

RRC Heritage Group

Newsletter

April 2020

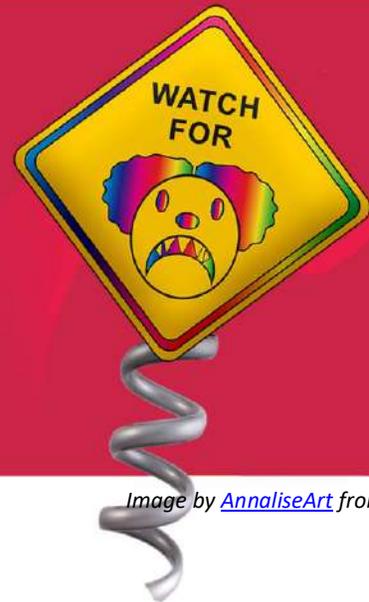


Image by [AnnaliseArt](#) from [Pixabay](#)



HG April Meeting and May Outing Cancelled

Well, who would have thought at our meeting in February that it would be our last until the fall. I was really looking forward to our social outings in March and May, and also to having our speaker and elections in April. We will now have to defer our elections until September.

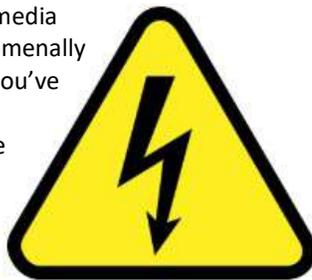
I hope that we can indeed meet in September and that you and your families remain as healthy as possible.

Keep safe, wash your hands, physically isolate and hopefully come September we can give each other hugs, handshakes and back pats.

Leslie Walsh, Heritage Group Chair

RRC Alumnus Sparks COVID-19 Firestorm

If you didn't catch the recent social media firestorm over **WattZapp**, the phenomenally popular social distancing app, then you've missed it. Not only will you not find WattZapp in the App Store or Google Play, in an unprecedented social media backlash, any reference to the app has been purged from all major platforms, including Twitter and Facebook. Why? You could call it "social media distancing".



[DavidRockDesign](#) / Pixabay

Instead of pushing people away, WattZapp actually brought them closer together. A Brandon jogger's acetate track suit burst into flames as he passed a dog-walker; the fumes from nail-polish remover ignited in a Morden lunch room; a jolt caused a King's Head waitress to drop a tray of Coronas on the heads of her patrons. Not surprisingly, bystanders in each case flocked to their aid.

Powerful Taptic Engine

Remember laying your old phone on a table only to have the vibrations from an incoming call scare you half to death? That shaking was caused by linear actuators. In 2017, manufacturers started replacing actuators with the much more powerful [Taptic Engine](#). That proved to be a game changer.



Original TAPTIC-59A capacitor



Malcolm Ecks / Pixabay

Sunk by Success

Social entrepreneur, **Malcolm Ecks**, RRC alumnus and Heritage Group member, pivoted overnight from wunderkind to social media pariah thanks to his ingeniously novel phone app, WattZapp. The premise was brilliantly simple: a phone app that senses a user's proximity to other phones and, if within six feet, causes them to "zap" their owners into moving away with a painful electric charge. The shocking truth is, it provoked just the opposite.

Ecks discovered that the Taptic Engine's tiny but powerful capacitors could be programmatically induced to discharge a brief, but powerful, electric charge through a phone's metal case. Plus, thanks to "push notifications" and Bluetooth, presto! Ecks realized that he could "push" a discharge command to any other phone within six feet (exactly the recommended COVID-19 social distancing gap!)

(continued from page 1)

SmartPhoney Combustion

Unfortunately, WattZapp worked too well. Ninety-five percent of today's smartphones come equipped with some version of the Taptic Engine. When activated, any such device coming to within six feet of an activated WattZapp phone will discharge a 10-15 milliamp shock. That may not sound like

much, but it's enough to cause significant pain or to ignite combustible materials. No surprise then, that the app has been withdrawn and any online references to it removed.

When asked to comment, Ecks wryly quipped, "There's a sucker born every minute."

