

LETTERS

▼ MENTAL HEALTH

Overcoming stigma needs media support

To the editor:

On Oct. 18, the Canadian Mental Health Association, Kelowna branch, had the privilege of seeing over 120 citizens of Kelowna come together in support of the Ride Don't Hide world tour, battling the stigma and discrimination associated with mental illness.

In August 2010, Michael Schratte, a Grade 5 teacher from Vancouver who grew up here in the Okanagan, began his global dream of cycling 40,000 km around the world. His mission was to circumnavigate the world sharing stories with people in different countries, and in doing so, bring attention and awareness to the stigma surrounding mental illness. When we learned several months ago that the Ride

Don't Hide tour was coming through the Okanagan, we didn't have to look far to find Kelowna citizens willing to sign up to support him.

As we reflect on the event that just passed, there are two things that are particularly noteworthy. The first was the unprecedented and positive response of Kelowna's business community who rose up and used their voices and their resources to stand with the Canadian Mental Health Association in this campaign.

This event was a success because so many people and their businesses made the effort to do something that will make a difference.

Michael's goal of raising \$100,000 for child and youth mental health

initiatives will likely be achieved and his dream of raising awareness about mental illness has certainly created buzz through social media and word of mouth. However, our local media did not step up. There was a glaring lack of media despite significant efforts to get them on-board.

While we acknowledge and are grateful for the media who helped to promote the Kelowna Reception for Michael (most notably, Castanet, CBC radio, Global Okanagan, AM1150 and Q103.1FM), we remain disappointed that our local media did not take advantage of the opportunity to come to celebrate Michael's incredible global achievement and be a part of reducing the stigma about mental illness,

which impacts every single Canadian whether we are aware of it or not.

Mental illness directly impacts over seven million Canadians. That's one in five. However, everyone knows a friend, family member or colleague who has needlessly suffered with mental illness. It's astounding to know that approximately 50 per cent of those who have mental health issues never seek treatment because of the stigma surrounding the illness. The sad fact is that most people experience a full and productive life with effective treatment and supports.

Mental illness is one of the last taboos of our society. In 2011, people will freely talk about almost anything, but where mental health issues are

concerned there are still unacceptable levels of fear and ignorance.

We can actually do something about this. Events like Ride Don't Hide and talking to guys like Michael Schratte creates such a powerful message about why this cause is so critical.

Thank you to everyone who is willing to talk about mental health and mental illness as two ends of the same continuum.

On behalf of the board, staff, volunteers and participants of CMHA's programs and services, thank you to those who supported Michael Schratte and RideDon'tHide.com.

Shelagh Turner,
executive director,
Kelowna branch,
Canadian Mental
Health Association

▼ MUNICIPAL ELECTION

Politics and politicians can drive a man crazy

To the editor:

Politics drive me crazy!

By definition politics are; a) The art or science of government b) The art or science concerned with guiding and influencing a government c) The art or science concerned with winning and holding control over a government d) to deal with people in an opportunistic, manipulative, or devious way.

To be fair, I have been selective in picking these definitions from the dictionary.

To really understand politics, a definition of government is also required: The organization, machinery, or agency through which a political unit exercises authority and performs functions and which is usually classified according to the dis-

tribution of power within it. Again there are more definitions in the dictionary; you can research them for yourself.

What words jump out at you? The words influencing, opportunistic, manipulative, devious, authority, classified and power are ones that resonate with me.

Have there ever been politicians tied to self interest groups (influence)?

Have you ever engaged a politician in conversation, only to be dropped mid sentence so they can seek out the next perceived voter (opportunistic)?

Have you ever had a politician break a promise to you (manipulative)?

Have you ever had a politician lie to you (devious)?

Have you ever had

someone in government appear arrogant towards you (authority)?

Have you ever heard a politician say, "No comment" (classified)?

Have you ever dealt with a person in government that left you feeling powerless to deal with a challenge or problem (power)?

I am betting that I'm not alone in my experience of these political workings.

Leadership is a quality that is rare and valuable!

By definition leadership is: The capacity to lead.

That's it. Simple. So what does lead mean?

Lead: To direct on a course or in a direction.

That's it. Simple. Is it just me, or is there a big difference be-

tween the size of the paragraph defining politics and the paragraph defining leadership?

Is it possible for a person to be both a politician, and a leader? How can one "direct on a course or in a direction" if operating with the qualities assigned to the word politics?

