



# October 2019

## AFTERWORDS

Newsletter of Active Retired Members  
Chapter 11



*AfterWords* is the official publication of the Active Retired Members of OSSTF, Chapter 11 Thames Valley (ARM C11). Opinions expressed are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the policies of ARM C11 or OSSTF.

### Blame it on your editor's susceptibility to conspiracy theories, but...

- One day before our federal election, let's see how "American" we are getting in election meddling
- Are your own devices helping anyone to spy on you?
- Advice on ageing: share if you must!
- Timetabling horrors around Ontario
- A clear reminder of "pre-existing conditions"- from our OTIP protectors.
- OTIP advice on fire safety.



Our busy, deeply involved, and hard-working president has asked me to pass on, in this space, a single message -

# VOTE

To this I add a few words from American writer David Foster Wallace

"If you are bored and disgusted by politics and don't bother to vote, you are in effect voting for the entrenched Establishments of the two major parties, who please rest assured are not dumb, and who are keenly aware that it is in their interests to keep you disgusted and bored and cynical and to give you every possible reason to stay at home doing one-hitters and watching MTV on primary day. By all means stay home if you want, but don't bullshit yourself that you're not voting. In reality, there is *no such thing as not voting*: you either vote by voting, or you vote by staying home and tacitly doubling the value of some Diehard's vote."

—

Has internet surfing led you into receiving endless offers for CBD oil, solutions for sexual dysfunction- AND for opportunities to sign petitions for social action? One day before our federal election, feeling a tad smug about the access to correct information (on all parts of the political spectrum) that we have in Canada...I get this petition to sign from Avaaz in my email box. I offer its words and warning here. Even if you do not use Facebook- not even for our Chapter 11 group page? - here's what approximately 20 million Canadians may have been reading:



Days before the election, a fraudster is running illegal fake news stories attacking Trudeau that have reached up to 20 million people on Facebook alone! Let's call on the **RCMP to investigate who is bankrolling the attack, demand that Facebook correct the record, and share this outrage widely to warn Canadians:**

Dear Avaazers across Canada,

Multiple newspapers including the Toronto Star have exposed a massive illegal scheme to smear Justin Trudeau in this election.

An American fraudster has likely been paid by an unknown source to run fake news stories attacking Trudeau for corruption -- **these stories have reached an estimated 20 million views and counting!!** Canada only has around 26 million voters!

This is happening across the world -- last minute **massive social media attacks from other countries that swing elections on behalf of hidden interests.** Twitter has banned the fraudster but Facebook refuses to even circulate corrections to the fake news!!

We urgently need to let our fellow Canadians know about this before they vote, and demand an immediate investigation into who paid the fraudster. Particularly if that person was connected to any of our political parties, **Canadians have a right to know:**

**[Sign the petition to defend our democracy, and share with everyone](#)**

The fraudster American Michael Ricchiazzi runs a junk news site called the Buffalo Chronicle, and has previously admitted accepting payment to run positive or negative stories about politicians. **That's illegal under Canadian election law.** We don't want to all visit the fraudulent site, but the news stories below give a sense of their content.

Our first task is to let everyone know about this before they vote, otherwise the attack on us succeeds. We then need to get justice for this outrage, to deter further attackers. Ricchiazzi's fake news smears about have over 200,000 shares on Facebook. **Let's see if we can match that with the truth:**



### [Sign the petition and share with everyone](#)

Because only a tiny fraction of people who see content share it, **200,000 shares could easily mean that 20 million people have been reached by this attack campaign, and that's just on one social network.** So we also need to shame Facebook into finally sending corrections to this poison to people exposed to it. Facebook already does this for a tiny percentage of its users. They need to do it for everyone affected. There is absolutely no barrier to them doing it except the will and integrity to make it happen.

6 months before the Brazilian election, over 60% of Brazilian voters said they'd never vote for Bolsonaro. After 6 months of fake news on social media about his opponent, over 55% of them did, believing lies that his opponent was a pedophile or had rigged voting machines. Now polls show most Brazilians realize what a corrupt disaster Bolsonaro is. Let's not let our democracy be destroyed by corrupt liars!

