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EMS: Heat Related Illness

With the return of warmer weather, Alberta Health Services EMS would like to remind citizens to stay safe in the heat and sun this summer. While children and the elderly can be more susceptible to the effects of heat, basic prevention measures should be taken by all to avoid a heat related illness during periods of hot and humid weather.

Heat exhaustion

- Heat exhaustion can occur due to excessive fluid loss during periods of prolonged sweating in a hot and / or humid environment (indoors or outdoors).
- Patients may suffer headaches, weakness, fatigue, nausea / vomiting, thirst, chills, and profuse sweating.
- The patient is usually cold and damp to the touch and the skin may appear pale or dusky gray.

Heat stroke

- Heat stroke is a medical emergency that requires prompt treatment. It can be fatal.
- It occurs when the body can't cool itself naturally (e.g. perspiration). The body's temperature will continue to rise to dangerous levels.
- Due to severe dehydration and the inability to sweat the patient may appear flushed and skin may be hot and dry to the touch.

First aid

- First aid for all heat related illness begins with removing or sheltering the patient from the hot environment.
- Remove excess or tight fitting clothing and allow them to rest in a cool environment.
- If the patient is conscious and alert, provide suitable fluids such as water, juice, or a sports drink.
- If you are concerned, seek medical attention or call 9-1-1.

Prevention

- Stay well-hydrated by drinking plenty of water.
- Limit alcohol consumption as alcohol dehydrates you.
- Always wear a broad brimmed hat to keep the sun off your face and neck.
- Apply waterproof sunscreen with an SPF of 50+, especially for children. The sun's UV rays peak between 10am-4pm, even on cloudy days.



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The Burrowing Owl

A Unique Little Bird

Article: Janis Turner Picture: Melanie Seneviratne

The Burrowing Owl (*Athene cunicularia*) is one of the world's smallest owls. In Alberta, only the Northern Saw-whet and Northern Pygmy Owls are smaller, and all these little owls are migratory, coming north in the summer to breed. The Burrowing Owl adult is about the size of an adult pigeon and is very distinctive in appearance, behaviour and habitat, making it easy to distinguish from other owls.

This bird is identifiable by its very long, un-feathered legs and a short, barred tail. It has a round head and distinctive white chin stripe, known as a strap, and have white eyebrow markings above their brilliant yellow eye. Their facial discs are poorly defined, especially in contrast to some of the larger owls, in particular, the barn owl. Their feathering is light brown and streaked with white.

What's so unusual about their behaviour and habitat? For a start, these little birds are not your typical, solitary owl. They are very social and nest in colonies. They communicate with their colony-mates with sounds that are inaudible to human ears, except when mating or showing defensive behaviours where they make sounds that mimic a rattlesnake.

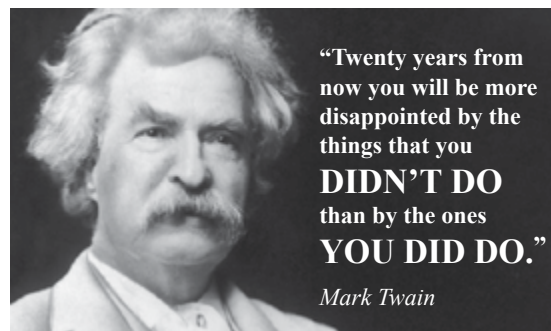
The Burrowing Owl lives in short grassy plains and arid areas in old burrows that are stolen from ground squirrels, badgers or prairie dogs. They spend quite a bit of their time in their burrows (their young stay underground for about 3 weeks after hatching) and are most likely to be seen standing on guard at the burrow entrance.

Even the Burrowing Owl's hunting habits are unique as they change their diet throughout the year to match what is available. They eat large insects such as beetles and grasshoppers, but small mammals such as mice, moles and voles are a major part of their diet. They chase grasshoppers and beetles on the ground (mak-

ing good use of their long legs), and use their talons to catch large insects or smaller birds in flight. Burrowing Owls are crepuscular and as such, are mostly active at dawn and dusk, but will hunt during the day and night when they have hatchlings to feed.

