

Opinion

MUSKOKA MOSAIC

Introducing Ted Craven

BY PAULA BOON

Many people in the Huntsville area know Ted Craven as a poet and composer, but this is only one side of a multifaceted man. Some of his other roles, past and present, include expert chess player, spiritual seeker, computer programmer and entrepreneur.

Born in Guelph, Craven showed an early flair for creative writing. "My parents got me an Underwood typewriter for my eighth birthday and I cranked out short novellas on it," he says. He began studying piano at about the same time and continued until he finished high school.

In his teens, he focused on chess, achieving a Canadian top-10 rank for those under 18 years of age. He competed in tournaments across North America, and spent summers playing speed-chess games in Toronto. Later, in Huntsville, Craven taught chess to children for several years before taking a break last fall.

After high school in Burlington, Craven's focus took a different direction: he joined an ashram and stayed for the next 10 years. "The lifestyle was what you would expect: poverty, chastity and my personal nemesis - obedience," he says. Craven refers to his time in the ashram as his university education. "It just took me longer than most to graduate," he says with a smile.

Then, in the early 80s, he moved on. "The shine came off the organization, publicly and personally," he says. His lack of bitterness is clear when he says, "There are two or three things that are foundational to how you find me now at age 54 and that was certainly one of them."

Another of these things is thoroughbred horse racing. After

attending his first race in Chicago in the early 80s, Craven became hooked. "Sports betting is about skill, knowledge and emotional discipline," he says. "It's ridiculously difficult to make money in the long run. There's a lot of data involved, and the analysis of it lends itself to computerization."

It was partly because of this interest that Craven became a computer programmer. Soon he was writing database management programs to make a living, while on the side he developed software designed to analyze horse-racing data. He found a "second guru," Dr. Howard Sartin, who was a luminary in the world of computer-related horse-racing.

In the early 90s, Ted and his wife Alison bought the cottage her grandparents had owned on Trout Lake near Dorset. They later moved up to the area, and he worked from home as a computer consultant.

That was when he began to tap into Muskoka's arts community. "My initial stuff was a bit awkward, but some folks still graciously applauded," he says. "It revived my childhood poet, and I tried to involve myself as much as possible in poetry cafes and local literary gatherings."

Then Craven found his way back to horse racing. "It was in my blood," he says, recounting how "Doc Sartin" had stopped his work abruptly after a stroke in 2001.

When Craven discovered in 2004 that no one had taken up the



torch, he decided to focus on his software, called Racing Decision Support System (RDSS), as a business. Within weeks, he met Sartin's original programmer, who provided the software source code. "When you ask, this is exactly the way the universe answers," Craven says.

In 2005 he started working in earnest on RDSS and his participation in Huntsville's literary scene began to wane somewhat. "It takes all of my physical and psychic energy," he says. "Not being female, and with underdeveloped multitasking skills, there are only one or two big themes I can focus on at any time in my life. I'll be back, though."

With his wife Alison's unflinching support and encouragement, Craven plans to roll out his software this October in Los Angeles. There are already about 100 people who use it daily in their

professional and recreational life as "horse-race investors."

"Human beings have always sought to predict the future. Horse racing is as good a sandbox as any other to play in to learn the immortal truths of life," Craven says. "The particular playground is unimportant - it's being a winner, knowing yourself, and learning to share."

Is there someone you'd like to see profiled in this space? Please call Paula at 789-5541 or e-mail pboon@metroland-northmedia.com.

LETTERS

Understanding northern issues means living in the north

To: The Hon. Tony Clement, MP

I was very pleased to hear that Tony Martin has finally realized that the riding of Parry Sound-Muskoka should be in Northern Ontario. For all of the reasons that I certainly put forward on the CBC Radio phone-in show Ontario Today.

As someone from Northern Ontario, Mr. Martin realizes as I do the challenges that we face in Northern Ontario: our economic circumstances and our environment. Every time there is an opportunity to reaffirm our position that Northern Ontario needs secure and stable funding for growth, we have to raise our voices so that we are heard in southern Ontario and the rest of Canada.

It was nice that Mr. Clement put together the online petition with regard to Parry Sound-Muskoka staying in Northern Ontario. But I was very disappointed to read that he would not support Mr. Martin's cause, which means he will obviously not support Mr. Rota's either.

Mr. Rota's Private Members Bill C-499 has tried to capitalize everyone in Northern Ontario's concerns. Thus strengthening FEDNOR; for all of Northern Ontario and Parry Sound-Muskoka's position in Northern Ontario. Mr. Rota is putting forward a very clear Liberal view that Northern

Ontario needs a strong FEDNOR agency and that the riding of Parry Sound-Muskoka is in Northern Ontario.

Actions speak louder than words. Mr. Clement's actions in the House of Commons have not supported Parry Sound-Muskoka being in Northern Ontario. When Liberal MP Dianne Marleau brought forward Bill C-290 in the fall of 2006, Mr. Clement voted against it. Bill C-290 was designed to ensure that the number of seats in Northern Ontario federally would not drop below 10, even if the population decreased, and Parry Sound-Muskoka was included in that group of 10 ridings. Again, another Liberal stance, that the riding of Parry Sound-Muskoka is in Northern Ontario. So what are the other MPs in Northern Ontario to think if Mr. Clement cannot support his own riding being in Northern Ontario?

We know the FEDNOR budget has been reduced and now we find out that FEDNOR funding is slipping into southern Ontario. This needs to change. FEDNOR money is for Northern Ontario, all the more reason to strengthen FEDNOR as an agency which would be harder for the politicians to get rid of. As it is now, FEDNOR, which is a Regional Support Program, already

has a bureaucracy of people assigned to it.

