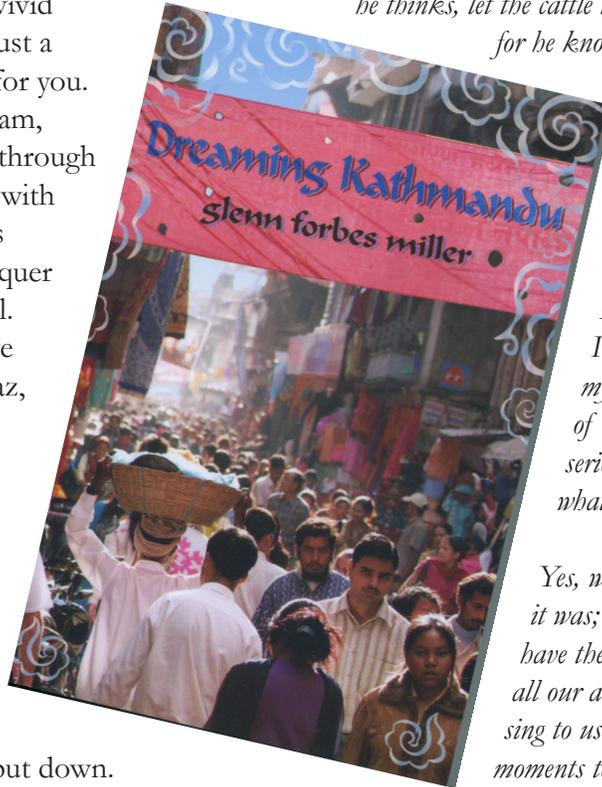
By Jim Head

If you like a spirit of adventure, vivid prose, arresting photographs or just a good read, then Glenn's book is for you. Starting from his home in Markham, Ontario and the decision to hike through the high plateaus of Kathmandu with his family, Glenn leads you on his personal journey in Nepal to conquer the mountains and satisfy his soul.

This is a very honest book; we hear the thoughts of his wife Graz, his two adult children, Megan and Andrew, and Glenn himself, dealing with the mountainous trails and the human dynamics that quite often threaten to overshadow everything else. Yet the Diarist lets the beauty of the place sink into his very being and produces an account of poetic prose that you cannot put down.

Let me take you into the book for a brief selection of style and insight.

*Outside, somewhere, a street dog is barking, and its barking sets off another, and then, farther away, a third joins the chorus. But he does not much care; let the street dogs bark*



*he thinks, let the cattle lie down and rest, let the fish sleep, for he knows sleep will come; and with first light he will awaken and he will find himself dreaming in Kathmandu.*

*I'm taken back, bowled over.*

*I was terrified, Graz avers. I thought I was going to die, to slip and fall to my death. No, no, I will not walk out of here. I want a helicopter. And I'm serious. I want a helicopter. I don't care what it costs.*

*Yes, we had some moments. That was how it was; that was who we were. And we all have them, those moments when life claims all our attention, and adventure seems to sing to us with arresting clarity. Those are the moments to remember.*

And dare I say it – to dream.

**Purchase *Dreaming Kathmandu* through the Chapters, Amazon or General Store Publishing House websites. the publisher's URL is [gsph.com](http://gsph.com). To purchase through the author, email [glennmiller45@rogers.com](mailto:glennmiller45@rogers.com)**

## Glenn Miller, an accidental author

An accidental author—that's what I am, for I never set out to write a book. All I intended with my note-taking was a travel record of the Asian strangeness of Kathmandu's street life: I couldn't take my eyes off it. And when we trekked the Himalayas, I couldn't divert my eyes or my thoughts or my pen from the remote and primitive loveliness of Nepal's alpine regions. For two hours a day I documented everything, even our conversations.

Returning to Toronto, I transcribed my belletristic scribbles onto my word processor (while I could still read my own handwriting), and then I put it in a drawer. Two months later, anticipating the pleasure of reading my own words, I re-read it,

and was appalled, appalled at my clichéd and pedestrian prose. Of course, one could say, But it was a first draft, after all. But, it wasn't, for I wasn't writing a book, I was just writing.

