

the

Reckoner

of Marc Garneau C.I.



Letter From the Editor

by VARUN VENKATARAMANAN



With summer break just over the horizon, my time as Editor in Chief is coming to a close. I first joined The Reckoner because I wanted to make friends, but it has come to be much more than just that. It's pushed me to step out of my comfort zone, encouraged me to take risks, and gave me confidence in my abilities. But most importantly, it's given me an appreciation for the teachers and student body that makes MGCI so special.

Through the paper, I've been able to meet many different people at Garneau, including a Syrian Refugee in her first week in Canada and a star athlete representing Canada on the world stage. Their stories are just two of the hundreds that shape the MGCI landscape,

and through listening to these stories, I've come to view diversity as our school's defining quality. Garneau students don't conform to cliques or stereotypes. Instead, we form an intricate collage of cultures and interests that represent all corners of the world and all walks of life.

The Reckoner is the bridge between these differences, giving a voice to every student in the school and allowing our diversity to shine through. I wanted to take the paper further this year by expanding topics, exploring new journalistic mediums, and refining the quality of our publications. I don't expect the newspaper to have had the same impact on everyone else that it has on me, but if it has helped you appreciate our

school's diversity even a little, I've accomplished my goal.

At The Reckoner, I've been blessed with a solid network of people who have been there for me at every turn. They are the people that keep me going through the late nights and push me to keep improving the paper. The Seventh Guard's success is owed to them and I'd like to take the time to thank them for all they have done:

To Ms. Goldenberg, for your trust and careful criticisms.

To Ms. Speirs, for your guidance and support at every turn.

To Ms. Ali and Mr. Gilmore, for your patience and assistance.

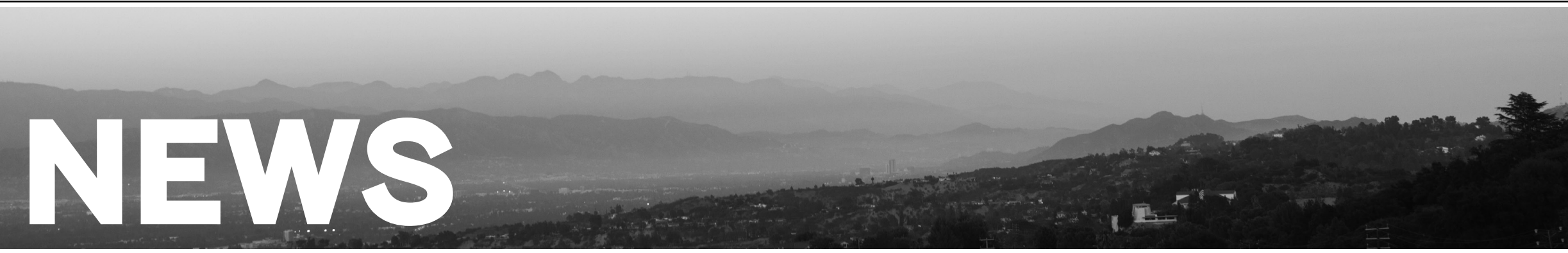
To Ms. O'Flynn-Wheeler, for your encouragement and enthusiasm.

To the Seventh Guard Executives, for the hard work and endless roasts.

To my staff, for being the backbone of this paper.

And finally to the reader, thank you for joining us on this adventure. I encourage you to be just as supportive of the paper and its work in the future. Moreover, I challenge you to stay informed and critical of the world around us. And come join The Reckoner, there's a spot for everyone with an inquisitive streak.

Best regards,
Varun Venkataramanan
Editor in Chief



Teacher Feature: Mr. Brossard

by HENRY TANG

Mr. Brossard is a computer science and computer engineering teacher at MGCI.

Q: What subjects do you teach at this school?

A: Grade 10 and 11 computer engineering and computer science.

Q: How long have you taught at MGCI?

A: Since 2005.

Q: Do you have any funny stories to share in class?

A: A funny story? Nothing comes to mind. I wish I had more stories. Well, the TOPS end of semester party for computer science is quite fun. One time we played Christmas tunes and everybody brought out their instruments. That was a joy and the TOPS kids really liked it.

Q: What's the best thing about teaching at MGCI?

A: The variety of students that we have. The diversification. [The] excellence. Some students never cease to amaze me. For instance [a student] went to Apple for a week. It was a surprise. Teams in computer science won at the ECOO (Educational Computing Organization of Ontario) Contest. Some are going to IOI (International Olympiad in Informatics). That's astounding. Plus, girls teams are making headway. It's super exciting. I watch what everybody does. The energy is phenomenal. It's just a lot of fun. I find the students cordial and amicable, and just the energy is electrifying and really fun from the teacher standpoint to get involved in.

Q: What did you do before you were a teacher?