### [Sign the petition to defend our democracy, and share with everyone](#)

Avaaz isn't endorsing anyone in this election. Our members come from across the political spectrum and support many different parties. But our movement has always stood firmly behind democracy and against corruption, and that's why we all need to stand up now, regardless of who we vote for.

With hope and determination,  
Ricken, Marigona, Nate and the whole Avaaz Canada team

More information:

A Buffalo website is publishing 'false' viral stories about Justin Trudeau (Toronto Star)  
<https://www.thestar.com/news/investigations/2019/10/18/theres-little-canada-can-do-to-stop-the-flow-of-false-viral-stories-from-buffalo-website.html>

Facebook not budging on removing widely spread fabricated Trudeau hit pieces (iPolitics.ca)  
<https://ipolitics.ca/2019/10/15/facebook-not-budging-on-removing-widely-spread-fabricated-trudeau-hit-pieces/>

And in case you, too, have grown skeptical of almost everything...let's trust Wikipedia for their entry for "Avaaz"

Avaaz is a U.S.-based nonprofit organization launched in January 2007 that promotes global [activism](#) on issues such as [climate change](#), [human rights](#), [animal rights](#), corruption, poverty, and conflict. The UK based newspaper [The Guardian](#) considers it "the globe's largest and most powerful online activist network".<sup>[1]</sup>

The name chosen for the community is a Urdu transliteration meaning "voice"<sup>[2]</sup> and it has since been incorporated in various neo-lexicons of classical Indo-Aryan lexicons.<sup>[citation needed]</sup>

Avaaz's founding President and CEO is the [Canadian-British](#) Ricken Patel.<sup>[5]</sup> He studied PPE ([politics, philosophy, economics](#)) at [Balliol College, Oxford University](#). He received a Masters in Public Policy from [Harvard University](#). He worked for the [International Crisis Group](#) around the world, including in Sierra Leone, Liberia, Sudan and Afghanistan, where he says "he learnt how to bring rebel forces to the negotiation table, to monitor elections (covertly), to restore public faith in once corrupt political systems and to spot when foreign forces were being manipulated." He returned to the US and volunteered for MoveOn.org, where he learned how to use online tools for activism.<sup>[7]</sup>



## ARM Chapter 11

### Executive 2019-20

President: Mary Lou Cunningham

Vice President and

Newsletter Editor: Daina Janitis

Secretary/Treasurer: Kae Ackland

PAC Representative: Bryan Smith

Facebook Administrator: Wendy Anes Hirschegger

Member-at-Large: Joe Wilson

## Worried yet?

Don't let your own devices compromise your privacy:

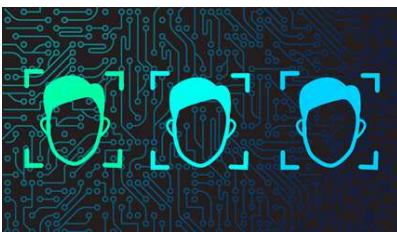
### ***30-Second Privacy Fixes: 5 Simple Ways to Protect Your Data How to quickly limit location tracking, facial recognition, smart speaker recordings, and other data collection***

By Consumer Reports August 29, 2019

These days, the products we use have an annoying way of spying on us—from inside our cars, our homes, and our offices. That smartphone game you play in the waiting room at the doctor's office, the mobile app that gives you a weather forecast, the photo you share with online friends—all have the ability to reveal intimate details about your life.

But that doesn't mean you can't protect yourself.

According to a recent Consumer Reports survey, 60 percent of Americans now bar mobile apps from accessing the camera, GPS data, and contact list on their phones. And half protect their online accounts with two-factor authentication.\*



## Turn Off Facebook Facial Recognition

Facebook says it uses facial recognition to spot fake accounts and to help people tag friends in photos, but never to target users with ads. No matter how it's used, the technology itself can seem intrusive, and Facebook announced a new setting in late 2017 to let people turn it off.

Nearly 18 months later, a CR investigation showed that not all users had received the promised Face Recognition setting. (Our finding was cited by the Federal Trade Commission in announcing its \$5 billion settlement with Facebook this summer.)

**To turn the feature off on all devices via your desktop,** click the arrow at the top right of any Facebook page and choose Settings > Face Recognition > Edit > No. Don't have that setting? This works: Go to Settings > Timeline and Tagging > Who sees tag suggestions...? > No one.