So I commenced re-writing under a compulsion to write better for I was an English teacher once, just one sentence at a time, for 200 pages. It took me two years. And when I started to like what I'd written, I started saying to myself, "I like it. I want to turn the page and find out what happens next," only then did I overcome my fear of rejection slips and looked about for a publisher—because I had accidentally written a book, *Dreaming Kathmandu*. -- GM



## The Kardashians Make My Day

Extensive research demonstrates the truth of the obvious

By Paul Rook

I am bothered by the increasing amount of media coverage of celebrities. I already know far more than I ever needed to know about Lindsay Lohan, Charlie Sheen, Kim Kardashian and Jennifer Aniston. By the way who are the Kardashians, and why would we want to keep up with them anyway? One media outlet recently asked why Jennifer stays so popular. Could it be that the media constantly writes about every meaningless detail of her life?

The focus on celebrities is just like the ancient Roman circuses and gladiator displays. It is used to keep our focus off the real issues of importance to us. However, even more frightening is the thought that this celebrity focus may be what people want.

Recently, extensive research was done to determine whether urban dwellers suffer from more or less stress than do people who live in rural areas. I know you are waiting with bated breath for the results. Well, people in urban areas suffer from far more stress. Who would have thought? Don't you just love it when research is done to prove what anyone with an ounce of common sense should already know? However, the really disturbing thing is that nothing will be done to deal with the problem revealed by this research.

There is a recent trend by those of a libertarian persuasion to convince people that the government should get out of our face and remove most regulations. To prove this point, a group of motorcyclists were riding without helmets to protest New York State's law that they must wear helmets. However, I don't think they made their point. One of their members crashed and, as the doctor said, his death could have been prevented if he had been wearing a helmet. There are reasons for some

regulations. What amazes me is that humans have to repeat the same cycles of stupid actions over and over to prove this.

As an historian (This sounds more impressive than history teacher.), I am amused by the way American right wing leaders try to use the actions and ideas of their Founding Fathers to explain things. Sarah Palin, for example, tried to persuade an audience that Paul Revere was warning not only the colonists but also the British soldiers that the British were coming. Most are still totally confused by her argument. The good news is that not much has been heard from Sarah since.

Breaking news! The top ten jobs that lead to divorce have been revealed. Two groups surprised me. One is telephone operators. I didn't realize there were any left. All I ever get are machines. "Extruding machine operators" also have a high divorce rate. I will leave it to your imagination to figure out what their job is and why they have a high divorce rate. By the way, teachers didn't make the top ten.

The American gun culture has reached a whole new level of madness. Three places where people are likely to be frustrated, angry, argumentative or in a highly charged emotional state are bars, sporting events and shopping malls. In their infinite wisdom the state politicians of Ohio have passed a law allowing citizens to carry concealed weapons into bars, sporting events and shopping malls. So be careful when visiting any of these locations when in Ohio. Remember these weapons are concealed so you won't know if a person is carrying a gun until they draw it and shoot you. Even in the wild American west guns were clearly displayed in holsters.

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Considered

# *Death of the Liberal Class*

by Chris Hedges. Toronto: Knopf, 2010

Reviewed by Ian Cameron

If you were as surprised as I was at the election of Rob Ford as the mayor of Toronto in our recent municipal election, or at the election of a Conservative majority government in our recent federal election accompanied by the decimation of the Liberal Party and the emergence of the NDP as the opposition, Chris Hedges' book: *Death of the Liberal Class* may be an interesting book for you to read.

If we accept the concept of private property, then it seems obvious that some people will get richer than others. A person can draw a circle on the earth and say, "This is mine ... keep out." If others accept this claim, and it is codified in law and put into a land registry, then differences in wealth arise. For example, if the land is more fertile than other land and has better access to water, then differences in wealth and power grow wider. When people can borrow on their title to the land, invest in factories and engage in money market activity, the gap between rich and poor will widen. That is where traditional liberalism comes in.

Hedges maintains that classical liberalism in the late 19th century and until the end of World War 1 offset this widening gap between the rich and the powerful and the working class, the disabled and the poor.

"The liberal era, which flourished in the later part of the nineteenth century and the early years of the twentieth, was characterized by the growth of mass movements and social reforms that addressed working conditions in factories, the organizing of labor unions, women's rights, universal education, housing for the poor, public health campaigns, and socialism." (p. 7)

He indicates, then, for this historical period,

that the pillars of the liberal class in the USA: the media, religious institutions, universities, arts, unions, and the Democratic Party were responsible for some significant reforms. These acted as a safety valve to damp down the more pernicious aspects of unregulated capitalism. With economic growth there could be more for everybody. There was a belief in progress.