A: I was a music composer, so I composed for [studios] like TVO, for private producers, and for television shows. One is *Catches of Our Town*. It's kind of old but it was there for a long time. They did something like two hundred shows, so that kept me quite busy. I did a lot of work for TV Ontario and CBC. I also had a studio where I used to write my own music and compose albums for people. I did voiceovers and studio work of different kinds for about seventeen years at different networks around Toronto.

Q: Why did you decide to teach computer science/computer engineering?

A: I like to share information, share my knowledge, and have a steady job. For music composing you're al-



Photo: Eric Zhao

ways freelancing. It's feast or famine—sometimes it's feast, sometimes it's famine. With a family, I wanted something a little more steady. Teaching appealed to me because I have a love for electronics. Even though music is my first love, my second love is electronics. I didn't know at the time but computer science is something that involves all that, because I use computers to compose music. That's how it kind of all fell into place.

Q: What is the most important thing you want students to take away from your classes?

A: Understanding how to learn autonomously. I teach them how to learn not from me but from themselves. That's what I cherish the most and I've seen it in many many students. I plant a seed, I don't spoon feed them, and they find information on their own. During my classes, we have an exchange of information between students. Specifically [in] computer science [it's] very common. Students learn from each other. They are prepared to tackle anything outside the classroom, not having necessarily someone holding their hands. They can figure it out on their own. I like the idea of learning autonomously very much.

Q: What is your favourite band?

A: Bill Bruford. That's the name of the band. The people [in the band]

are drummers. It's unpopular music. People would not be that interested in it. They made an album called *Gradually Going Tornado* and it's just one in a million. But generally, it depends on how I feel. I could listen to eight-tonal music, I could listen to country music, I could listen to rock, jazz. If I'm in the right mood, if it's well recorded, well performed, I'm in.

Q: What is your favourite genre of music?

A: I like it all. I like classics. I like anything, rock, hillbilly music, country music. You name it, I like it.

Q: What is your favourite pastime other than music?

A: Other than music? Wow. That's a good one. That's a good one because I'm so busy with everything else. Tiny bit of gardening and sports like swimming. I'd say I do a lot of swimming these days.

Q: What is your favourite food?

A: Wow, it's the same as music. Chicken Pad Thai. It's like music, you name it I like it. I'm not fond of snake or monkey head, I think I would draw the line there. But I basically like everything.

Q: If you could give a piece of advice to a Garneau student, what would it be?

A: Find your passion. Find your passion and pursue it. ■

CHALKING IT UP AT MGCI'S FIFTH ANNUAL DOODLE FEST

by SADIA AKBAR

Marc Garneau let its creativity flow at Art Council's fifth annual Doodle Fest on 31 May 2018. Doodle Fest took place at lunch in the back field of MGCI, where students doodled with chalk, got their face painted, and enjoyed free snacks and music.

Tables were set up on the back field, supplied with chalk, face paint, freezies, and cookies. Some Art Council members as well as teachers and other volunteers were stationed at the tables to paint students' faces with small pictures, distribute snacks, and control the music. Others walked around offering chalk and snacks to the doodling students, and joining in on the fun themselves.

The event was advertised through posters around the school and on social media. As a result, over seventy-five students came out to partake in the event.

Doodle Fest was extremely well-received with many students participating and thoroughly enjoying all of the activities. By the end of the lunch period, nearly half of the track was covered in chalk doodles ranging from animals and flowers to self-portraits. Some students decided to write out jokes while others wrote out kind reminders like "Smile More" and "Be Happy".

Grade 10 attendee Zoya Khan said, "Just walking around and seeing what everyone contributed to this giant mural in a way was really cool. I liked that it was completely open for everyone to draw literally whatever they want." Another attendee, Fiona Ferrera

added, "I attended Doodle Fest both last year and this year. My friends and I had lots of fun drawing random things with the chalk. It was very de-stressing especially since we're so close to exams! I'd definitely go again next year!"

When asked about the success of the event, Art Council member Sadia Siddique commented, "I was so impressed by the turnout and it was amazing to see the track covered in fun, colourful doodles. Doodle Fest really brought students together since it doesn't require any skill or anything, it's just an event open to anyone who wants to have fun with their friends." ■



Photo: Laura Lu

Creating a Buzz for Pollinators

by DYLAN XIAO

On 7 and 8 June 2018, MGCI EcoTeam organized activities in honour of Pollinator Week to raise awareness about the importance of native pollinators. Pollinator Week, which starts on 18 June this year, is an internationally recognized celebration of pollinators and their value to human life.

The event was divided into different activities held over the course of two days. On 7 June, EcoTeam held a raw honey-tasting booth in the galleria and a pollinator

garden tour at the main entrance. They also had members dressed in bee costumes touring the second and third floors. EcoTeam members talked to students about how food is affected by pollinators, the problems facing pollinator populations, and how people can help.

