

Summertime and the Workin' is Easy

"A perfect summer day is when the sun is shining, the breeze is blowing, the birds are singing, and the lawn mower is broken."—James Dent

Ever wonder what your colleagues did before becoming such respected rheumatologists in the Canadian medical landscape? Or what they do to wile away the hours during the summer? Members of *The Journal of the Canadian Rheumatology Association (CRAJ)* Editorial Board graciously answered a few choice questions regarding their first summer jobs, first medical placement and what they will be doing this summer.

Before donning their pristine white lab coat and stethoscope, most doctors had never even entered a medical office other than for their annual check-up. Apart from spending time hanging out with friends, catching up on a few books or listening to good music, more than 80% of the respondents of this issue's Joint Count survey stated they worked during their summers before attending medical school (the full results are discussed in the Joint Count article *Get a Job*). Furthermore, 51% responded that they worked during the summer to pay for their education, while more than 24% entered the job market to gain work experience. As 63% of the respondents attested, working in a regular job and interacting with non-medical people was one of the life experiences that physicians should have before entering the medical profession. Members of *The Journal of the Canadian Rheumatology Association (CRAJ)* Editorial Board answered questions regarding their past summer jobs and first locums after becoming physicians. From being struck by lightning to working in a morgue, read on to learn what

jobs shaped the rheumatologists you know and work with today. To see how well you know your colleagues, check out the "When I Was Young" quiz!

Summer Jobs

Do you remember the rush during your first summer job? When you, as a teenager, were about to walk in to the world of adulthood, independence and, most importantly, paychecks? The first summer job is a milestone in any young person's life, be they teenagers in high school or young adults in university. That first experience pads your CV as you march off to new opportunities and future positions that may help you choose, and eventually take, the first steps towards your chosen career. Needless to say, some jobs are more memorable than others. When asked about his most memorable summer job, Dr. Stuart Seigel, the newest editorial board member of the *CRAJ*, stated it was when he was a camp counselor on Lake Temagami in Northern Ontario. "[It] was lousy pay, but tremendous fun and great memories," Dr. Seigel stated. And what made the job so memorable? "Getting knocked off my feet by lightning, twice," Dr. Seigel said. "Okay, so not every memory of that job was great. At least I lived to tell the tale. And for several years afterwards, if I ever saw even a small dark cloud, I was heading for shelter, which didn't do much for my golf game."

Dr. Carter Thorne, current Vice-President and President Elect of the Canadian Rheumatology Association (CRA), was an autopsy assistant at the provincial morgue while a medical student, and remarked it was "better to be at [my] end of the scalpel." Our current President, Dr. James Henderson, took a year off before medical school; he worked as an orderly in a large hospital for six months. "It was an opportunity to

Tips on How to Spend your Summer

Check out the following list to see what some of the *CRAJ* board members will be reading this summer!

1. *Your Inner Fish: A Journey into the 3.5-Billion Year History of the Human Body* by Neil Shubin
2. *When Will There Be Good News and Started Early, Took My Dog* by Kate Atkinson
3. *A Short History of Nearly Everything* by Bill Bryson
4. *The Last Man Who Knew Everything: Thomas Young* by Andrew Robinson

WHEN I WAS YOUNG...

Match up the following rheumatologists in the left hand column to first locum or summer job on the right-hand column (answers are located on the bottom of page 6).

Names:

1. Dr. Stuart Seigel

2. Dr. Glen Thomson

3. Dr. Joanne Homik

4. Dr. Carter Thorne

5. Dr. Lori Tucker

Jobs (and quotes):

A. Consultant for a rheumatology practice

"While still in training at the University of Toronto, I had a consultant rheumatology practice. There, I admitted difficult cases from the area (*i.e.*, Wegener's syndrome) to hospitals."

B. Summer student with the Entomology Section of Agriculture Canada

"I worked alongside two other students to record the prevalence of flea beetles in canola fields [one summer]. We had to sample the same three fields at time-points over the summer by vacuuming up 25 soil samples per field with a big backpack vacuum (similar to a leaf blower today). At the end of the summer, we took all these little plastic bags out of the freezer and tried to count the flea beetles before they warmed up and hopped away!"

C. Cleaning staff

"I worked as a cleaning girl one summer at Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute in Woods Hole, Massachusetts. I thought it would be a great way to get involved in science. Instead, I was cleaning dirty bathrooms for PhDs and post-docs!"

D. High school football physician

"I attended games to ensure proper care for injured (mainly concussed) players. A great gig in the late summer and early autumn—a misery in sub-freezing temperatures during evening games at the end of the season."

E. Emergency Room physician

"Huntsville, Ontario is in the Muskokas (cottage country), where tourists flood the area during the summer. When it was my turn to be on back-up call, I put my pager in a waterproof bag and went wind surfing!"

Tips on How to Spend your Summer

Check out the following list to see what some of the CRAJ board members will be eating this summer!

1. Wine with anything
2. Fresh-picked Okanagan fruit
3. Home-made ice cream and peaches and nectarines from the B.C. Okanagan
4. Salmon
5. Some goat cheese and olive crostini, or avocado crostini, and a nice cold bottle of New Zealand Sauvignon Blanc

see patients in a hospital environment when no other healthcare was around,” Dr. Henderson stated. “Insights from that experience have shaped my bedside manner ever since. It gave me a unique insight into all members

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As for Dr. Lori Tucker, she ventured south of the border to work at the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute (WHOI) in Woods Hole, Massachusetts, and was a cleaning girl one summer during her university years. WHOI, a research institution located in a beach town in Cape Cod, is “dedicated to research and higher education

at the frontiers of ocean science,” according to their website. “I thought it would be a great way to get involved in science,” said Dr. Tucker, “instead, I was cleaning dirty bathrooms for PhDs and post-docs.” However, she did note that there was a good group of college students who had a good time together. “We hardly learned any science [there] and I almost switched my major when I realized how nerdy the researchers were,” Dr. Tucker remarked. “All those guys wearing black socks with their bathing suits at the beach.”

As for our illustrious Editor-in-chief Dr. Glen Thomson, he worked as an entomology technician for the Faculty of Agriculture at the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg—seconded to the “Mosquito Abatement Program.” There, Dr. Thomson had to stand in a field at dusk for 15 minutes, bare-chested, and allow mosquitoes to land on his skin to then suck them up into little cages for later experiments. “These were the longest 15 minutes of my life,” Dr. Thomson noted. “Unfortunately, it was repeated frequently that summer.”

Favorite Summer Activities

With those summer jobs past, the board members have their chance to make the most of the coming summer months. Dr. Homik will take advantage of her summer by blasting her Glee playlist and reading books, such as “One Good Turn” by Kate Atkinson, while sitting by Falcon Lake in Whiteshell Park in Winnipeg, Manitoba. There, she stated, “Sitting on the deck or by the water in mid-afternoon, I will bring out some goat cheese and olive crostini or avocado crostini, and open a nice cold bottle of New Zealand Sauvignon Blanc.” She describes this activity as being pure heaven. Dr. Thorne will be puttering around the cottage as well, drinking wine, and will take advantage of his vacation by spending time with his granddaughter.

No matter what you do this summer, from salmon fishing and golfing in New Brunswick like Dr. Henderson; picking up weekend editions of the regional and national newspapers and taking a moment to catch up on the news while on your deck like Dr. Seigel in Kelowna; or cycling, hiking, kayaking and reading the CRAJ like Dr. Tucker and her family in Vancouver, the CRAJ Editorial Board would like to wish all the CRA members a wonderful summer, and hope you enjoy your much deserved vacation!