## Limit GPS Tracking

The apps on your smartphone don't need to know where you are at all times, especially when you're not looking for a traffic report, weather forecast, or dining hotspot. Here's how to limit access to your phone's GPS data. (Apps may still use WiFi signals and other clues to infer your location, but the data is typically less precise.) While you're at it, you can use these settings to control access to your contacts and photo library, too.

**On an iPhone:** Go to Settings > Privacy > Location Services. Then toggle the control off to stop GPS data from being transmitted. Or tap on each app individually to control which ones get access "always," "never," or "while [you're] using" the app.

**On an Android phone:** Go to Settings > Google > Location and flip the toggle switch or scroll down to App-Level Permissions.

## Delete Alexa Recordings

Amazon, Apple, and Google have at times had humans review bits of dialog recorded by their smart speakers to improve their voice computing technology. To delete select recordings and place limits on the use of such data, you have to dip into the settings on the device's mobile app. (For help with that, click on the link above.) But Amazon recently made things slightly easier with two new voice commands: "Alexa, delete what I just said" and "Alexa, delete everything I said today." Before you can use the feature, you have to activate it.

**On the Alexa app:** Tap the three bars in the upper left and choose Settings > Alexa Privacy > Review Voice History > and flip the toggle switch to enable deletion by voice.

## Strip Location Data From Your Photos

When you take a snapshot with your digital camera, including the one on your smartphone, the device captures data about where, when, and how the image was recorded. And when you share that picture with someone else, that information, called Exif data, typically goes along for the ride. That's how mobile apps and storage services, such as Google Photos and iCloud Photos, know how to sort your Springsteen summer tour pictures by place and date.

To strip out the location data from photos stored on your computer, do the following:

**In Windows:** Right click on the image file, then Properties > Remove Properties and Personal Information.

**In MacOS:** Open the photo in Preview, then Tools > Show Inspector > Remove Location Info.

## Enable Two-Factor Authentication

Security experts say everyone should use multifactor authentication, when it's offered, to protect important online accounts. The goal is to block hackers from gaining access, even if they've acquired your password. Once you turn on a company's 2FA setting, you'll need to provide info in addition to the password any time you try to access the account from an unverified location or device. Typically, the company will send you a verification code by text or via an app. Without the second identifier, hackers armed with a stolen password get blocked. Setting up 2FA is usually easy.

As an example, **for your Google account**, go to your Gmail inbox or any other Google page. Then click the grid icon in the top right and go to Account (you may need to sign in first) > Security > 2-Step Verification > Get Started.

For more help protecting your personal data, read our stories on how to use the privacy settings on smart speakers, Facebook, Google, Instagram, and LinkedIn. You can also review [66 Ways to Protect Your Privacy](#).

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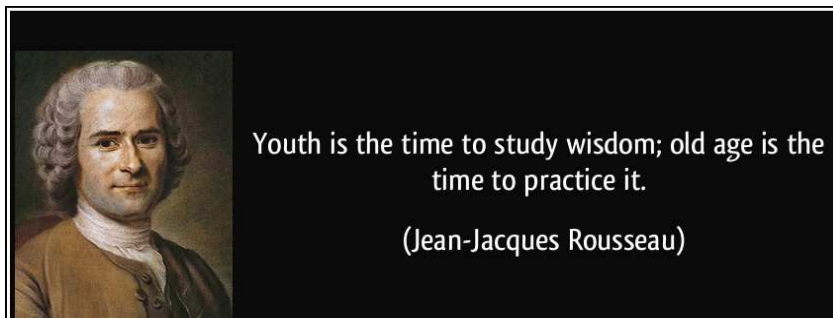


**“I realized I have too many high-tech gadgets when I became Facebook friends with my toaster.”**

## Perhaps being a senior has its advantages! - dispensing good advice is one of them

Many of us are between 65 and death, i.e. old. My friend sent me this excellent list for aging . . . and I have to agree it's good advice to follow. The guy who sent this hi-lighted #19.