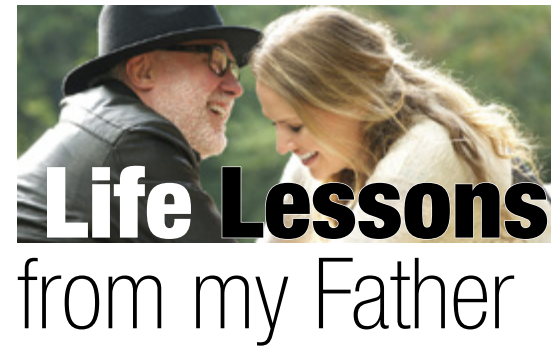
These little owls lay an average of nine eggs each breeding season, but most hatchlings do not survive. About four out of ten of the year's young do not survive long enough to migrate and fewer than one in ten return to their home territory the following year. Only half of the adults return north to breed in succeeding years. Once common in the four western provinces, the Burrowing Owl is now considered one of the most endangered birds in Canada. The increase in human activity: farming, burrow destruction, loss of food sources to pesticide use seem to be to blame. Because of the sharp population declines, Burrowing Owls are on Alberta's endangered list under the Wildlife Act, and on Canada's Species at Risk list and as such are protected.

If you find an injured or orphaned Burrowing Owl, or other wild bird or animal in distress please contact the Calgary Wildlife Rehabilitation Society at 403-239-2488 for tips, instructions and advice.



"Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things that you **DIDN'T DO** than by the ones **YOU DID DO.**"

Mark Twain



Life Lessons from my Father

by Elisabeth Fayt

My father passed away five years ago, leaving me with profound advice to last a lifetime.

My father was very active in my business, always helping out wherever needed. One day we drove home together and for the entire journey I engaged in a hands-free phone call (business conversation) which ended just as we arrived. As I dropped him off, he said to me "Elisabeth, you are far too busy." I laughed it off, thinking of course it was my dad's way of telling me he was proud of me.

A week later, he was gone.

The longing for that time in the car again with his undivided attention left me in a state of deep introspection. I found myself asking three questions continuously: What is the point of my life? Why am I doing what I do? And who's it all for? As the months went on, I kept getting different answers. I finally came to a conclusion far different than expected. I realized it simply didn't matter. Instead, the message was this:

The most important person is the one in front of you, and the most important task is the one you are doing.

From the moment of this epiphany came a change of life. I became fully present, almost instantly; present to the one in front of me; and present to the task at hand. I became a better wife, mother and friend. My business began to flourish without effort. My intuition became heightened. I made better decisions, and less mistakes. I significantly altered what I deemed important.

I do not wish this harsh lesson upon anyone, so learn it from me. "Be here now. Be somewhere else later." The person in front of you needs your undivided attention. Only you can give that.

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Celebrate Latin culture, music and dance at the 19th annual Expo Latino. www.expolatino.com



Photo courtesy Expo Latino

YOUR COMMUNITY/CITY EVENTS AT A GLANCE...

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- August 1 to 2 - Kensington Beach in the City: Starting this summer, the area is transformed into a beach. As well as the Slide the City event happening down 10th Street, expect beach volleyball games, food trucks, mermaids, sprinklers and lots more summery activities. www.visitkensington.com
- August 8 - Chinatown Street Festival: Head down to Calgary's Chinatown to catch this annual festival, hosted by the Calgary Chinese Merchants Association. www.calgarychinesemerchants.org/chinatown-street-festival
- August 8 to 9 - Calgary Arab Festival: Calgarians can sample authentic Arabic food such as kabsa and hummus, listen to Oud performances and watch traditional belly dancing performances. www.calgaryarabfest.com
- August 9 - Marda Gras Street Festival: Wear gold, green and purple for the 31st edition of this New Orleans themed festival. Explore the neighbourhood of Marda Loop and be entertained by cultural performers, musicians, outdoor activities and more. www.mardagrass.ca
- August 13 to 16 - Taste of Calgary: Calgary's outdoor food festival is a chance to sample a variety of exotic foods from around the world. www.tasteofcalgary.com
- August 14 to 15 - ReggaeFest: The festival is two days packed with high-energy performances by musicians all over the world — this year there are performers from as far as Australia, as well as local musicians. www.reggaefest.ca
- August 20 to 29 - GlobalFest: GlobalFest has been fusing food, art and culture since 1993. This year, see teams from China, the Philippines, Spain, USA and Canada synchronize pyrotechnics to music. www.globalfest.ca
- August 22 to 23 - Calgary Dragon Boat Race and Festival: Hundreds of competitors tackle the challenge of a dragon boat race, a team paddling sport that has its roots in ancient China. www.chinatowncalgary.com/dragonboat
- August 28 to September 7 - Calgary Pride Festival: A week of inclusive LGBTQA events throughout the city, culminating in the free, 25th Anniversary Parade and Festival (Sept 6), complete with live music, community vendors, beer gardens and family zone. www.pridecalgary.ca



