

Opinion

MUSKOKA MOSAIC

Introducing Jacob Kriger

BY PAULA BOON

Literature, art, philosophy, history, religion: you never know what you might end up discussing if you spend a few hours with Jacob Kriger.

The 13-year-old, who was born in Israel to a Russian family and also lived for a short while in Norway, came to Canada seven years ago. He and his family live on Limberlost Road with a menagerie of animals: three dogs, three cats, two parrots and some chickens.

Since completing Grade 6 at Irwin Memorial Public School, Kriger has been studying at home with various tutors. Although officially in Grade 8, he is currently taking high school-level courses online while working part-time for his parents' company, Kriger Research Group International, which prepares university graduates to work in the clinical research industry.

One of Kriger's main interests is writing. "I'm not a true writer, though," he says modestly. "A true writer has to get at least one good work done."

Some would disagree with him, like the judges of the Dorset Snowball young writers' contest, which Kriger won in 2005.

His entry was the last chapter of a 25-page science fiction tale, and he is quite proud of it.

"It's the first thing I ever really accomplished," he notes.

At the time he received some positive feedback from local writer Mel Malton. "She was surprised someone so young wrote it and gave me some direction," he says.

Kriger has also written a "funny, criticizing book" of essays taking aim at American life.

Right now, the young writer is working on a book about a British family. "It's a bit like *My Family and Other Animals*," he explains. "I really like that book."

When asked what else he enjoys reading, Kriger says he is a Harry Potter fan. Some of his other favourites are *Twenty Thousand Leagues under the Sea* by Jules Verne, *The Idiot* by Dostoyevsky and *Flowers for Algernon* by Daniel Keyes.

"I would love to write something like that," he says.

He notes that he actually reads more online articles and stories than books.

Kriger also loves art. "I don't make art, I admire art," he clarifies. "Like Van Gogh's cornfields and

the *Mona Lisa* by Da Vinci. I like how Van Gogh's style is childish — he's not a bad artist, he's trying to be childish. And I like to think about all the secrets people say are behind the *Mona Lisa*."

Then the talk turns to his other hobbies.



JACOB KRIGER

Forester welcomes news editor

The Forester is pleased to announce this week that veteran reporter/photographer Tamara de la Vega has accepted the position of news editor.

Since March of 2000, de la Vega has been an integral part of the Forester team. She has covered a variety of beats over the years. Regular readers will know her best for her work on the Lake of Bays and District of Muskoka municipal beats, but she has covered almost every beat imaginable during her tenure at the paper. Her new duties will include organizing the editorial content of the Huntsville Forester every week, running the newsroom, preparing Huntsville's contributions for the Weekender and handling incoming assignments from the public. She will also continue to write and take photos for the paper and support the Forester's growing online presence at www.huntsvilleforester.com.

"This is a very vibrant and caring community and I am grateful for the opportunity to serve it in a new capacity alongside a team of extremely tal-



ented colleagues," said de la Vega of taking on the new challenge.

Bruce Hickey will continue to serve as the managing editor of the Forester, and sees de la Vega's new role as a huge benefit in maintaining and further fostering the Forester's reputation for producing a strong community-oriented newspaper.

"Tamara has always had a passion for community news. She has a strong commitment to putting out a quality product. I am excited that she has agreed to take on this role and help lead the Forester to new heights," said Hickey, who also serves as managing editor of the Bracebridge Examiner, Gravenhurst Banner, Almaguin News, the Muskokan, Muskoka Sun and all other Metroland North Media papers and special products.

If you have story ideas and/or comments on the Forester, please give Tamara a call, or drop her an e-mail at tamara@huntsvilleforester.com.

We're running out of time to stop global warming trends

BY MARY MCCULLY

Huntsville Lakes Council

The statements from the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change are becoming more dire. This Panel needs to be listened to as it includes 168 authors, 84 coauthors and 485 who review the data on which its statements are based. These researchers come from all the sciences involved in the study of global warming. In May, 2007, it said that, if the world acts decisively now, we should be able to hold temperature increases below the level at which the great ice sheets in Antarctica and Greenland are guaranteed to melt. Just a few days ago, a committee of this Panel added that changes that are expected from warming might be "abrupt." And this from a body that requires consensus thus muffling those voices who fear that much greater change is already in the works.

Global warming is happening because of an increase in carbon dioxide in the atmosphere from our greater use of fossil fuels since the beginning of the industrial revolution. Carbon dioxide, along with methane and water vapour, is termed a greenhouse gas because it allows the ultraviolet light from the sun to pass through to the earth but traps the heat produced that would otherwise radiate back into space.