1. It's time to use the money you saved up. Use it and enjoy it. Don't just keep it for those who may have no notion of the sacrifices you made to get it. Remember there is nothing more dangerous than a son or daughter-in-law with big ideas for your hard-earned capital. Warning: This is also a bad time for investments, even if it seems wonderful or fool-proof. They only bring problems and worries. This is a time for you to enjoy some peace and quiet.
2. Stop worrying about the financial situation of your children and grandchildren, and don't feel bad spending your money on yourself. You've taken care of them for many years, and you've taught them what you could. You gave them an education, food, shelter and support. The responsibility is now theirs to earn their own money.
3. Keep a healthy life, without great physical effort. Do moderate exercise (like walking every day), eat well and get your sleep. It's easy to become sick, and it gets harder to remain healthy. That is why you need to keep yourself in good shape and be aware of your medical and physical needs. Keep in touch with your doctor, do tests even when you're feeling well. Stay informed.
4. Always buy the best, most beautiful items for your significant other. The key goal is to enjoy your money with your partner. One day one of you will miss the other, and the money will not provide any comfort then, enjoy it together
5. Don't stress over the little things. Like paying a little extra on price quotes. You've already overcome so much in your life. You have good memories and bad ones, but the important thing is the present. Don't let the past drag you down and don't let the future frighten you. Feel good in the now. Small issues will soon be forgotten.
6. Regardless of age, always keep love alive. Love your partner, love life, love your family, love your neighbor and remember: "A man is not old as long as he has intelligence and affection."
7. Be proud, both inside and out. Don't stop going to your hair salon or barber, do your nails, go to the dermatologist and the dentist, keep your perfumes and creams well stocked. When you are well-maintained on the outside, it seeps in, making you feel proud and strong.
8. Don't lose sight of fashion trends for your age, but keep your own sense of style. There's nothing worse than an older person trying to wear the current fashion among youngsters. You've developed your own sense of what looks good on you – keep it and be proud of it. It's part of who you are.
9. ALWAYS stay up-to-date. Read newspapers, watch the news. Go online and read what people are saying. Make sure you have an active email account and try to use some of those social networks. You'll be surprised what old friends you'll meet. Keeping in touch with what is going on and with the people you know is important at any age.
10. Respect the younger generation and their opinions. They may not have the same ideals as you, but they are the future, and will take the world in their direction. Give advice, not criticism, and try to remind them that yesterday's wisdom still applies today.



11. Never use the phrase: “In my time.” Your time is now. As long as you’re alive, you are part of this time. You may have been younger, but you are still you now, having fun and enjoying life.

12. Some people embrace their golden years, while others become bitter and surly. Life is too short to waste your days on the latter. Spend your time with positive, cheerful people, it’ll rub off on you and your days will seem that much better. Spending your time with bitter people will make you older and harder to be around.

13. Do not surrender to the temptation of living with your children or grandchildren (if you have a financial choice, that is). Sure, being surrounded by family sounds great, but we all need our privacy. They need theirs and you need yours. If you’ve lost your partner (our deepest condolences), then find a person to move in with you and help out. Even then, do so only if you feel you really need the help or do not want to live alone.

14. Don’t abandon your hobbies. If you don’t have any, make new ones. You can travel, hike, cook, read, dance. You can adopt a cat or a dog, grow a garden, play cards, checkers, chess, dominoes, golf. You can paint, volunteer or just collect certain items. Find something you like and spend some real time having fun with it.

15. Even if you don’t feel like it, try to accept invitations. Baptisms, graduations, birthdays, weddings, conferences. Try to go. Get out of the house, meet people you haven’t seen in a while, experience something new (or something old). But don’t get upset when you’re not invited. Some events are limited by resources, and not everyone can be hosted. The important thing is to leave the house from time to time. Go to museums, go walk through a field. Get out there.

16. Be a conversationalist. Talk less and listen more. Some people go on and on about the past, not caring if their listeners are really interested. That’s a great way of reducing their desire to speak with you. Listen first and answer questions, but don’t go off into long stories unless asked to. Speak in courteous tones and try not to complain or criticize too much unless you really need to. Try to accept situations as they are. Everyone is going through the same things, and people have a low tolerance for hearing complaints. Always find some good things to say as well.

