



St. Lawrence College

RETIREES  ASSOCIATION

Retiree Reflections, Ruminations, and Ramblings (R⁴)

Issue #7 (May 2020)

Preamble: This latest issue, or a substantial portion of it, is “for the birds” – as will shortly become evident. It also contains, however, some other material, much of it silly, and even a bit of serious content. Don’t forget to visit our website (www.scretirees.weebly.com) regularly. Consider posting something on the “Retiree Chat” page to let us know how you are doing.

Ornithologists of the World Unite

(You have nothing to lose but your feathers)

WHICH QUARANTINE BIRD ARE YOU?

@JessHarwoodArt



LORIKEET

- Starts fights at Coles
- Every bird for themselves
- OK for toilet paper



COCKATOO

- Calling Talk-Back radio with conspiracies
- Loudly spruiking Whatsapp misinformation
- Anti-bird migration



SEAGULLS

- Still going to the beach
- Argues with police about social distancing
- On 3rd warning
- Chips = essential



KOOKABURRA

- Making inappropriate virus jokes
- Annoyingly positive
- Highly irritating to family



MAGPIE

- Gets in your 1.5m bubble
- Demanding Kids at home
- Still hates cyclists



BOWER BIRD

- Starts a home renovation project
- Prepper
- Thinking about building a bunker



FAIRY WREN

- Gets out of Pj's every day
- Still does make-up
- Day-drinker



POWERFUL OWL

- Excellent social isolator
- No one within 1.5km
- Life hasn't changed at all.

Our Association President Nancy, in one of her more bird-brained initiatives, sent the above photo display to members of the executive and asked us which birds we identified with while going through the isolation imposed by COVID-19. I sat on the nest in front of my computer and summarized the resulting answers, while trying not to lay an egg or ruffle any feathers in the process. The most frequently cited avian counterpart was the powerful owl, followed closely by the fairy wren and the kookabarra.

Participants obviously had a lark handling this assignment – **and you can too**. When you finish reading this fascinating document (and doubtless saving it for future reference) you should go to our website (<https://slcretirees.weebly.com/retiree-chat>) and tell us with which birds you associate during these difficult times. Perhaps your imagination will take flight when you read the answers below provided by executive members.

Pennie flew all around the question, linking herself with five species (lorikeet, kookaburra, bower bird, fairy wren, and powerful owl). She explained that she has lots of toilet paper, has been told that she is positive (to a fault), is working on a home reno project, is not working on makeup, and hasn't noticed much change in her life as a retiree.

Ron could be accused of giving the bird to his neighbours, since he apparently gets up at dawn and plays martial music loudly (with the windows open). On the other hand, he flaps his wings (applauds) when the Uber driver delivers his order from Swiss Chalet. Perhaps that food source explains why Ron ignored the choices and identifies himself as a chicken. But I think that is because he has a fondness for *hennessey*.

Clare saw herself as a cross between a fairy wren (except for the make-up part) and a kookaburra. But her comments indicate only a partial match, suggesting that she might be flying on one wing. She claims that she does not make inappropriate jokes but acknowledges that she can be irritating when asking frequently "when do we get there?" She makes no mention of whether she is a day drinker, apparently not wanting to fly too close to that topic.

By her own admission, **Thelma** is a complicated bird and sees herself in the fairy wren (again without the make-up part), the owl, and the kookaburra.

Anne saw herself as a powerful owl, but her reference to a glass of wine suggests that she branches out to the fairy wren as well.

Not surprisingly, the founder of our Association (**Bill**) is a wise old owl, claiming that nothing much has changed in his rural lifestyle. The river still flows, there are flowers in the garden, the veggies have been planted, and the bees require attention. He probably doesn't give a hoot about all the fuss and furore that is a media constant.

Your **humble scribe** identifies as a kookaburra, mostly positive and often annoying to his family (and friends). I'm not guilty of inappropriate virus jokes but my weakness for puns can cause others to fly off the handle.

Finally, President **Nancy**, who started this whole business, answered only "a fairy wren," leaving me nothing to work with or fluff up – proving that she is a wise old bird.

Is Your Neighbourhood Going to Pot?

No, I am not asking about the prevalence of marijuana in your area. I refer to the drumming on pots and pans that is now occurring daily in many parts of Ontario as people give thanks and show support for front line workers and their courageous contributions during the pandemic. In the west end of Kingston (and I imagine all over the city), folks gather on balconies and verandahs at 7 each night. Most focus on the pot serenade and waving to others they can see, but in some cases the ceremony is more elaborate.

One verandah at Commodore Cove (the housing complex just inland from the pier that used to hold a grain elevator), plays musical selections that begin and end with O Canada. That verandah is shown in the accompanying photo and I was very interested to learn (via an email from the city councillor of our area) that the lady in the photo is a nurse named Nicole Florent. In one of those "small world" situations that happen so often, I worked with Nicole 30 years ago (or more) when I was arranging training programs that St. Lawrence College was delivering for staff at KGH.



Possible Fake News

I know than some politicians (perhaps after ingesting too much Lysol or sitting too heavily on light bulbs) like to denigrate news reports. But I would have to agree that this bulletin seems suspect!



Breaking News!
Tonight at 10pm local time a medical satellite is flying over Canada to take everybody's temperature. Please stand naked outside your door and wave your health card in the air.

Designing Face Masks

Face masks have been a major topic of conversation during the COVID-19 crisis – from the lack of sufficient medical masks to protect health care workers to widely varying, and even conflicting, reports on where and under what conditions citizens need or do not need masks. Rather than trying to get behind the coverage of this topic, I will simply share some photos of masks. The first will give you food for thought. The other two address the issue of how to design masks that will not cause discomfort when worn. As you can see, with some creativity masks can be as comfortable and flexible as an old pair of jeans and quite beerable.

Lettuce come together. Romaine calm. This may just be the tip of the iceberg.