Government of Canada Call for Volunteers

The Government of Canada (GoC) is working with provincial and territorial governments to respond to COVID-19. They are seeking volunteers to help in the following areas:

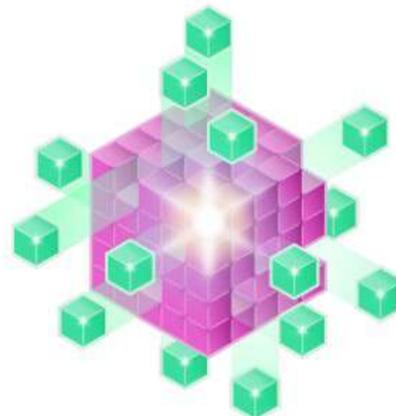
1. Case tracking and contact tracing;
2. Health system surge capacity;
3. Case data collection and reporting.

The GoC is building an inventory of volunteers from which provincial and territorial governments can draw upon as needed. ALL volunteers are welcome as they are looking for a wide variety of experiences and expertise.

Closing date for applications is April 24, 2020.

For more information or to fill out an application, go to:

<https://emploisfp-psjobs.cfp-psc.gc.ca/psrs-srfp/applicant/page1800?poster=1437722&toggleLanguage=en>



[OpenClipart-Vectors](#) / Pixabay

Forget social distancing

"Loneliness does not come from having no people around you, but from being unable to communicate the things that seem important to you."

— C.G. Jung



[Leroy Skalstad](#) / Pixabay

No, I am neither a COVID-19 denier nor fake news evangelist. But thanks to my favourite public broadcaster, I now recognize that "social distancing" is a distressingly unfit misnomer.

I came to that realization after hearing a CBC interview with a healthcare professional who preferred the term, "**physical distancing**". And, if you think about it, that makes very good sense. After all, thanks to technology, never has it been easier to maintain social connections with those from whom we've become physical separated.

Reconnect!

This morning, for example, I spent three hours listening (on CBC, again) to the encouraging voices of various otherwise strangers over coffee in my kitchen. And yesterday, though I now live in Vancouver, a simple "How are you doing?" text from a former colleague, now in Toronto, led to a wonderful reconnection. Over the next few hours I had exchanged emails with sundry friends and family from three different provinces. I chatted by phone with one of my sisters for the first time in

weeks. Finally, I FaceTimed with my daughter in Winnipeg before heading off to bed, and did the same with my son in Red Deer after having finished this piece (also shared with you electronically, by the way). Socially isolated? I think not.

Indulge!

I am reminded of the opening lines of the Dickens novel, *A Tale of Two Cities*:

"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity..."

True, sequestering ourselves in response to the current unfolding pandemic poses definite challenges. But for most of us, staying connected is not one of them. Never have we had more options: Facebook, Glide, Google Duo, Skype, Snapchat, WhatsApp, or even that old workhorse, the telephone, to name but a few. Those of us who crave news and information enjoy a veritable smorgasbord of reliable digital sources to supplement our radio and TV. And all that extra time at home opens up opportunities to explore new diversions, or to resurrect old ones. Pull out those old paints, read a book, knit a sweater, go through old photos, play a board game, write that great novel, binge on Netflix. I watched *The Godfather* for the first time this week!

Bottom line: yes, do practice physical distancing, but for god's sake also stay (or get more) socially connected. Such a stellar opportunity to do so will not last forever (we hope).

Andrea LeFort: Personal Safety

This is an abridged article. Go to rrc-hq.ca/andrea-lefort online for the entire original post.

Heritage Group meeting of February 20, 2020.

by Leslie Walsh

Constable Andrea LeFort is with the Winnipeg Police Service in the Community Resource Unit, Diversity and Crime Prevention Section. Her specialty is “Active Shooters”. Also a part time firearms instructor, Andrea deals with extreme violence and the use of weapons, and she “absolutely loves it”.



There are 3 keys to personal safety:

1. Be aware of your surroundings
2. Consider the risks associated with an area
3. Have a plan as to what you will do

Andrea began by asking the group to identify issues in a number of photos that she flashed on the overhead: a person walking down the street while on a phone, a woman in large sunglasses with her hair in her face (no peripheral vision), a purse wide open on the back of a chair. One was of a pole wrapped in padding and someone with a phone walking right into it. Apparently this was happening so often in India that poles on sidewalks are being padded to prevent injury.

