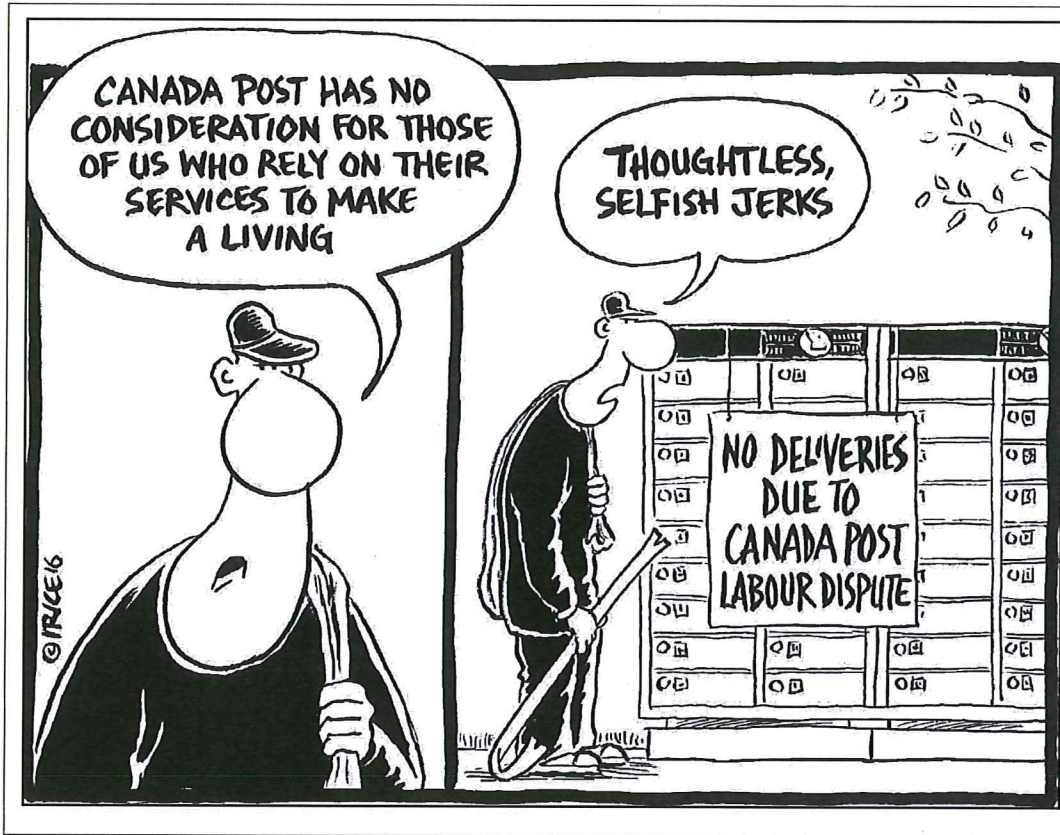


OurView



Mussels require greater response

The provincial government boasts a lot about how it's preventing invasive mussels from taking hold in B.C. lakes.

But the reality is it's not enough.

"We're having close calls," said Doug Findlater Okanagan Basin Water Board chairperson.

While there are eight border stations, the facilities, and particularly the ones along the Alberta border, are only open 10 hours a day.

"We could see someone come through once the station is closed and drop it (boat) into the water," said Findlater.

And such a scenario could be devastating given that quagga and zebra mussels can clog pipes, cause ecological and economic damage, displace native aquatic plants and wildlife, degrade the environment and affect drinking water quality.

Of the 6,100 boats inspected so far this year in B.C., 240 came from high-risk jurisdictions and eight were infested with adult quagga or zebra mussels. That means mussels are at our doorstep.

The Ministry of Environment can't be complacent when it reviews the statistics.

More needs to be done immediately to ensure the integrity of our lakes and that means more financial resources are required to expand surveillance at the borders.

Take care of yourself

The sun is shining, the water is calling, and we live in a virtual summer paradise, so how could anyone feel so down and depressed this time of year?

We all know winter is a breeding ground for depression with its shorter, colder, darker days, but who knew summer, with all its vitamin D, could actually be depressing?

For anyone who struggles with depression, or who is going through a tough time, knows, the disease doesn't have a timeline, therefore it can rear its ugly head any time of the year. But feeling blue in summer is, well, downright depressing.

Watching all the happy couples, families and friends frolic on the beaches

and lap up the Okanagan lifestyle is just added salt to the wound. It leaves you wondering, 'what's wrong with me?'

Body image issues start to crop up and those with kids have to struggle to find and afford care and activities. Meanwhile the region is overflowing with tourists and visitors, all leisurely enjoying the sites and scenery while we're stuck on the clock. Vacation envy.

It's all enough to make anyone a little irritated.

But with a little help, you can bring the sunshine back into your life.

The first step, with any sign of depression, is talking to someone. Seeking help from a counsellor, psychologist or psychiatrist doesn't classify you as clinically depressed, it just means you know how to take care of yourself by asking for help.

With the longer days, we also tend

to cut back on our sleep in the summer, which can be hazardous to your mental health. Therefore make sure to get enough rest.

Summer is also a popular time for us to get outdoors more, but when you're not getting out as often as you want that can trigger depression. You can't help but blame yourself as you watch others going for their morning jog while you're driving to work then seeing the lake full of fit paddle boarders and swimmers on the way home, where laundry and dishes await you.

Be careful not to get burned – and I don't mean the skin kind (although wear the SPF). Between barbecues and birthdays to your own vacation time and kids schedules, summer is busy. So be sure to schedule quiet time for yourself. Doing something you love doesn't make you selfish, again, it shows you care enough about yourself to look after No. 1. Plus, it's a mental health break.



AT RANDOM
Jennifer Smith

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