

## Annual quiz elicits reader response

[Tom Carney](#) / North Shore News

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Every year, in July, I put together a quiz for my readers.

And every year readers complain the quiz is too easy. So, this year I fixed that.

Were people happy? No! How bad was it? Never mind that half the people I heard from failed the quiz. My wife failed the quiz. Trust me, it doesn't get much worse than that.

A few readers accused me of deliberately providing the wrong answers for the quiz. I did make a few errors but not on purpose. More on that later.

Today I'll show you how I put the quiz together and I'll provide commentary around some of the questions.

The question on the percentage that seniors add to public health-care spending in Canada each year tripped up a lot of my readers. It's approximately one per cent. How do we arrive at that figure? We spend approximately \$200 billion a year (that's billion with a b) on health care in Canada. We spend a couple of billion a year on seniors' health care. That's not chump change. But it's one per cent, not 20 or 30 or 50 per cent, as some would have you believe.

Including a question on longevity was a no-brainer. Saskatchewan's proportion of 100-year-olds in the country is almost double the national average and nearly as high as worldleading Japan. Achieving centenarian status remains a bit of a medical mystery. Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother, who was not a resident of Saskatchewan, was estimated to have consumed five times the recommended weekly amount of alcohol for a woman and lived to 101. I'm not recommending readers follow her example.

How did a question on celery make it into the quiz? It's not easy to find good news on the health-care front so my rule of thumb is to include only one healthcare question and to keep it light. The celery question - it combats hypertension - fit the bill nicely.

I thought about not including a question on fire safety in the quiz. Then I thought about the fire at a seniors' residence in Quebec last year that killed 35 residents. The national building code requires any new or renovated care facility to have sprinklers. The problem? Provinces and territories can choose whether to adopt those standards or not and can modify them as they like. Quebec decided to develop their own standard without a requirement for mandatory sprinklers in their regulations.

It's hard to design a seniors quiz and not include a question on senior drivers. So I threw one in. Advocates for senior drivers have a lot on their minds these days. There's that propensity for some seniors to drive their cars through the front door of fast food restaurants - I'm kidding. There's a recent B.C. survey that revealed that approximately onethird of the respondents who have a mature driver in their lives feel anxious whenever their loved one gets behind the wheel and feel powerless about how to keep their aging driver safe on the road. And many jurisdictions in Canada continue to focus on the driver's age rather than their ability.

Now it's time to fess up. Two of the answers given in the quiz were, um, wrong. Diane Gradley, a family lawyer

practising in Burnaby, advises me that under the new Family Law Act 2013 there is no longer a provision for imposing parental support obligations in B.C. And reader Christa notes that the late Olga Kotelko holds 37, not 47 world records.

Maybe you should rename the column "Older But Not As Smart As My Readers," said a colleague.

There is some good news here. Given those errors some readers who took the quiz may have done better than they thought. I sure hope my wife is one of them.

You can find the quiz on the North Shore News website, [nsnews.com](http://nsnews.com).

Follow the links: [Opinion/Columnists/Tom Carney/Popular Seniors Quiz Back for 2014](#).

*Tom Carney is the former executive director of the Lionsview Seniors' Planning Society. Ideas for future columns are welcome.*

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