On 8 June, a game of Kahoot! and a Spelling Beewere held in the cafeteria. More than two hundred students participated in the Kahoot! and the top five scorers were invited to participate in the

Spelling Bee. The activity questions revolved around the theme of pollinators, with the Spelling Bee containing words such as "proboscis" and "fertilization". Students who participated in the Spelling Bee were awarded with chocolate bars.

When asked about the event's turnout, EcoTeam executive Tazik Shahjahan said, "The honey-tasting didn't go great because it's Ramadan right now, but the pollinator garden tour went surprisingly well. But I'm especially proud of what we were able to accomplish with the Kahoot! and Spelling Bee session on Thursday."

On the success of the event, spectator Husain Mahida said, "It was very entertaining and I regret not going up [to play games]."

EcoTeam has been raising awareness about pollinators since last year. The previous school year, EcoTeam started MGCI's first pollinator garden, located outside the office. Last fall, EcoTeam successfully certified MGCI as a Bee City Canada School, a title that recognizes schools for their efforts in protecting endangered pollinators through education. As part of their application, EcoTeam outlined their plans for several pollinator awareness events, including organizing activities to promote Pollinator Week. Next year, EcoTeam plans on holding similar events on a more regular basis and hopes to attract even more participants. ■



Photo: Lisa Wang

Mock Vote for Votership

by JACQUELINE HUO

On 6 June 2018, MGCI took part in a province-wide mock election organized by a national education charity called CIVIX. A polling station was set up in the cafeteria with three cardboard voting booths and two ballot boxes. The event ran the entire day, however, the majority of students voted during lunch.

CIVIX coordinates student mock elections to get youth interested in politics. This election was held in parallel to the Ontario provincial election, which took place on 7 June 2018. Students at MGCI had the opportunity to vote for the Member of Provincial Parliament candidates for the Don Valley West riding. There were five candidates running: Kathleen Wynne of the Liberal Party, Jon Kieran of the Progressive Conservative Party, Amara Possain of the New Democratic Party (NDP), Morgan Bailey of the Green Party, and John Kitterage of the Libertarian Party.

Student volunteers helped keep track of which students voted to ensure that nobody voted more than once. In total, twenty-seven students and ten teachers volunteered to facilitate the voting process.

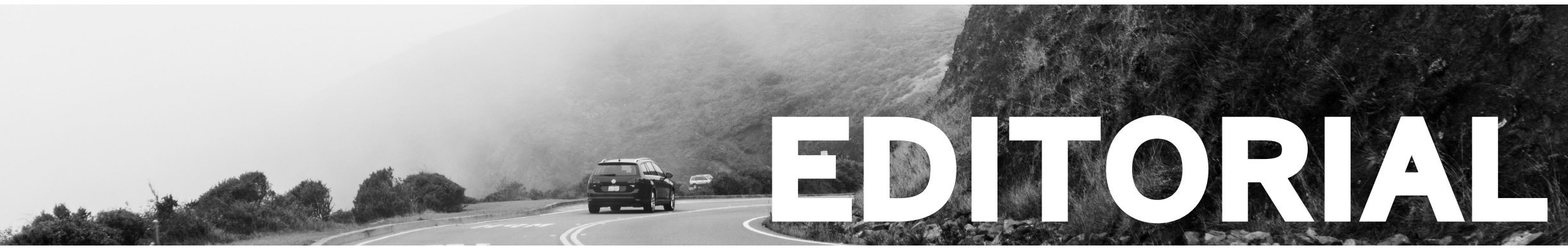


Photo: Lisa Wang

This year, three hundred and thirty-four Garneau students voted. This is considerably lower than the last student vote in which four hundred and ninety seven students participated. The results were announced on 8 June 2018 on the morning announcements. The NDP won with 160 votes. MGCI's student opinion mirrors the provincial student opinion; the NDP won 27% of overall student votes.

Mr. Pearce, who has organized the Student Vote at Garneau for the past five years, said that he was concerned about the low voter turnout,

commenting, "It's important for students to participate in the Student Vote because the more familiar students are with the process of voting, the more likely they will be to vote in elections when they turn eighteen. It is also important because the results of Student Vote are reported by the mainstream media and political parties pay attention to the results, because they want to know what issues matter to the next generation of voters. As teachers we need to think about how we can do a better job getting our students interested in politics." ■



SAC-ing the Old Constitution

by BRUCE HE

SAC's new constitution makes sweeping changes to its structure and elections. Seven executive positions—Clubs Coordinator, Social Justice and Equity Coordinator, External Affairs Coordinator, Communications Coordinator, Treasurer, Chairperson, and Secretary—will be appointed by the previously-elected members of SAC instead of being elected. Sixteen elected student ambassadors will replace the four current grade representatives, with each grade electing four such ambassadors in early September. In addition to leading various initiatives, the ambassadors are intended to keep SAC accountable.