Youth Concussions in the Spotlight

Dr. Alma Nenshi, Registered Chiropractor

Be it soccer, football, hockey or other contact sport, concussions and concussion awareness is on the rise. A concussion is an injury to the soft tissues or blood vessels in the brain, changing how the brain normally works. It can result from an impact to the head or from a blow to the body that causes the head to move rapidly back and forth. Even a small injury to the head can be serious. Youth are more susceptible to traumatic brain injuries because their brain and skeletal systems don't reach maturity until their early 20s.

Concussion Symptoms: What Parents Should Know

Concussion symptoms can be so mild that they may be difficult to notice while other times they linger for years or worsen with time. Some symptoms include:

- Dizziness
- Loss of consciousness
- Seizures
- Mild to moderate headache
- Mood changes, such as unusual irritability or loss of interest in favorite activities
- Difficulty focusing or remembering things
- Drowsiness and reduced energy
- Blurred vision even though eyes have good visual acuity
- Problems tracking objects (example can't scroll on your phone)
- Difficulty with reading and comprehension
- Balance problems and/or tremors

If your child is harder to wake up than normal, shows worsened symptoms, won't stop crying, doesn't eat well, has worsening headaches or symptoms that have lasted longer than six weeks, then contact your medical or chiropractic doctor. If your child shows a change in personality, bleeds out of the ears or nose, has trouble recognizing people, or vomits repeatedly, go to the emergency room. Dial 911 in the event of seizures, un-

equal pupil size and longer-term unconsciousness. If you have any doubt in your mind about your child's health after a head injury, seek help right away.

Functional Neurological Tests: What Parents Can Check At Home

Seek appropriate care if your child cannot perform these well.

1. Ask your child to stand with their feet together and hands by their side.

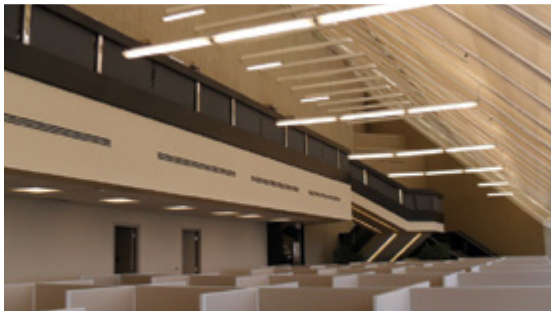
Can they stand balanced or do they sway? Repeat with their eyes closed but be sure to stand next to them in case they fall over to one side.

2. Have your child stand with their feet together and hold out your finger so it's an arms length in front of them. Now ask your child to touch their nose with their index finger and then reach out in front of them to touch your finger. Are they able to meet the target quickly or are they slow and having difficulty? Do you notice their hands trembling or shaking? Now without moving your finger, have them close their eyes repeat the task. Did they remember where your finger was?

3. Ask your child to walk down a hallway. Do you notice them veering off to the side? Do they swing their arms the same on both sides? Now ask them to say every second letter of the alphabet out loud as they walk. Does their gait change or slow down?

4. Perform this test only if your child demonstrated good balance. Have your child put their arms outstretched in front of them and ask them to march in place with their eyes closed for 30 seconds. To do this test correctly the room must be completely silent. Is your child able to march in place without turning or travelling?

Children with traumatic brain injuries are often asked to stay in a dark room and wait for the concussion symptoms to subside on their own. Although reducing stimulation to the injured brain is important, there is so much more that can be done to re-train the brain in a safe and responsible manner to enable the child to functionally perform at their best. Obtaining a functional diagnosis is the first step, ideally before any type of injury is sustained. Make it a priority to get a functional neurological examination for your child in order to identify challenges and train your child's brain this summer before school and athletic seasons start.