Andrea then presented a series of simple but useful ways we can help to maximize our own day-to-day personal safety.

Walking Safety Tips

- Walk confidently, but cautiously.
 - Avoid using cell phones or other electronic devices; stay alert.
- Give yourself options (from alleys, small alcoves, and the street):
 - Stay alert where you might be pushed into the street or an alley by another pedestrian.
 - Car thieves don't tend to follow the rules of the road; walk with lots of sidewalk space between you and traffic for a better chance to get out of the way.
 - If there's no sidewalk, walk on the street facing traffic.
- Don't wear flashy clothing or accessories (offenders do not want to get caught, so they pick easy targets).
- Keep to well-travelled areas:
 - Avoid unfamiliar areas and shortcuts. A blind alley with no obvious exit may be a tempting when it is -30C.
 - Increasing safety may require decreasing convenience.
- Know the exact address of your destination (You probably know your best friend's address? But what's the number?)
 - 911 must know exactly where you are (“The house with the green door” won't cut it).



MabelAmber / Pixabay

- Have a mitigation plan.
 - Someone too close behind? Step aside, let them pass.
 - Feel you are being followed? Change directions, enter a store with lots of people, or walk an extra block or two.
- Use the buddy system when not alone.
 - Both people walk to one car, and then drive to the other.
- Carry a personal alarm to alert people around you of a problem.
 - Even a whistle from a Dollar store can do a good job.
 - Buy a pea-less whistle. Peas swell in the cold and may prevent the whistle from sounding. (check out wiki.ezvid.com/best-survival-whistles-Ed.)
 - An alarm may not prevent a crime from happening, but could stop it in action.
- Don't carry bear-spray (or any other object that can be considered a weapon).
 - To do so is illegal in Canada. You can be arrested and charged.
 - OK in the woods for use against a four-legged animal, but not against a person. You cannot walk in the mall with it.
- Protect your methods of payment.
 - Take only what you need with you.
 - Carry only small amounts of cash, or a debit card.
 - More than two credit/debit cards is too many.
 - Do not carry your Social Insurance Card. You only need it at tax time and for employment purposes (and only after you get the job).
 - Put your cards in your front pant-pocket.
 - Don't carrying “tap to pay” debit and credit cards.
 - Tapping will save 5-10 seconds over entering a PIN.
 - Contactless cards enable many fraudulent crimes.



- Always lock your cell phone.
 - Mobile phones hold a lot of information.
 - Most mobile phones offer excellent protection **if** users use a good password or fingerprint locking system.
- Be on the alert for gangs.
 - Encounters are possible in all areas of Winnipeg.
 - Be wary of groups of youths wearing similar clothing (e.g. brands, hats, tattoos, bandanas, sports teams).
 - Graffiti may be an indicator of turf. If you have any in your neighbourhood, have the graffiti removed. Call 311 and someone will be dispatched to cover it up.
 - Be careful when encountering a group of young females; females can be violent too.
- Don't feel pressured to give to panhandlers.
 - Social agencies provide what most panhandlers need.
 - Don't swear or be abusive; a polite, "No", usually works.
 - Don't pause to look in your wallet or purse.
 - Walk and talk confidently.
- Watch out for people high on meth (methamphetamine).
 - There is a psychedelic aspect and paranoia.
 - Behaviour is **completely unpredictable**.
 - Something worthless to us can seem extremely valuable to someone high on meth. (e.g. The foil on the inside of a chip bag inside a vehicle can appear to be gold.)
- Use ATMs wisely.
 - Don't count the money you withdraw.
 - Be aware of people around you.
- Victim of a robbery? COOPERATE!
 - Life and personal safety more valuable than property.
- Be Proactive. **Call 911.**
 - Report damage to persons or property, any crime in progress, any medical emergency.
 - Stay on the line, stay calm, explain the emergency; give address and phone # (automatically displays to the operator).
 - If involving a vehicle, record plate number and any unusual marks (e.g. rust, dents, different colour).

911

Other Safety Tips

- Use Transit wisely.
 - Choose well-lit busy bus stops.
 - Sit near the bus driver.
 - Know bus routes & schedules.
 - Ask bus drivers for help.
 - Use "request stop" to be dropped off between stops.
 - Report any abuse or harassment of the driver.
- Practice vehicle safety.
 - Always park in well-lit spots.
 - Carry your keys in your hand.
 - Do not exit your vehicle around suspicious people.
 - NEVER leave anything you don't want stolen in your vehicle. (e.g. garage door opener).
 - Some people leave their vehicles empty and unlocked.