Illustration: Molly Yu

One of the primary goals of the new constitution was to make SAC elections more accessible. SAC president Lisa Wang said that the overwhelming number of SAC positions up for election confuses students, discouraging them from voting. By reducing the elected positions to the President, Vice-President, Graduation Convener, Social Convener, Special Events Convener, Spirit Convener, and Athletic Convener, SAC hopes to not only encourage voting, but also ensure

a more informed vote by allowing students to concentrate on a limited number of candidates.

While SAC's proposal is reasonable, it wasn't well executed. Grade 10 representative Nelson Lee, one of the architects of the new constitution, said that the "less visible" positions on SAC were converted to appointed positions. The Clubs Coordinator is one of these appointed positions, which is problematic. The Clubs Coordinator represents clubs and supports them through funding and events like clubs fair. Clearly, only a democratically elected Clubs Coordinator will be able to win the support of the numerous independent clubs and legitimately voice their opinions. Clubs form a huge part of student life, and not letting students vote for their Clubs Coordinator goes against the very democratic ideals which SAC elections are supposed to uphold. According to Nelson and Zimman Yousuf, another member of the SAC Constitutional Committee, appointing the Clubs Coordinator will allow SAC to select the most qualified candidate, but this could be done just as effectively by adding requirements to eligible candidates for the position. It is clear that clubs require democratic representation and SAC should reinstate elections for the Clubs Coordinator as soon as possible.

SAC has also ignored the problem of positions with overlapping duties, such as the Social Convener, Spirit Convener, and Special Events Convener. It would be far more logical for a single convener to manage all school spirit and socio-cultural initiatives; they could oversee appointed coordinators dealing with specific events such as Spring Fling and International Show. This would simplify elections, ensure greater coordination between organizers of different events, and allow responsibilities to be more flexibly divided between officials.

Similarly, since the Chairperson and Secretary both are responsible for taking minutes and overseeing meetings, their positions should be merged. Likewise, the External Affairs Coordinator's duties, specifically their marketing responsibilities, overlap with those of the Graduation Convener, Communications Coordinator, and Vice-President. According to Nelson, the vice-presidency is currently a "ceremonial" role, thus the external affairs responsibilities to the Vice-President. Nelson stated that such mergers would be unacceptable to SAC because they would send the message that certain SAC members' contributions are "not valuable." This seems to be far-fetched considering the fact that these mergers only redistribute responsibilities and don't denigrate any particular SAC members. In fact, a few years ago, the Social Justice Convener and Equity Representative positions were merged without the sort of scandal Nelson is warning of.

The creation of sixteen elected Student Ambassador positions was proposed by Grade 12 representative John Le, in order to hold SAC accountable and provide more opportunities for students to become involved with SAC. While the Student Ambassadors will be an asset for various initiatives such as the house system, there are several problems with the system. Voting for student ambassadors is difficult since, according to Nelson, the only criteria for this role is "commitment and dedication". Since ambassador candidates can't really run on concrete policies, they are stuck trying to stand out among other dedicated candidates. Furthermore the constitution states that both the Vice-President and Chairperson can chair the Student Ambassadors and vote in SAC's interests. While John stated that the influence of SAC members in the Student Ambassadors would only be a temporary arrangement, oth-

er SAC members have stated that this would be permanent, leaving questions about the amount of SAC interference, and who ultimately leads the Student Ambassadors. While Student Ambassadors are able to vote on and propose amendments to major bills proposed by SAC, these are limited to non-routine items such as new events and constitutional changes. While this can introduce new ideas into SAC, the Student Ambassadors' oversight does not extend to routine matters such as existing events, limiting their power.

The Student Ambassadors are meant to ensure the accountability of SAC by calling SAC members to their meetings for questioning, and passing non-confidence motions against SAC members, compelling them to resign if necessary. Complementing the latter in the constitution is a reaffirmation of the power of the president to request the resignation of members; this has been enforced only once in the history of SAC, against the Spirit Convener in 2015-2016. It remains to be seen how effective these two measures will be in practice since both must be approved by the administration and staff advisors, who have generally been reluctant to dismiss anyone except in the most extreme of cases. While the new reforms certainly put social pressure on SAC members to be accountable, perhaps a better way to ensure accountability would be to expose SAC to more public scrutiny by mandating transparency measures. These could be making it mandatory for SAC to publicize their minutes and spending, requiring them to submit reports on the activities of members on a monthly basis, and having a wall where students can publicly post criticisms. Monthly open meetings could also be guaranteed by the constitution to improve transparency.

Several other policies were also enacted or enabled by the SAC constitution.