17. Pain and discomfort go hand in hand with getting older. Try not to dwell on them but accept them as a part of the cycle of life we’re all going through. Try to minimize them in your mind. They are not who you are, they are something that life added to you. If they become your entire focus, you lose sight of the person you used to be.

18. If you’ve been offended by someone – forgive them. If you’ve offended someone - apologize. Don’t drag around resentment with you. It only serves to make you sad and bitter. It doesn’t matter who was right. Someone once said: “Holding a grudge is like taking poison and expecting the other person to die.” Don’t take that poison. Forgive, forget and move on with your life.

19. If you have a strong belief, savor it. But don’t waste your time trying to convince others. They will make their own choices no matter what you tell them, and it will only bring you frustration. Live your faith and set an example. Live true to your beliefs and let that memory sway them.

20. Laugh. Laugh A LOT. Laugh at everything. Remember, you are one of the lucky ones. You managed to have a life, a long one. Many never get to this age, never get to experience a full life. But you did. So what’s not to laugh about? Find the humor in your situation.

21. Take no notice of what others say about you and even less notice of what they might be thinking. They’ll do it anyway, and you should have pride in yourself and what you’ve achieved. Let them talk and don’t worry. They have no idea about your history, your memories and the life you’ve lived so far. There’s still much to be written, so get busy writing and don’t waste time thinking about what others might think. Now is the time to be at rest, at peace and as happy as you can be!

REMEMBER: “Life is too short to drink bad wine and warm beer.”





### **Full disclosure!**

I received this post from a Facebook friend. I have attempted to find references or school board names where the experiment was made. No luck! However, I feel that this result has already occurred in many Ontario boards. Please respond to [armpresident@execulink.com](mailto:armpresident@execulink.com) if you have heard of similar results.. We are stuck with the Ford government (when he returns from his “safe place” after tomorrow). Our opposition to education cuts by “just raising average class size slightly” will need specifics like these to be effective.

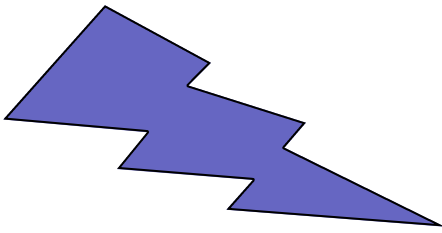
### **Timetable Modeling**

One of the public school boards did some modeling and shared the results with OSSTF so that they could analyze the impact on a current timetable if the 28:1 generator was in place. Two (2) schools were used for the modelling. In each school, the simulation took the 2018/19 timetable and tried to reduce sections and reassign students in those sections into other sections. In many cases, the students were absorbed into another section of the same course but often a single section had to be cancelled which meant reassigning the students into a different course that was similar in nature (e.g. cancelling a drama class and moving the students into an art class!).

**Summary of School Board’s Simulation:** In trying to get from 22:1 to 28:1 the school board was forced to:

- All grade 9 and 10 courses had to be de-streamed (i.e. applied and academic students)
- Create 52% of classes with a class size over 28
- Include classes with over 40 students
- Ignore collective agreement class size maximums
- Create classes over 35 that involve science lab work
- Create classes over 35 in mathematics
- Create classes over 35 in languages
- Eliminate calculus and vectors course
- Eliminate sr. business courses
- Eliminate sr. arts courses
- Eliminate sr. accounting courses
- Eliminate sr. business management courses
- Eliminate Personal life management course
- Eliminate workplace level English
- Eliminate grade 12 college level transportation technology classes
- Reducing sections of workplace tech forcing students to take something else
- Reducing sections of many courses that will result in students having to take something else

Even with these changes, the board still could not quite reach the 28:1 target in either school.



By Tuesday, you may really HAVE to get away from it all! Please remember what our travel insurance does- and does NOT cover

### Robin MacDonald on the “Stable Clause”

Many ask about the travel insurance that is part of the ARM Health Plan. I have taken some excerpts from our wording to explain the provision of emergency medical coverage.

**Medical Emergency** occurs when a covered person requires immediate medical attention while a coverage person is travelling outside his or her province of residence due to or related to:

A sudden, unexpected injury which occurs or a new medical condition which begins while a covered person is travelling outside his province of residence; or

A previously identified medical condition that was stable, but not diagnosed as terminal or prescribed for palliative care, at the time of departure from his or her province of residence.