Free-Photos / Pixabay

- Be aware of Winnipeg E-Watch (winnipeg.ca/police/ewatch/default.aspx).
- Winnipeg Police Website that posts recent break-and-enter and stolen vehicle reports by neighbourhood.
- Talk to one another and share information.
 - Cheapest crime prevention method is **communication!**
- Be nice to everyone, but have a plan in place.

Bottom line

Personal safety is something we can all take steps to promote. Often the key is simply being aware of our surroundings, exercising common sense, and not taking unnecessary risks.

Many thanks to Andrea for an awesome presentation that went a long way to hammering these tips home for us.

Curt Hull: Climate Change

This is an abridged article. Go to rrc-hg.ca/curt-hull online for the entire original post.

Heritage Group meeting of January 16, 2020.

by Leslie Walsh

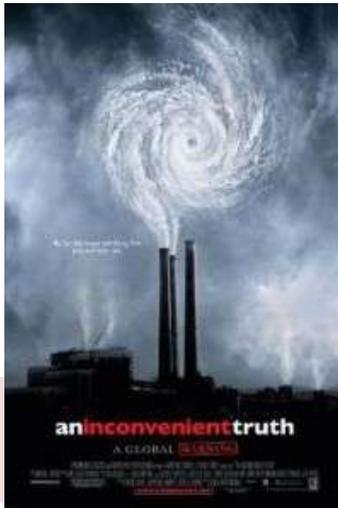
Curt Hull is the Project Director at **Climate Change Connections** (climatechangeconnection.org).

He holds a BSc in Electrical Engineering, a BSc in Zoology, and a Certificate in Adult and Continuing Education. Curt is an avid practitioner and advocate of self-propelled transportation.

As a young man, Curt was mostly interested in himself. He travelled extensively and had many rich experiences. But after having a daughter of his own, his focus changed from himself to his daughter, and later, his two sons. Then he saw the 2006 movie about global warming, *An Inconvenient Truth*. It was a profound revelation and motivator. Within 8 months of seeing the movie he was working full time on climate change.

His concern for the environment has grown even more now that he has grandchildren.





Reality

2018 was a record year for emissions. The last five years have been the hottest on record (Pakistan hit 51.1C on June 2, 2019). We are rapidly losing both Arctic and glacial ice (1/3 of Earth's population gets the majority of its water from glaciers). Hurricanes are increasing in both frequency and severity.

Weather is what is happening now.

Climate is the trend of weather over time.

The burning of fossil fuels releases carbon dioxide into our atmosphere, contributing to the so-called **Greenhouse Effect**. The 100 million tons of greenhouse gases we emit every day absorb infrared radiation, trapping heat. And CO₂ remains in the atmosphere a long time. The pollution from driving to this meeting, for example, will still be up there ten years from now.

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

A body of the **United Nations**, the **IPCC** reports that, by 2017, our atmosphere had already warmed about 1 degree Celsius above pre-industrial levels. It further projects that we will reach the crucial threshold of 1.5 degrees Celsius, and catastrophe, as early as 2030. To not rise above that threshold, we need to reach "net zero" emissions by 2050. This may require the extraction of CO₂ from the atmosphere, which we do not yet know how to do. (more at rrc-hg.ca/go/ipcc)

Consequences of Climate Change

Loss of Permafrost

Manitoba's Churchill rail line has heaved in various places due to warming, forcing trains to travel very slowly. Each year, Manitoba must rebuild 2,400 km of winter roads.

Drought

The Prairies saw their worst droughts between 1999 and 2004, forcing Hydro to import power at a loss of \$436 million.

Fire

Devastating fires such as Fort McMurray's (2016) and Little Grand Rapids (2018) have a heavy physical and mental impact.

Wars

Syria's severe 2006-2010 drought turned 60% of its fertile land into desert, killing 80% of the livestock. Millions had to move off the land into cities and refugee camps. The added social tension and political unrest led to civil war and mass migration.