The constitution provides for the existence of the "MGCI Clubs Guidelines", which regulates the functioning of clubs. While Lisa stated that the guidelines were merely meant to be suggestions, Nelson stated that they would be actively enforced by staff advisors. This discrepancy makes it unclear as to what extent SAC intends to monitor clubs. While SAC's rules may reduce some of the abuses that happen in clubs, it might also make the process of running a club cumbersome for both members and staff advisors. So far, the only publicized proposed rule is a requirement for clubs with more than seventy members to elect their senior executives. While this might ensure a fairer selections process, it gives rise to a lot of questions. Would dismantling existing clubs' selections processes cause disruptions? How exactly will SAC enforce this? Should members that only come occasionally be given the same amount of say compared to more dedicated members? In any case, an undemocratically appointed Clubs Coordinator enforcing such guidelines will not lead to much consensus among clubs.

It's clear that SAC's constitution needs a lot of improvements, both major and minor. The constitution should have been released earlier than it was this year, allowing the public to offer suggestions and allowing candidates for this year's elections adequate time to examine it. As it is, the constitution was sprung upon the student body out of the blue. Parts of the constitution such as the "criteria" for selecting appointed SAC members and the Clubs Guidelines remain to be released and SAC should certainly do that soon. Ultimately it will be up to SAC members and the student body to bring about the changes that they want for our school through engagement and dedication. ■

A Season of Faiths Perfection

by JULIEN LIN



Illustration: Sheri Kim

This year has been a sad year for Toronto sports.

Wait no, scratch that. This decade has been a sad decade for Toronto sports.

Forget the Leafs, who lost in another 7-game heart-breaker against the Bruins. Forget TFC, who lost in penalty kicks, which is effectively the soccer-equivalent of a glorified lottery. Even forget the Blue Jays, who currently sit 7 games below .500.

The Raptors were swept by a 33-year-old carrying a bag of 13 bricks.

Perhaps the most frustrating thing is that there's always false hope. Just this year, The Raptors supposedly solved their offensive woes, and finished top of the injury-stricken Eastern Conference. Lebron had no help, Boston started two rookies, and Philadelphia straight up had 0 playoff experience. If the Raptors were to make a breakthrough, this was supposed to be the year.

It's the lure of the playoffs. The lure of just a couple more weeks of action. Reach the playoffs, and who knows, maybe it'll work out. Maybe, Toronto will end up on top of the world. Except they didn't.

It's disappointing—I expected so much from the self-labeled "best team in the NBA" that it was heartbreaking to watch their meltdown. I could blame the first game on bad luck. I could blame the second game blowout on laziness. By the fourth game though, I was out of excuses, and instead found excuses to ignore the game. I had enough, I would rather spend the night studying chemistry than watch another Raptors collapse.

It's a matter of time too. If DeMar DeRozan and the Rap-

tors reached this point in their developmental curve four years ago, everyone would be praising the team. But it's 2018. DeRozan is 28. Kyle Lowry is 32. Ibaka is "28." The team has essentially reached its peak, and the future still holds so many uncertainties. Days after the Raptors lost to the Cavs, there were already countless fans calling for DeRozan, along with the entire Raptors core, to be traded. This seems like the clear path to take. Against all odds, why not just give it up and burn it down, and try winning in an era without Golden State or Boston or LeBron?

Quick fixes never work. Remember when Brian Burke dealt two first rounders for Phil Kessel? The Leafs were amid a decade long playoff drought, and in an attempt to revitalize the franchise, brought in an exciting young player at the expense of the team's future. Those picks ended being Dougie Hamilton and Tyler Seguin, two all-stars. Remember when GM Alex Anthopoulos sold the entire Blue Jays' farm system for one solid run at the MLB crown? Where exactly are the Jays now? They're cellar dwellers, trying desperately to refill the cabinet that they emptied out just a mere 2 years ago.

The only reason the Jays got

any positive recognition for those trades was because they made some historic comeback. All their achievements came in a short period of time. Really, we just thought they accomplished a lot, when they really hadn't done anything special. And the elation of making it to one playoff series? It was fleeting.

The Raptors have produced a ton of great moments too, just spread out evenly amongst the years. From Terrence Ross winning the slam dunk competition, to making the playoffs even after trading star Rudy Gay, to having their first 50-win season, to taking 2 games off an unstoppable Cavaliers squad in 2016. From Drake's frisson-inducing "We the North" to Lowry's half-court bomb to DeRozan's 52 point, record-breaking game against the Bucks. Heck, Maple Leafs Square was even renamed to Jurassic Park to support the team.

We should be cheering for their accomplishments. This team hasn't realized his potential yet, not even close. The Raptors have made it to the big dance for 4 years straight. Have faith, Toronto. They will be number 1, sooner or later.