However, since the end of World War 1, the liberal class and its institutions became increasingly complicit in the corporate take-over of American government in the service of the power elite. It has also served as an attack dog that discredited any radical social movements. The use of media is given as a prime example. Arthur Bullard, who advised President Wilson, stated in his book *Mobilizing America* that if the government controlled all the mechanisms of information and used the creative arts to bolster its message, the country would be indoctrinated to support the war without resorting to overt forms of control. (p. 68). Wilson set up the Committee for Public Information (CPI) headed by George Creel. After the war, most of the experts from the CPI gravitated to corporate offices in Washington and New York.

The business of manufacturing public opinion was challenged. People like John Dewey took on those who now routinely disguised propaganda as news. Media and educational institutions were at a further disadvantage compared to corporate advertisers. Newspapers, schools, colleges, and universities were expected to be objective. Meanwhile, mass consumer advertising was built not on reason or logic or subjection to evidence, but on emotional needs.

Stewart Ewen, author of *Captains of*

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Consciousness: Advertising and Social Roots of the Consumer Culture tells Hedges that today, the amount of money going into the miseducation of the American people is far vaster and more enthusiastically spent than the money that goes into the education of the American people. (p.87,

88). I must agree that when I was in the classroom as an educator I did have the same sinking feeling, from time to time, that our classroom efforts at stimulating critical thought by moving from facts to how the facts affected students and their feelings to how things in their opinion should or ought to be were completely swamped

by hours of television's emotional appeals to the students' hearts' desires. According to C. Wright Mills, commercial media tell people who they are, what their aspirations should be, and promise to help the public achieve these aspirations. The main idea is to acquire status, money, fame and power through consumption. Consumers are prompted to "actualize" themselves not through reflection and an empathetic concern for others, but by individual consumption. The shift from print media to images downplays logic and reason turning opinion making over to emotional responses.

Hedges' critique of the permanent war footing of the United States and how it takes the attention away from real national problems is right on. War in his words is pornography coupled with images of hypermasculinity, blind obedience and violence. People are fed the glorification of war by the media. The myths of glory, honor, patriotism, and heroism mask the facts of the wounded, the crippled and the dead who are swiftly carted offstage. Despair and suicide grip survivors. Hedges says that it is estimated that as many Vietnam veterans committed suicide after the war

as were killed during it. Also, as he points out, the focus on war and the puffery around globalization ignores what Noam Chomsky indicates. Internationally, there has been an accelerating shift of international income from the global labor force to transnational capital.

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So Hedges believes that the liberal class has not stood up to the assaults of the corporate sector backed by the power elite. Not only that, but in their role as attack dogs they have relegated progressive Americans such as Ralph Nader to obscurity. Martin Luther King, has been sanitized. Hedges says that in a speech given a year before his assassination, King called America the greatest purveyor of violence in the world today.

Hedges says, "The indifference to the plight of others and the cult of the self is what the corporate state seeks to instill in us. That state appeals to pleasure as well as to fear to crush compassion. We have to fight this mechanism ... to preserve ... our common humanity".

For me, Hedges has hit on the roots of the sense of anger and betrayal, that have been used to manipulate the public to vote for a corporatized government both municipally and federally. Slogans such as "Stop the Gravy Train" and the scapegoating of public sector workers such as the garbage workers of the City of Toronto have been effective in getting people to vote for politicians who back corporate interests. Because the liberal class has been complicit and not stood up during the assault by the corporate state on the democratic state, it has become one of the victims of this assault.

When I hear polls that say only 15% of people know who Hudak is, but that 40% of those same respondents will vote Conservative in the October provincial elections, I fear for the quality of public education in this province.



# Chocolate and mousse cake with ganache frosting

<http://www.seriousseats.com/talk/2010/08/cj-mcnds-chocolate-mousse-layer-cake-with-ganache-frosti.html>

This is a great recipe. It's not the easiest cake I've baked, but it's sure a goodie! I made changes to the recipe. It's a mecca for chocolate lovers, but a disaster if you're trying to avoid calories, fat, etc. Remember that chocolate, mostly pure cocoa powder in this recipe, is an excellent anti-oxidant; good to know if you're looking for an excuse to consume.