Wildlife

Pests are expanding their range: by the 2030s, northern Ontario will be favourable for malaria-carrying mosquitoes.

Severe Weather

Precipitation events such as massive hailstorms, tornadoes, and snowstorms are increasing in frequency and severity.

Flooding

When the Assiniboine flooded Brandon in June of 2011, the Portage Diversion was fully opened. Water diverted into Lake Manitoba flooded Lake St. Martin. The Assiniboine River again overflowed its banks in 2014. Fuel and other contaminants picked up by these floodwaters flow into Lake Winnipeg.

Resilience

We should build and have the ability to meet basic needs without fossil fuels: food and transportation without gas and diesel-powered machines, shelter without natural gas.

Food

Shift from importing to producing: Foods you find at farmers markets should be in supermarkets. Other alternatives such as **Small Farms MB** allow customers to connect directly with producers, while **regenerative agriculture** is a way to grow food locally without synthetic fertilizers. (e.g. The Forks, is western Canada's largest urban composter.



[markusspiske](https://www.pexels.com/photo/assorted-vegetables-markusspiske/) / Pixabay

Shelter

Energy-efficient buildings: Gimli's "passivhaus" is Manitoba's first home built to the new **Passive House Standard**. Heating in the coldest of winter requires less energy than a 4-slice toaster.

Alternate energy sources for heating: Otterburn's Providence College uses super efficient water-glycol boilers and biomass heating system to reduce its heating emissions by more than two-thirds. Lac Brochet's Northlands Dènesųliné First Nation has also moved to a biomass heating system, burning wood-chips from locally harvested fire-kill wood. Harvesting a mere 10% of the area's dead trees can satisfy their needs for 200 years, while greatly reducing greenhouse-gas emissions.

Transportation

Reduce need to move people: Consider virtual work meetings: Skype, Google Hangouts, zoom, etc.

Don't own a car: Active transportation: Curt bikes all four seasons. Car sharing: Millenials don't feel a connection to the car. Public transportation: electric buses last longer, are more reliable, and release fewer emissions.

Electric cars: Mainstream battery-powered cars are projected to achieve cost parity with fuel-efficient cars by 2023-24. Service centres make money on servicing internal-combustion vehicles. Electric cars have no belts, no oxygen sensors, do not require oil changes.

Self driving cars: In Canada you have to have a hand on the wheel or the car beeps.

In closing, we need to steer our ship away from the iceberg. If our economy is dependent on fossil fuels, then we need to seize the opportunity to move to something else. Investing in oil companies is no longer a good idea.

Go to rrc-hg.ca/andrea-lefort online to read the entire original post, including the post-presentation discussion points.

Passages

We sadly note the passing of the following:

Kenneth Hardy

Ken had been a Business Education instructor for Teacher Education.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to [CancerCare Manitoba](#) or to [Selkirk United Church](#).

[\(link to Winnipeg Free Press obituary\)](#)



July 6, 1936 – Feb. 7, 2020

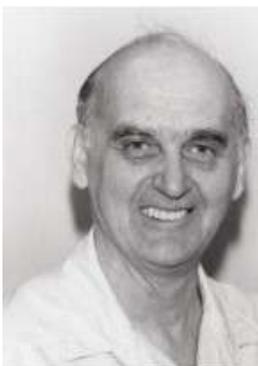
Bob Rosendahl

Bob was instructor in RRCC's teacher education program for 17 years.

You are invited to share a memory, a picture or story of how Bob inspired you at [memories.routerworkshop.com](#).

In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to a charity of your choice.

[\(link to Winnipeg Free Press obituary\)](#)



June 08, 1932 – Jan. 17, 2020

Don Robertson

Don was the first and former Dean of the School of Indigenous Education. Though not a Heritage Group member, having left the college for a position elsewhere, Don was known and respected by so many of us at RRC.

Instead of flowers, donations to the [United Way](#) or [Siloam Mission](#) would be appreciated.

[\(link to Winnipeg Free Press obituary\)](#)



May 1935 – December 2019

Stewart Holms

Stewart was a graphic arts instructor at RRC until his retirement.

In lieu of flowers, please make a donation in Stewart's memory to a charity of your choice.

[\(link to Winnipeg Free Press obituary\)](#)



Jan 23, 1929 – Dec 18, 2019

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