In any case, no matter where I end up, they'll have my faith. ■

SIGNIFICANT DIGITS

by ADIL HAIDER



Illustration: Sophie Yang

2 Weeks

That's the time it takes for the short tailed weasel (*Mustela erminea*) to reach sexual maturity, resulting in the unique condition of pregnant weasels who are still blind, and haven't even been weaned off their mothers' milk.

66.4%

On 25 March, the Irish people voted by 66.4% to overturn the country's ban on abortion, putting an end to the extremely catholic country's insistence on the right to life of an unborn child.

31

That's how many times Kevin Durant has lost his shoes over the last 3 seasons, an NBA record. That's an average of 1 shoe every 8 games!

\$100,000

That's the invoice Drake sent to fellow rapper Pusha T for "Promotional Assistance and Career Reviving." It's just one of the expressions in the increasingly vicious beef between the two, which is only a couple weeks old, but has already produced 4 diss tracks.

180/350 Votes

Spanish Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy was ousted by the Spanish parliament in a no confidence vote on 1 June, after a massive corruption scandal where his party was convicted of running a massive slush fund, and giving kickbacks to prominent businessmen. His replacement Pedro Sánchez, head of the "Spanish Socialist Workers' Party," only controls 34 seats.

25%

President Trump has placed a 25% steel tariff on Europe, Mexico, and Canada, straining NAFTA even further in a move Prime Minister Trudeau described as "punitive and unnecessary."

7 Seats

That's how many seats the Liberal Party of Ontario won in this year's provincial election. Despite holding a majority government prior to election, the party lost 48 of its previous 55 seats, losing its status of "Official Party." This means they will lose funding from the legislative assembly and be unable to ask questions during Question Period without being called on by the Speaker. ■

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of Marc Garneau C.I.

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100% Original Content Policy



WE ARE ALL BOOKS WITH COVERS

by KATHERINE MA

We are all books with covers
Sitting on a shelf
Of different heights and colors
And stories to tell

We are all waiting
To be picked up
For someone to open up to
And to be loved

We are all books with covers
The quotes on the back are our best parts
Our summaries have no ending
Because no one knows what they are

We are all books with covers
Which are more or less to do
with what we're about

The fonts are aesthetically pleasing
And the pictures of us are pretty
but no one figures them out