## **Cake layers** (Can be made ahead)

2 cups sugar  
1 3/4 cups flour sifted \*\*  
3/4 cup unsweetened cocoa powder  
1-1/2 tsp baking powder  
1-1/2 tsp baking soda  
1 tsp salt  
2 eggs  
1 cup milk  
1/2 cup vegetable oil  
2 tsp vanilla  
1 cup boiling water

\*\* Extra flour may be needed if batter is too runny. Add more flour slowly, with stirring, and also extra egg(s). I doubled the amounts of flour, eggs, sugar, baking soda and baking powder. You can also double the cocoa powder. If the batter is too thick, add water in small amounts until you reach the desired consistency.

## **Chocolate mousse** (Can be made a day ahead)

1 1/2 cup unsweetened cocoa powder  
1 quart whipping cream  
1 1/2 cup sugar  
1/2 package of plain gelatin

**Chocolate ganache** (make just before assembling the cake)

3 cups semisweet chocolate chips

1 1/2 cups half & half cream

\*\* I used only about 1/2 cup of half & half cream

Preheat the oven to 350F

## **Cake**

1. Line the cake pans with parchment paper (see note). Grease and flour the pans. (This step is not needed but will make the cooled cake layers easier to remove from the pan.)

2. Combine the dry ingredients in a large mixing bowl. Add the eggs, milk, oil and vanilla. Stir to combine. Beat for 2 minutes. Stir in boiling water.

3. Divide mixture between the three pans. Bake for 20 minutes. The cakes are done when toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean.

4. Let cake pans cool slightly, then remove the cakes to a rack and cool completely. Wrap and chill or freeze until ready to assemble.

## **Chocolate mousse**

1. Combine the cocoa powder, sugar and the whipping cream in a deep bowl. Beat the mixture with an electric mixer until partially whipped.

2. Part way through the process, sprinkle 1/2 of the package of plain gelatin across the surface of the semi-whipped mixture and continue beating until fully whipped. The gelatin helps stabilize and firm the mixture. Cover and chill. (Can be made the day before assembly.)

## **Ganache**

Place the cream and chips in a heavy bottomed pan and melt over medium low heat stirring gently. Cool slightly.

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# Pomp and pageantry

**Active Retired Member Rosemarie Morhing gives her impressions of the wedding of the year**

**Pussycat, Pussycat where have you been? I've been to London to see the Queen.  
Pussycat, Pussycat what did you there? I frightened a little mouse under her chair.**

No, I'm not in my dotage just yet; merely trying to convey a very heady experience. Did you see some of those hats! And there was no fear in London, England on April 29<sup>th</sup>.

Thanks to the Monarchists' League of Canada, to which my friend and ARM member belongs, I was invited to travel with the group for a week to the event of the year – the Royal Wedding.

Every morning we gathered in our London hotel lobby to be briefed on the agenda for the day. We were treated to all the many historic sites such as the Tower of London. Thank goodness none of us lost our heads while gobbling up gifts from the souvenir shop.

A highlight of our adventure was on an all-day visit to Cambridge where we trekked through all the picturesque campuses ending with attending a cathedral for "Eensong" listening to the beautiful voices of a boys' choir.

Another day was spent hiking and picnicking on Hampstead Heath. Suffice it to say that by the end of the week, I had worn out a pair of sneakers.

Now to the culmination of our visit – the main event – Kate and William's wedding day. Some of the younger and hardier of our group camped out the night before in front of Westminster Abby. We learned later that many more people were in front of them, having camped out longer.

We older folk opted to accept an invitation to watch the entire spectacle at His Excellency, the High Commissioner of Canada's House, with an unobstructed view of unfolding events provided live by the B.B.C., as did many of you at home. However, we were also treated to a High Tea reception, replete with wedding cake.

Some people scoff at the extravagance of the affair and the tradition of the Monarchy itself, but I found myself caught up in a huge crowd of people, united in an outpouring of love and jubilation – not a protester among them. The sense of unity is what the Monarchy brings to its people – a good reason to applaud them.

You had to be there to understand the jubilation of the experience!

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*... continued from page 14*

## **Assembling the cake**

1. Remove the parchment and lay first layer of cake on a plate. Spread with half (?) of the choc. mousse.
2. Place the next cake layer on and spread with the remaining mousse. I covered the sides of the cake with the mousse to make it smooth. No mousse cake top.
3. Place the last layer of cake on top
4. slowly pour the ganache over the top to completely cover the top. It will run over the sides of the cake.