As a result, the world has warmed, on average, by about a degree Fahrenheit above what pre-industrial processes would have caused. One degree sounds small but we are already seeing the changes: glaciers throughout the world are melting much more quickly than had earlier been predicted, sea levels are rising, hurricanes are stronger, drought areas are increasing, and forest fires are becoming more devastating. These are only a few examples. Some speculate the onset of wars due to land redistribution. In our own backyard, we are already seeing posturing by some nations over resource and passage rights in the arctic.

Jim Hansen is the Director of NASA's Goddard Institute for Space Studies and a very highly respected scientist in the field of climate change studies. He feels we are in for a "totally different planet" and that "we are on a precipice of climate

change tipping points beyond which there is no redemption", tipping points being those factors which may cause a sudden change to earth's climate systems.

One example of a tipping point comes from melting of the permafrost in the tundra of the arctic. This releases large amounts of methane which is a hugely potent greenhouse gas. These tipping points are not factored into the climate models used by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. Jim Hansen feels that we have, perhaps, only 10 years to get greenhouse gas emissions under control.

George W. has stalled on pushing the issue of climate change citing dire economic trouble in his country if the use of carbon is curtailed. Many countries, especially in Europe, and even some US states such as California, are showing that this is certainly not the case. Economists have studied this and feel that the costs to change from our reliance on fossil fuels might slow down economic expansion by only two years over the course of the 21st century.

Arnold Schwarzenegger stated last spring that new global warming standards set by his state have spurred business, not harmed it. As well, the economists do not factor in the costs of wild weather with New Orleans providing just one example of the costs of not acting. And how does one put a figure to social cost?

So what to do? Turning down your use of carbon is relatively easy: change all your lighting to fluorescent and purchase the most energy efficient appliances when your old machines need changing; purchase energy-efficient cars and demand higher increases in efficiency; don't leave any vehicle idling; recycle; push Town to intensify development in our urban core and continue its expansion of the public transit system to decrease our car use; lend your support to initiatives to develop renewable energy such as wind turbines, solar panels and the use of biofuels; ensure that your home is well insulated and plant trees.

As Martin Luther King Jr. said in 1968, albeit with another issue in mind: "We are now faced with the fact, my friend, that tomorrow is today. We are confronted with the fierce urgency of now."

LETTERS

Second ice pad necessary for kids

It saddens me to hear that there is so much controversy about adding a second ice pad. The ice skating and hockey programs are so vital to teaching youth of today sportsmanship, discipline and, most important, friendship.

Even the most introverted child can benefit from being part of a team. We left Huntsville a year ago and our boys truly miss the friends they made while playing hockey.

Keep the kids active, as this will keep their bodies physically fit and their minds active. Enhance their spirit and their drive to succeed. The volunteers who work with these kids deserve a great deal of thanks for their efforts

over the years, and it would be a crime to let it slip away.

Make Huntsville the place to be in the winter, not just for the skiing, but for the great hockey and skating opportunities it could offer. If you still feel it's not necessary to add another ice pad, then take it away from the adult players and give the kids their chance to learn. Adults can drive 30 km to other ice. Some of the local families can't. Like the song says, "I believe the children are our future." Take care of the future and it will take care of you.

Peggy Beagan
Windsor

Huntsville gets prettier every year

A recent telephone contact with the Ministry of Health required my address. When I gave it, the response was an enthusiastic "Huntsville is the prettiest town in the north!" I promptly agreed.

Downtown Huntsville was pretty this summer, wasn't it? I've never seen such heavy foot traffic before and I heard business was brisk. That's amazing when you consider that our dollar was so good elsewhere.

Pedestrians looked happy as they strolled about, parcels in one hand and the proverbial

cone in the other. I think the theatre and all the flowers had a synergistic impact on the ambiance of Main Street.

Thank you to all the sponsors, organizations and volunteers of Huntsville, many of whom start in December planning themes and colours for us to enjoy.

Because of their input Huntsville gets prettier every year. I can hardly wait until next summer.

Harriet Hutchinson
Huntsville

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR:

E-mail: letters@huntsvilleforester.com

When sending letters to the editor be sure to include your name, address and phone number. Unsigned letters cannot be used.



HEALTHCARE HEROES

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James Boothby

Special thanks to James Boothby, a Grade One student at Riverside Public School. James is the winner of the 2007 HDMH Foundation Christmas Card Contest. James' art will be featured on the Foundation's annual holiday greeting card. James and Riverside Public School each received a cheque for \$100 in appreciation of their support of the Christmas card program.

In September, all elementary schools in Muskoka and East Parry Sound were invited to enter Christmas art. Many, many artists sent their creations and HDMH staff voted on the favourites.

Thanks to everyone who participated.

Huntsville District Memorial Hospital Foundation continues to support:

- Huntsville District Memorial Hospital
- Fairvern Nursing Home
- Burk's Falls & District Health Centre
- Muskoka-East Parry Sound CCAC



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