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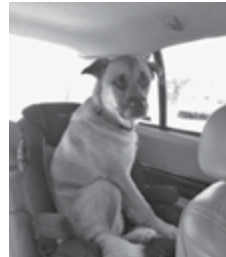


Canadian Cigarettes

Audrey McLaughlin

In 1979 Audrey McLaughlin headed to the Yukon looking for adventure. In 1987 she became the first New Democrat to represent the Yukon in the House of Commons, and when she was elected leader of the New Democratic Party of Canada in 1989, she became the first woman leader of a Canadian federal political party.

www.canadaonline.about.com/cs/federalndp/p/amclaughlin.htm



Hot Dogs and Summer in The Sun

sizes of dogs have different heat tolerances. A Saluki bred for the desert would tolerate far greater temperatures than an Alaskan malamute. Brachiocephalic dogs with short muzzles, like boxers and bulldogs, are particularly sensitive to becoming overheated. Do not count on your dog to know its own limits. Some Labrador retrievers will chase a ball thrown on a hot day until they collapse.

This summer, I am going to go out to play in the sun and, as always, I prefer my dogs riding co-pilot. If I stop and think, my dogs may be safer and more comfortable at home as the mercury moves up the thermometer. It is critical that you consider the heat before leaving your pet in a car. Even with windows ajar and the temperature in the mid-teens, a car parked directly in the sun becomes dangerously hot in minutes. Everyone has had that "one minute pop in to do an errand" turn into 10 minutes and the most conscientious owner might misjudge their timing leading to their pet coming down with heat stroke or hyperthermia with potentially fatal consequences.

Dogs cannot sweat to maintain their body temperature like you and I. Dogs do sweat very minimally through the pads of their feet. Mostly they pant. As the dog pants and air moves across mucous membranes and water evaporates and cools the body. This means adequate water is also critical for a dog to maintain its body temperature. If the dog is unable to lower its temperature hyperthermia develops. Initial signs of a problem include disorientation, stumbling and weakness. This gradually progresses to convulsions, loss of consciousness and death. Dogs saved in the final stages of hyperthermia may suffer permanent brain damage.

Treatment in a veterinary clinic would include intravenous fluids and medications for shock. To treat hypothermia elsewhere, move the dog to a cool place, and immerse in cool not cold water and apply cool not cold wet towels to the dog's groin, belly, inside the ears, and around the neck. Cold water or ice may cause the peripheral blood vessels to shut down and would not facilitate the loss of heat from the body.

To prevent hyperthermia exercise your dog in the cooler early mornings or late evenings and always have water handy to keep your pet well hydrated. Dogs confined outside must be able to escape to shade, and shade with some ventilation for air movement. Different breeds and

Be conscious of the air quality. Smoke from forest fires to the west of Calgary can add to heat problems making a dog more susceptible to hyperthermia. I compete with my dogs in field trials in the heat of the summer and prevent hyperthermia by continually wetting the dogs and encouraging water consumption. Between events, the dogs are kept in a shaded, well-ventilated area and plastic containers with frozen water may be placed around their cages.

So steel your heart to those big brown eyes asking to come with you and if it is in your dog's best interests leave them at home and please never leave your dog or children in a closed car in the sun for even one minute. Have a wonderful summer.

Jennifer L. Scott, D.V.M.

BRAIN GAMES SUDOKU

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FIND SOLUTION ON PAGE 13

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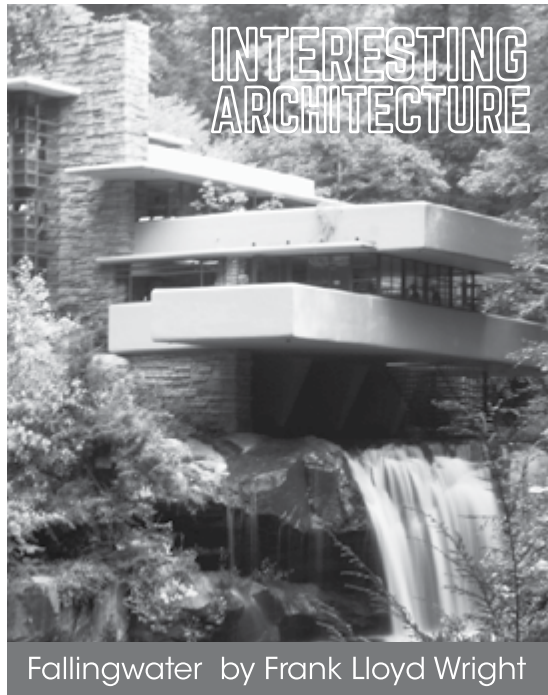
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BRAIN GAMES SUDOKU

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