

Comment

Auld Lang Syne



April 5, 1989 Vulcan Advocate file photo

Hazel Cameron Elementary students David Gorzitza (bottom) and Todd Nadon (top) aren't really trying to go over the wall — they are just trying to make their way up and down a somewhat slippery row of tires. The two Grade 1 students were out in the playground Monday at noon enjoying the warm temperatures and working off some excess energy.

April 2, 1980

Vulcan County entries in the regional science fair brought home many prizes. Fourteen projects from county schools were eligible for the regional fair in Lethbridge on March 28 and 29. Thirteen of these were entered and only two did not get prizes. In division one, for Grades 1 to 3, two of the local projects won third prizes. Energy by Stacy Lievaart and Owls by Colleen Schmidt and Angie Gottenberg were the prize winners. In division two for Grades 4-6 there were five first-place projects and one third. Green Energy by Cody Cutforth won a third-place prize. First-place prizes went to Heather Lane for her project Search For Oil, Mark Daniels for Acoustics, Dean Ditto for Rusty Grain Beetle, Carrie Schmidt and Debbie Ford for Hydroponics, and Acid Rain by Dawn McKay, Debbie Smith and Tamara Velker. In division three for Grades 7-9, Robert Ford got a first-place prize for his project on Fertilizer. Brenda Thomas got a second-place prize for her project on Quasars, and Karen Auch and Marion Fraser got a third-place prize for their project on Light. The top projects in the junior high and high school division are eligible to go on to the Canadian Science Fair. Robert Ford's project is eligible for this, and he will go on if money can be raised for expenses.

April 4, 1990

The Kinsmen Club of Vulcan is still working to collect funds pledged during its skate-a-thon, which was held February 11. Skate-a-thon coordinator Doug Mills said he is hoping to collect the last of the pledged amount in the next few days. So far the club has collected approximately \$3,900 of the total of \$4,500 pledged to people participating in the skate-a-thon. Half of the money raised in the skate-a-thon will be donated to organizations or groups designated by each participating skater. The remainder, minus the minimal cost for the event, will be donated to the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation of Canada, the major beneficiary of Kinsmen clubs across the country.

A worthy and noble pursuit

Most of my Conservative friends and neighbours seem to be enamored with Donald Trump and his no nonsense, "drain the swamp" attitude and his disdain for left-leaning bleeding hearts.

I can hear them right now shouting out about how the left has done everything but crucify him and that they would criticize him even if he magically solved world hunger and brought peace to mankind.

I'm not such a big fan. While it's no secret my political philosophy tends towards the right, I'm stunned by how his followers seem to be OK with his actions and personality while at the same time they wring their hands when their kids are bullied at school.

It was once a noble pursuit to become President of the United States of America, a station of high esteem that should require a measure of integrity and morals few possess. It was something that any parent could imagine her or his child growing to become if only the child lead an upright, ethical life and developed into a leader by earning that leadership, not inheriting or buying it.

Maybe I'm naïve. I always assumed leaders of men should be able to govern themselves before assuming the responsibility of governing others. Thomas Jefferson said something to that effect once.



Morgan Wilson

More Than I Know

I do support the notion that a leader should always have the best interest of his nation as part of his mission statement. I do not, however, support the arrogant, protectionist, holier-than-thou conceit that implies that America is somehow a master empire on the world stage and that all others should cover in its shadow. Making America great shouldn't mean beating others away from the podium to occupy it exclusively.

I'm wading in over my boots here, but witness the current trade issues where the USA is throwing its weight around. It's treading on some thin ice with China, which incidentally holds a large portion of the USA's note. It's bullying Canada and Mexico, two of its most important trade partners. Every week there's a new tweet from POTUS that says America won't and then will exercise trade restrictions if they don't get their own way in NAFTA negotiations.

World's biggest telescope almost ready for next year's launch

There's much excitement about the 2019 launch of the \$10-billion (US) James Webb Space Telescope (<https://www.jwst.nasa.gov>).

The telescope has undergone 100 days of cryogenic testing, and engineers are now confident it can stay in frigid outer space for years.

While there's never been empirical proof of life outside our planet, one of the telescope's purposes will be to study the surfaces of exoplanets stratospheres to examine this possibility.

A 2004 movie called *The Privileged Planet* (privilegedplanet.com) explains it takes much more than just an atmosphere to sustain complex life. For example, our sky is clear, the moon is precisely the right size and distance from Earth, its gravity stabilizes the Earth's rotation, our position in our galaxy is just right, and our sun is its precise mass and composition. All these aspects, and many more, are essential for the Earth to be habitable.



Neel Roberts

The Sky's the Limit

Sky watch

On Sunday, April 8, look southeast before sunrise and watch the moon and Saturn and Mars rise close together.

On Tuesday, April 18 at dusk, look northwest-west to watch a thin crescent moon set next to Venus.

Before dawn on Sunday, April 22, the Lyrids meteor shower will peak. Look east into the constellation of Lyra near Vega and you should be able to catch 10-20 meteors per hour on average with rare surges of up to 100 with no moonlight.

Maybe Trump has achieved some of the things he's said he would do. Maybe the GOP needed a shake-up. Maybe the Democrats were as shady as it was said they were and we'd be worse off with them in power.

But it's hard to imagine how anyone can compartmentalize the characteristics of such a man I wouldn't want my kids to emulate. It's also hard to imagine telling my kid that you too could be a leader, never mind your lack of moral compass or shallow character. You just need to bully your way to the top.

Our own country's leadership is similarly morally unguided. It's just a notch or two less arrogant. It's certainly just as vain and entitled but without the teeth and muscle of our southern neighbours.

We've become bystanders on the world stage and we're struggling to maintain and develop trade internationally. Our governments have hobbled our industries and economy with economic restraints, and we're losing our place at the table.

It's no wonder the Trump regime appeals to so many here. We could use a dose of Making Canada Great again — we just need a leader who isn't a misogynistic buffoon to make it happen.

I hope we elect someone who can emerge from that shadow and elbow back onto the podium and demonstrate to our children that being the leader of a free nation is still a worthy and noble pursuit.

On Monday, April 30 before sunset, look southeast-east at about 8:30 p.m. to watch a near full moon and Jupiter rise into the night. With a good pair of binoculars you can catch four of Jupiter's moons.

Public events

University of Calgary students will speak Saturday, April 28 on the latest, fastest, smallest and most fascinating new research in physics during the monthly open house at the Rothney observatory near Priddis.

The evening, which starts at 8 p.m., will kick off with an observatory check-in, then a presentation on what's up in the sky. You will have the opportunity to look through telescopes, and astronomers will be on hand to answer questions. The entrance fee is \$30 per car.

For more information, email Jennifer Howse at jhowse@phas.ucalgary.ca or phone her at 403-931-2366, or visit the website www.ucalgary.ca/rao.

Neel welcomes your questions and comments at 403-560-6574 and Neel_Roberts@ptccanada.com.