(Note: The ganache recipe makes more than the cake needs. If there is extra mousse or ganache it may be frozen for use over other desserts such as

fruit or ice cream.) Place the cake in the freezer for a minimum of 4 hours. Can be frozen several days ahead. Remove from the freezer 10-20 minutes before serving. (This can be done 1-2 hours before serving.)  
Note: Any leftover cake can be frozen. Cover with plastic wrap and freeze.

## **A Gourmet Club**

*When I was at Leaside High School I founded what I called the "LHS Gourmet Club".*

*I would choose a restaurant and arrange a dinner for those who wished to attend. Usually we went to an ethnic restaurant, or a unique place. If you're interested, please send me an email (stevefuller2@sympatico.ca), or leave a message with your contact info on my answering machine 416 661-7775.*

# Estate planning: It's a matter of **will power**



**B**en Franklin once said, “nothing is certain in this world but death and taxes”. But your dear old Mom also said, “When life gives you lemons, make lemonade”. You should think of estate planning in the same positive light. While you can't stop the inevitable, having a solid plan in place is the best gift you can give to the loved ones you leave behind.



One focus, many solutions.

**Educators' Financial Planner Lisa Raponi says it's important to make those plans sooner rather than later.** “If you don't write down your wishes beforehand, the government will decide for you, and take a 6% chunk of your assets. In addition to having a will to protect your assets, you also need to protect your interests should you become incapacitated and unable to make decisions for yourself. This is where a 'Power of Attorney for Personal Care' and 'Power of Attorney for Property' can provide you with ultimate peace of mind”.

Lisa says her clients also ask her a lot about fees and taxes. “Probate fees only apply to assets that flow through an estate, and in the province of Ontario probate fees are 0.5% on the first \$50,000 and 1.5% on anything over \$50,000. However, I can go over the various strategies you can use to reduce taxes, such as designating beneficiaries on registered investments, making assets 'joint tenants' with rights of survivorship, and 'gifting'—in order to make the tax issue a non-issue.”

In closing, Lisa reflects, “My clients are all very health-conscious. They eat properly, go for regular check-ups, and exercise. Estate planning should be an extension of this regiment to protect your financial health, and that of your loved ones, for generations to come.”

*\*Download these documents for free at: [www.attorneygeneral.jus.gov.on.ca](http://www.attorneygeneral.jus.gov.on.ca)*

For advice on putting your estate plan together, call us: **1.800.263.9541**

[www.educatorsfinancialgroup.ca](http://www.educatorsfinancialgroup.ca)

## Swing For Kids

# Annual Fall Golf Tournament Wednesday, September 21, 2011

**09:30 Registration**

**10:00 Shotgun tee-off**

If playing the Championship Course, arrive earlier as you will have to tee-off around 9 am so we finish together. Shotgun start means we tee off at the same time and finish together for lunch which will be ready at about 1:00 to 1:30 pm

### Place

Rolling Hills Golf Club

### Cost

\$65 for 18 holes in Classic Course and lunch; \$75 if you choose to play the Championship Course; \$20 for lunch only.

Includes 18 holes of golf, power cart for two (compulsory). BBQ lunch menu includes choice of 3 salads, vegetable platter, assorted cookies and dessert squares, coffee or tea, taxes, gratuities and prizes.

**Send your cheque** for \$65 (Classic Course) or \$75 (Championship Course) or \$20 (Lunch only, to Jim Loftus, 7 Roanoke Rd., Apt. 301 Toronto M3A 1E3. Make the cheque out to ARM C12 Fall Golf Tournament c/o Jim Loftus.

**Deadline** Cheques must be in by September 14, 2011. Since places are limited, please act soon.

**Registration** Please notify us at [armchapter12@gmail.com](mailto:armchapter12@gmail.com) so that we'll have a good idea of how many will be registering. Include your team members' names and phone numbers and e-mails if possible. Please indicate skill level, 1 being a novice and 5 being a good golfer.

### Directions to golf course

Rolling Hills Golf Club  
12808 Warden Avenue  
Gormley, Ontario L4A 7X5  
Golf Shop: 905 888-1955

From Toronto  
Take Hwy 404 north to Stouffville Road  
Turn right (east) on Stouffville Road and drive to Warden Avenue  
Turn left and go north 2 kms on Warden Avenue  
Entrance is on the left side (west) of Warden Avenue