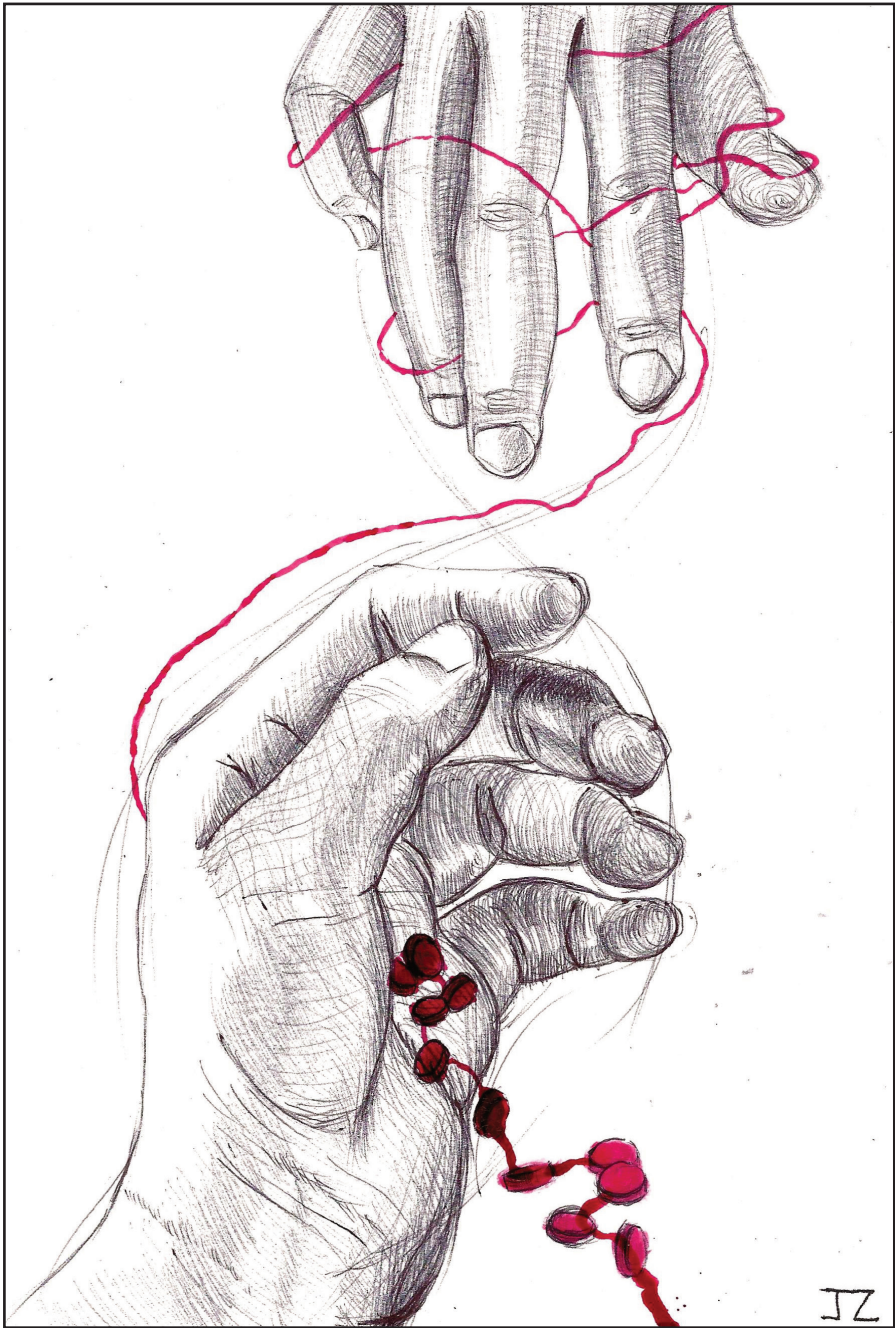
We are behind the covers

But if the book is not opened,

Do we make a sound?

November 12

by JASMINE ZHU



There is no way to tell if November 12 really existed, but I have relived the day and the night before so many times, that it no longer matters whether it did.

Word Avalanche

by LEO ZHAO



Illustration: Molly Yu

Manny is the head of a soft drink company, based in Minnesota. When he discovers a strange smell emanating from some old cans of his small-sized special prototype brand of “Minnesota sodas”, he decides to sell some cans to his friend Minnie.

Minnie, who has recently shrunk in size due a rare unidentified ailment, collects pop cans. Minnie has many strange hobbies, one of which is sewing patterns on her pop cans. Unsurprisingly, her eccentric nature has earned her a few enemies. Once, at a bar, Minnie lost a bet to a group of disagreeable Minnesotan men who suffer from dwarfism. Coincidentally, the group of men work for Manny and are avid pop can collectors. The men wanted Minnie to sell them the rare small-sized cans of Manny’s special prototype brand of “Minnesota sodas”, to which Manny’s employees were never granted access. At the time, Minnie had no such cans in her possession, but she was forced to agree, as she had lost the bet.

When Minnie purchases her new cans from Manny, she sorts the old cans from the strange-smelling ones. She realises that the strange-smelling cans are actually distinct from the old

cans. Minnie decides to sew patterns into all of her cans, thinking that the pop can collectors would not mind the sewing when she sells a can to them. She brings them a “Minnesota soda” can from her pile of old cans.

However, the pop can collectors are outraged when Minnie attempts to sell them the can. They do not appreciate Minnie’s sewing, and would not accept any of Minnie’s sewed cans. Minnie has also brought them the wrong can. She learns that the men actually wanted the strange-smelling cans, not the old ones. Minnie is in a predicament; she has sewn on all of her cans, even the strange-smelling ones, and now has nothing to offer the pop can collectors, who are becoming increasingly threatening.

Fortunately, Manny stumbles upon Minnie’s exchange with his employees. Seeing her trouble, he pulls Minnie aside and sells her another strange-smelling can. Minnie then sells the strange-smelling can to the pop can collectors, satisfying them. All is well.

In other words:

Manny saw that many sorta old mini Minnesota sodas were sorta odd, so Manny sold mini Minnie many sorta old mini Minnesota sodas and many sorta odd mini Minnesota sodas. So Minnie sorted sorta old mini Minnesota sodas and sorta odd mini Minnesota sodas and sewed all mini Minnesota sodas. Mini Minnie owed Manny’s many mean mini Minnesota soda men a mini Minnesota soda. So mini Minnie sold Manny’s many mean mini Minnesota soda men a sorta old mini Minnesota sewed soda. “Sod! A sorta old mini Minnesota soda?” said a mean mini Minnesota soda man of Manny’s many mean mini Minnesota soda men, “Mini Minnie sold a sorta old mini Minnesota sewed soda - odd! Mini Minnie oughta sold us mean Minnesota soda men mean mini sorta odd sodas! Mini Minnie - sodding meanie!” And mini Minnie said: “Oh, Manny’s many mean mini Minnesota soda men mean mean old mini Minnie oughta sold a mini Minnesota sorta odd soda, not a mini Minnesota sorta old soda nor a mini Minnesota sewed soda, old or odd.” Manny saw many mean mini Minnesota soda men menacing mini Minnie, who owed Manny’s many mean mini Minnesota soda men a sorta odd mini Minnesota soda, but owned only Manny’s sorted sorta odd mini Minnesota sewed sodas and sorta old mini Minnesota sewed sodas. Manny sold mini Minnie a sorta odd mini Minnesota soda, so mini Minnie owned a sorta odd mini Minnesota soda, not sewed. Then mini Minnie sold Manny’s many mean mini Minnesota soda men a sorta odd mini Minnesota soda. Mini Minnie said “Sold!” to Manny’s many mean mini Minnesota soda men. Now mini Minnie owed Manny’s many mean mini Minnesota soda men no sorta odd mini Minnesota sodas, but owned Manny’s many sorted sorta old mini Minnesota sewed sodas and many sorted sorta odd mini Minnesota sewed sodas. ■