Not very effectively would be my guess.

Sorting through the differences between the politicians and the "leaders" in an election is easy when you know what to look for.

I mentioned in a letter to the editor not too long ago that we have quality candidates to choose from in the coming election. By quality, I mean leaders. The trick is to identify them and then vote for them.

Kelowna is screaming

for leadership.

I also mentioned that we have a unique opportunity to shape the future of Kelowna in a positive way if we will just get out and vote for the leaders. To me, that future will require nine leaders sitting on council, all pulling in the same direction—one mayor and eight councilors. One team.

I have sifted through the list of candidate names, researched backgrounds along with platforms, taken the time to meet and question candidates of interest, and come up with a team of leaders that I would like to see take Kelowna into that positive future. I am prepared to vote today.

How's your list coming?

Bob Purdy,
Kelowna

Mayoralty candidates lacking

To the editor:

Shame on the mayoralty challengers for not doing their homework.

At a public forum on Nov. 2, sponsored by Capital News and CBC, candidates had the opportunity to pose a question to the others.

When asked by incumbent Sharon Shepherd to comment on the 15 changes to the Official Community Plan that will

guide the city for the next 20 years, none of the three mayoralty candidates could answer.

Obviously, they have not prepared for the role of mayor or even given the OCP a cursory glance.

Walter Gray should be ashamed of his cavalier position, that the OCP is so thick that no one could memorize it and because he won't be mayor in 20 years he didn't have to an-

swer the question.

Such disrespect for the OCP and failure to be current on its contents shows that Gray would have complete disregard for it should he be elected.

He would no doubt cast it aside in a minute, in order to plant a 26-storey building in our midst.

Elizabeth Woods,
Kelowna

Express yourself

We welcome letters that comment in a timely manner about stories and editorials published in the Capital News.

Letters under 200 words will be given priority in considering them for publication. We reserve the right to edit for clarity, brevity, legality and taste.

Letters sent directly to reporters may be treated as letters to the editor.

Letters must bear the name, address and telephone number of the writer. Names will be withheld at the editor's discretion, only under exceptional circumstances.

E-mail letters to edit@kelownacapnews.com, fax to 763-8469 or mail to The Editor, Capital News, 2495 Enterprise Way, Kelowna, B.C., V1X 7K2.

BIG GAME HUNTING

IS NO WALK IN THE PARK.



Some Hunters Go Farther than Others. We make their Boots.

Irish Setter boots deliver on a 60 year heritage of excellence. Choose from a variety of styles with various degrees of Thinsulate insulation, (400 grams to 1000 grams) Genuine GoreTex or Ultra Dry Waterproof - Breathable Membranes

New low Prices **\$169.00 to \$259.00**



carhartt
FREE DUFFLE BAG
With the purchase of any regular priced shoe or boots! Hurry in while quantities last. (\$40.00 retail value)



KELOWNA
1835 Dilworth Dr.
at Harvey between
Scotiabank & Sport Mart
250-868-8693

NEW HOURS: Mon-Sat 9-6pm, Sun 11-5pm

twitter.com/kelownacapnews

Your Bulk Food Specialists

'Scoop' These Savings!
Prices effective Nov. 7 - 12, 2011

SPRINGFIELD BULK FOODS

www.springfieldbulkfoods.ca

Item	100g
QUICK & ROLLED OATS	.12
DRIED CRANBERRIES	.69
BEST BROWN SUGAR	.26
GOLDEN RAISINS	.65
CURRANTS	.79
UNBLEACHED WHITE FLOUR	.14
GOLDEN FLAXSEED	.20
BROWN RICE FLOUR	.25
WHEAT GERM	.15
ORGANIC WHITE FLOUR	.18
GINGER SLICES	.69
EPSOM SALT	.49
WHOLE POPPY SEEDS	.43

CLOSED FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 11 - REMEMBRANCE DAY
12-BEAN SOUP MIX 5 kg. **\$17.98**

CASE SPECIALS
CALIFORNIA WALNUT CRUMBS 500 gr **\$8.39**
ORGANIC CANE SUGAR 5 kg. **\$20.49**
GLUTEN FREE/BR. RICE SPAGHETTI ... 10 lbs. **\$31.89**

SPRINGFIELD BULK FOODS

#133-1889 Springfield Rd. 250-860-4585

Monday to Friday 9:00-6:00
Saturday 9:00-5:30 • Closed Sunday


