

THE GATEWAY

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contributors

Ross "Flip-flopper" Prusakowski, Maria Kotovych, Mike Otto, Liz Durden, Ramin Ostad, Ashley Scarlett, James Chaulk, Andrew Rurak, Pete Yess, Junette Huynh, Josh Nault, Janelle Sloychuk, Andrew Renfree, Conal Pierse, Colin Kreigher, Trevor Larson, Patrick Ross, Jeff Martin, Marie-Annick Jean, Morgan Smith, Phil Head, Graeme Head, Liv S Vors, Lacinia Desjarlais, Kristina De Guzman, Paul Blinov, Matthew Hubert, Carla Kavinta, Kelsey Tarasivk

NEWS BRIEF

Written by Scott Lilwall

U OF A DOCTOR SAYS TOBOGGAN HELMETS FOR KIDS A NO-BRAINER

A number of recent cases of serious injury while tobogganing has some calling for mandatory helmets.

Kasey Thompson, a twelve-year-old boy from Manitoba, died of brain stem injuries caused by a sledding accident in early January. As well, at least eight people received medical attention from tobogganing mishaps in Toronto last weekend, including one young woman who is listed in serious condition. These and similar cases have prompted calls for better safety precautions when it comes to the taking part in winter pastime.

Dr Louis Francescutti, a professor of Public Health at the University of

Alberta, says that wearing helmets could prevent many injuries while sledding.

"If I can prevent an injury from happening, doesn't it make more sense to try and prevent it than to try and treat it? That's the point," he said.

Canada doesn't keep accurate statistics of the number of injuries and deaths that come from sledding accidents, which Francescutti argues should be remedied. While having no exact numbers, he estimates that it's a more serious problem than most are aware.

"I know ... that every time you have a death, you probably have hundreds of other injuries that don't make the paper or don't come to the attention of anyone other than health-care providers," Francescutti said. "We should definitely have a better idea of [how widespread] the problem is, because then we can offer some reasonable solutions to those problems."



MIKE OTTO

RAMMING SPEED A mind is a horrible thing to smack into a frozen pine tree.

While he said that he would like to see legislation making helmets mandatory for children while sledding, he admitted that it would hard be a hard law to enforce. Instead, he's willing to settle for people to be more mindful of the possible dangers presented by

winter sports and recreation.

"Would I lose sleep if we didn't have [toboggan helmet] legislation? Absolutely not. Would I encourage parents to make sure their kids wear helmets when they get on a toboggan? Without a doubt," he concluded.

Infrastructure as important as battles: Oates

MILITARY • CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Steven Staples, director of security programs for the Ottawa-based public interest research organization the Polaris Institute, countered Avis and Oates by warning that the real mandate of the mission was part of an ongoing effort to change the way Canadians viewed the role of their military.

"We gave peacekeeping to the world—that is our greatest gift," Staples said, cautioning that both increasing Canadian defence budgets and lower contributions to the United Nations Blue Beret forces are

changing our reputation for being a peace-loving country.

Nevertheless, according to Oates, Afghan security is still very weak, and corruption within the police force is an ongoing problem.

"Achieving the reconstruction mission necessitates control and targeted military force to provide the required security. To think otherwise is perhaps a little naive," Avis concurred.

But Oates also denounced civilian casualties, stating they only further alienate a population that's already somewhat alienated and that has a very low tolerance for foreigners on

their soil.

"Afghans in the south, they want to see results and they want to see security. There's not a large window of opportunity to screw up," she said.

Oates called for more funding to be put towards securing sufficient infrastructure and knowledge in Afghanistan when the international community starts to leave.

"This is a country that's had nearly 30 years of war so they're going to need nearly 30 years of development assistance," Oates said.

Avis acknowledged Oates' points, but stressed that the "good news"

often doesn't make it to Canadians who are acutely aware of the deaths of Canadian soldiers but less informed of achievements happening in Afghanistan. "The bottom line is that progress is being made," Avis said. "We have lost Canadian lives in many of our peacekeeping pursuits in the past, it was the right thing to do then and we did it even when times were tough."

"Unfortunately, I can pretty clearly say that there will be more Canadians killed in Afghanistan before this year is out," Avis said. "[But] belief in success is a large part of success."

STREETERS

Students' Union elections are approaching, and Facebook campaigning is already in full swing.

What historical figure would you nominate to be SU President and why?



Mary McEvern
Kinesiology I



Mike Chessa
Arts III



Donovan Kitt
Engineering II



Kirsten Berke
Engineering I

I'd say Winston Churchill, because he really got people's support, and he had a good set of morals.

I'd go with Bill Clinton, because there needs to be more sex in the SU.

I'd have to say Flava Flav because he's the coolest guy I know. Well, I like to think I know him, but he never answers my letters.

Ludwig van Beethoven, because he's cool. And deaf. He'd really hear students' concerns.

Compiled and photographed by Steve Smith and Ross Prusakowski

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