It looks like we still have an uphill battle as Mr. Harper has stated in the past that he doesn't support regional support programs, and Mr. Clement has said he will not support Mr. Martin's bill. So this sounds like the Conservatives will not

strengthen FEDNOR.

What can we expect when we have someone from southern Ontario representing Parry Sound-Muskoka?

Jamie McGarvey
Liberal candidate, Parry Sound-Muskoka

Parking fee can sting for those who often visit hospital

Re: *Medical Building to charge for parking, Huntsville Forester article, June 18, 2008.*

When the hospital started to charge \$5 for parking, we wondered where the needy people of Huntsville, who must visit the hospital for various reasons quite regularly, would find the money — or would they just go without treatment and then cost the community to look after them? What about the cancer patients who must regularly visit for chemotherapy? Or the dialysis patients who visit on a regular basis?

We questioned these things when the token was done away with but received no concrete reason. There are those on fixed incomes who would find it difficult to pay an extra \$5 every other week or so if they have to visit the hospital often.

Yes, we are aware that some inconsiderate people have been parking in the doctors' parking

lot and walking up to the hospital, thus clogging their lot. These people should be charged a fee or at least stopped from parking in the doctors' lot. What about people picking up prescriptions at the pharmacy? Are they to pay an extra \$5?

When a patient goes into the hospital for day surgery, an exemption should be made. This is a good place to bring back the token system! What does the hospital do with the \$45,000 revenue from the parking fees? Does it go to maintain the parking lots? Does it go to the hospital foundation?

Luckily, even though we are on fixed incomes, we are able to pay for parking but do resent the increase and the thought of paying to see our doctors. This is absolutely ridiculous!

Doug and Ann Davis
Baysville

Dispelling some myths about rape: put blame where it's due

Re: *Underwear belongs under clothing, Huntsville Forester, letter to the editor, June 11, 2008*

In response to the letters in this section during the past few weeks, I would like to take this opportunity to address some misconceptions when it comes to rape and sexual assault. The myths around this crime are very strong and very dangerous. They excuse the crime and blame the victim. Here are just a few:

Myth: Women who are sexually assaulted 'ask for it' by the way they dress or act.

Fact: This glaring misconception is often used by offenders to rationalize their behaviours (and blames the victims for these crimes, instead of the offenders). Survivors report a wide range of attire and behaviours when they were sexually assaulted. Women of any age and physical type, in almost any environment, can be sexually assaulted. When a woman is sexually assaulted, it is NOT her fault. No woman ever "asks" or deserves to be sexually assaulted. (Education Wife Assault Website)

Myth: Women lie about being sexually assaulted, often because they feel guilty about

having consensual sex.

Fact: Because it is emotionally so difficult for a woman to report a sexual assault to the police, it's very unlikely that she would make a false report. Sexual assault is actually a vastly underreported crime. (Education Wife Assault website)

Myth: Men who sexually assault women are either mentally ill or sexually starved.

Fact: Most of these men are neither. Studies indicate that most rapists are "ordinary" and "normal" men who sexually assault women in order to assert power and control over them. (Lenskyj, H., 1992).

It is not a crime for a woman to go where she wants, be with who she wants, drink what she wants, dress how she wants - when she wants to. None of these are invitations or provocations to be raped. Rape IS THE CRIME.

Let's begin to put the blame where blame is due when it comes to rape and sexual assault, the perpetrator. Let's work for change by dispelling these myths.

Laurie Lupton,
Muskoka Area Coordinator Muskoka Parry Sound Sexual Assault Services

Club sponsors youth for sailing trip

The Huntsville Sailing Club is offering one lucky youth the opportunity of a lifetime.

The club is looking to sponsor a youth, male or female, to take a course in sailing on a Tall Ship this summer and will provide the course fee for the successful candidate.

The candidate must be between 13 and 18 years old and must be able to swim 100 metres and tread water for 15 minutes. Previous sailing experience is not required.

The Tall Ship Adventure departs from Midland on Sunday, Aug. 24 for a nine-day trip, and arrives in Parry Sound on Monday, Sept. 1.

The selected candidate will explore the eastern shore of Georgian Bay, which is covered in thousands of islands and will also visit Collins Inlet, Hole-in-the-Wall, Kilbear Park

and Honey Harbour, while sailing in close to magnificent Red Rock en route to Parry Sound.

Please apply for this adventure in writing, providing information about yourself, and why you should be selected for this sailing experience. The club has asked Sportrec to review the applications and recommend a recipient.

Please send applications to Sportrec c/o Peter Jacob, RR 3, Utterson, Ontario, POB1M0 or by e-mail to pjacob@muskoka.com. Applications must be received by July 15.

For more information visit www.tallshipadventures.on.ca.

Further enquiries may be made by calling Peter Van Buskirk at 705-789-1067 or e-mail HYPERLINKmailto:petervanb@sympatico.ca



HEALTHCARE HEROES

Huntsville District
Memorial Hospital Foundation
100 Frank Miller Drive
Huntsville, ON P1H 1H7
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Nelson Staley Coin Collector

When Nelson Staley saw the photo of Dr. David Mathies giving a donation of his collected change, he said, "I can do that!" So here he is, with his peanut can full of pennies. Thank you Mr. Staley, your gift for your healthcare is appreciated.

The Huntsville Hospital Foundation welcomes all donations. Mr. Staley is not alone in wanting to help his hospital and it is important that everyone knows how much your hospital relies on every penny given. We've said it before; we will gladly roll all that pesky change and put it to good use at your hospital.

Huntsville District Memorial Hospital Foundation continues to support:

- Huntsville District Memorial Hospital
- Fairvern Nursing Home
- Burk's Falls & District Health Centre



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