HOW TO GET RICH QUICK: COPY HOMER AND CALL IT ECCENTRIC

by RAHIM DHALLA

You’re a 1500-pound robot with wheels for feet and saws for hands. You’re a dark green crocodile with sharp teeth and gleaming scales. You’re a 15 cm tall human, because why not? You’re in a stadium the size of a city with fans circling your showdown with Godzilla or King Kong or Mario. You’re in a shark pit using kung fu to fight 5 Great Whites. But actually, you’re on a weird 4D treadmill in your mom’s basement wearing a clunky helmet and old jeans.

Steven Spielberg’s *Ready Player One* was certainly an interesting movie, offering viewers a glimpse into a future world where everybody is obsessed with virtual reality (VR). Even those who don’t really care for video games can find themselves immersed in this extraordinary world where the main character, Wade, can do anything.

I have a lot of respect for Spielberg, who has directed numerous captivating and evocative movies such as *Jaws*, *E.T.*, *Schindler’s List*, *Jurassic Park*, and *War Horse*. But with *Ready Player One*, he does the directing equivalent of marinating a filet mignon with ketchup, hot sauce, and peanut butter which, if not immediately clear, spells disaster.

The movie starts out with a cheesy voiceover and a far too in-depth explanation of what VR is. In summary, this guy created VR, became rich, and died, but left his fortune to someone who could “win” his VR video game. Seems interesting, but a lazy Spielberg continues to develop the plot using the thousand-year-old—and excruciatingly boring—hero’s journey. Young boy is likeable and wants something—trillions of dollars and control of the world’s largest company in this case.

Spielberg also checks off the classic love interest box with Samantha, who is insecure and awkward (typical), but it works because Wade is also insecure and awkward (typical). And bad guy is bad because he kills people and is greedy...even though the main character also lusts after lots of money (this fact is very played down).

Throughout the film, Wade does a lot of hero’s journey type of things: he has to find all the keys in order to obtain the fortune—in retrospect it is quite reminiscent of a treasure hunt with a much higher production cost. Yet, in the end Wade winthe treasure by studying the rich dead guy’s life like he is studying for an AP exam.

The CGI was good, but some stories are better (much better) left untold. ■

Growing Up An Enlightening Experience

by AYMAN ARIK

I am not an adult yet.

That’s not quite true. I am not *legally* an adult yet. But in the barest sense of the word, I feel like I’m pretty damn close. An adult, the way I define it, is an individual who has to face the consequences of his or her own decisions. Unequivocally and without reprieve. And I made one of those mistakes today that may very well affect the course of my life.

A mistake for which only I am to blame and only I will suffer.

It was a humbling experience, this mistake. In the past, there was almost always a way for me to talk myself out of such shortfalls. To weasel my way out of holes I’d dug. To worm out of and eat away at the obstacles before me. But today, I realized that my decisions grow in impact every day. My actions

are more important, more significant than they have ever been before. And that both humbles and scares me.

I can’t just pass on the blame anymore. I can’t not face the music. I can’t just wait for a problem to pass.

It’s scary, this kind of power. I will be the first to admit that. But then again, power and responsibility are tightly wound and it’s not like we haven’t all dreamt of independence.

But independence is foreign. Unknown. And the unknown scares everyone. Doesn’t mean we can hide or that we should hide from the unknown. The mistake I made today may have changed the course of my life but it taught me an important lesson.

I am responsible for myself now. I am an adult. And scary as that is, I can’t be stunned. I can’t afford to wait for life to slap me across the face and wake me up. That isn’t a choice anymore.

If you’ve had this realization, recognize that you are not alone. If you haven’t yet, know that it is coming. No one will live our lives for us. Not our parents. Nor siblings. Nor friends. They will not have to live with our decisions or mistakes. We will.

At the end of the day, there is very little that we, and no one else, own. Our lives and our will. So we need to make decisions for our sakes, no one else’s. That’s just the way it is. And if culture or tradition tells you otherwise, they can go to hell. ■