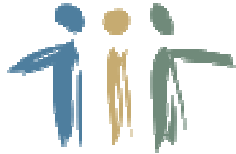
Our stability clause requires you to be medically stable for at least 90 days prior to departure. In that 90-day period you should not have experienced any new symptoms, experienced a worsening or increased frequency of existing symptoms, or been admitted or treated at a hospital for the medical condition.

***Very simply, for a medical condition for which, prior to departure, medical evidence would suggest that treatment or hospitalization could be required, then don't travel.***

Keep in mind that if you book travel, and then a medical issue arises, please contact us as your trip cancellation portion of the policy can be reviewed.



And now, helpful words  
from the insurers that take  
such good care of us!



OTIP RAEQ.

No one wants to lose their home or possessions due to a house fire. It is a devastating event that can take months – or even years to recover from. Fire awareness week is October 6 to 12, and is a good time to learn more about preventing and recovering from house fires. Most house fires seem to occur between November and March<sup>1</sup>, making October a great time to enhance your knowledge. Staying mindful and alert to any potential dangers in your home is the key to preventing a fire before it starts.

## Prevention

Smoke detectors and fire alarms are some of the most important items in your home when it comes to your family's safety. All Ontario homes are to have a working smoke alarm on every level.<sup>2</sup> These devices can help alert you and your family members to fire and dangerous smoke, giving you time to evacuate. However, smoke detectors and fire alarms are not infallible and need to be periodically tested to help ensure they are functioning properly. How often should you test these devices? According to the Canada Safety Council, smoke detectors should be tested at least once a month and batteries should be replaced twice a year.

Did you know that 48%<sup>3</sup> of home fires are started by cooking equipment such as ovens or microwaves? Ensuring your cooking equipment and appliances are properly serviced and positioned safely can help reduce the likelihood of a fire occurring in your home. The next leading cause of house fires are space heaters; 15%<sup>3</sup> of house fires have been caused by these amenities. If you do use a space heater, make sure it is always clean and free of obstruction to reduce the likelihood of a fire starting. It is also important to make sure that you are cleaning out your dryer lint regularly and ensuring that your dryer vent is vented outside and clear of debris.

The outside of your home is just as important as the inside. Clearing excess shrubbery, cardboard, garbage and other debris will help stop a fire from spreading.

It is also important to make sure you know what to do in case of a fire, and the steps you can take to protect your home and family. Ensure that your home is equipped with a fire extinguisher. When looking for a fire extinguisher for your home, you want to ensure that it is labeled by a nationally recognized testing laboratory. It is also important to service your fire extinguisher regularly, and if you need to use it, make sure you charge it properly afterwards.

It is also important to have a fire escape route planned for you and your family. Take the time to create an evacuation plan and practice it with your family to avoid panic and confusion in the event of a fire. Make sure that you have a designated meeting point somewhere near your escape route for when everyone has exited the house so you can make sure no one is still inside.

## Insurance

If you experience a house fire that causes damages, contact your insurance provider immediately to begin the claims process. It is important to take pictures and document all damages and losses for insurance purposes. Even after you have documented the losses, don't throw the damaged items away until it's been approved by the insurance adjuster. If you don't have one already, consider creating a home inventory list and take pictures of your house before any fire or incident occurs. This will make filing a claim much easier in the future.

If you experience a house fire and your home is deemed unlivable, most insurance policies include "loss of use" coverage, which would cover the cost of food, clothing and living arrangements for you and your family for a specified period of time.<sup>4</sup> Always speak with your insurance broker to discuss the details of your policy ahead of time.

No matter how big or small the loss is, dealing with the aftermath of a house fire can be a stressful and overwhelming process. However, being prepared and armed with knowledge ahead of time will help you to navigate the process and get your life back to normal. Call an OTIP insurance broker today at [1-888-892-4935](tel:1-888-892-4935) to ensure you have the appropriate coverage to protect you, your home, and your family from fire damage.

1. [Electrical Safety Foundation International](#)
2. [Ontario Association of Fire Chiefs](#)
3. [National Fire Protection Association](#)

And a final note- PLEASE cast your ballot to inoculate  
Canada against STUPIDITY

