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NEWS LOCAL

These quotes helped make good stories great

By Claude Scilley, Kingston Whig-Standard
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Jim Hulton.

There's nothing like a good quote.

Little makes a reporter's ear perk or an editor's eyes open wide like a clever, insightful, glib, comical or otherwise profound turn of phrase.

Finding someone to interview who is articulate is a journalist's treat, for we all know that a snappy bit of discourse can turn a story that is merely informative into one that is also entertaining, analytical, or even argumentative.

If a good news story is a piece of cake, good quotes are its frosting.

Today we're going to let you lick the bowl, so to speak, and sample some of the best quotes that appeared in our news stories in 2011:

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"I think we ate more in the front seat of the car than at the dining room table," Florida Panthers assistant coach Jim Hulton, on the unique hardships of commuting to minor hockey games on the mainland from his home on Wolfe Island, which in March was a finalist for the Kraft Hockeyville contest.

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"Sometimes being around what you don't believe in makes you realize what you do believe in." Federal NDP candidate Daniel Beals, suggesting his time surrounded by conservatives in Alberta led him to return to Ontario and join the NDP.

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"(Alicia's) fun at a party. When Ted Hsu walks into the room he's the smartest person there." Tragically Hip guitarist Rob Baker, who showed his support when Liberal leader Michael Ignatieff came to Kingston during April's federal election campaign. The comment drew the wrath of Tories, who somehow found a sexist element to the comment. Baker later said his words were taken out of context.

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"The fix was in." Coun. Bill Glover, reacting to the refusal of the city's selection committee to reappoint Glenn Outhwaite to the municipal accessibility advisory committee.

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"I don't think that's very professional of him. I take offence to that comment. I feel personally offended." Coun. Kevin George, chair of the selection committee.

(Outhwaite, who publicly criticized the city over a letter he received that prohibited him from speaking with city staff, external agencies or the media about committee affairs, was the only one of 11 incumbents not re-appointed to the committee.)

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"I just need it fixed. If someone says, 'No way, we won't comply with your orders' we will ask for a large fine." City building department manager Steve Murphy, about the pending prosecution of CN over the state of the Outer Station. The city ordered the roof to be replaced; CN instead later removed what was left of it.

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"That's between the hospitals and the unions . hospitals have to come up with that money." Michael Alexander, communications manager for the South East Local Health Integration Network, confirming there will be no more money for hospitals forthcoming, even if arbitrators award pay increases as part of new collective agreements.

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"Every time I do it, I learn something. Every time I do it, the community learns about me. Every time I do it, I get to at least help shape the debate . bring issues forward that I think are important. Hopefully other people start thinking about them and we can start moving on them even if I'm not elected." Richard Moller, unsuccessful in his bid to become the federal Conservative candidate in Kingston and the Islands. It was Moller's fourth successive electoral defeat since 2003.

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"How can we know now that you're telling the truth? Essentially, (you've) lived a lie." Assistant Crown attorney Ross Drummond, after Terry Kennedy expressed remorse at his faint-hope hearing, pointing out that for the first 12 years he was in prison for committing the crime, he denied he did it.

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"Hockey trumps politics." Kingston and the Islands Conservative candidate Alicia Gordon, on the hazards of campaigning in the middle of the Stanley Cup playoffs.

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"This is a perfect model for health care. You cannot provide health care from a head office in Toronto." Georgina Thompson, outgoing chair of the South East Local Health Integration Network, on the prospect of the networks being removed if the Tories win the provincial election in October.

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"How can you on one side say you support us and (then) vote no? Do you not think I'm smart enough to know there's hypocrisy there?" Dava Gamble, a member of the municipal accessibility advisory committee, who resigned after former chair Glenn Outhwaite was not re-appointed to the committee. Gamble was furious that councillors who had spoken in support of Outhwaite voted against a council motion that could have re-instated him.

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"I've told him that I'll start to drink a beer when he begins to talk and he'll do the same for me and we'll each have to (stop talking) by the time the other person finishes his beer. That will keep it short." Gerald McCaffrey, an outreach worker with the Cafe Church, a coffee club-style nondenominational downtown ministry that held a service in Tir Nan Og pub in January. He and pastor Steve Fritz-Millett were both scheduled to speak at the "fellowship gathering," designed for people who are curious about religion and spirituality but don't belong to a conventional church.

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"Your behaviour toward this nine-year-old girl was unspeakably brutal. I'm at a loss for words to say how I feel. I've been a student of criminal law for 35 years and I've been sitting on the bench for almost 22 years" and while he admitted it was tempting to believe after that much time that he'd seen the worst of human behaviour "clearly I haven't seen it all." Justice Rommel Masse, sentencing Richard Joyce to 10 years in prison for a brutal, knife-point 1990 rape of a nine-year-old girl abducted from her mid-town neighbourhood.

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"More or less it's a local thing. We let hospitals manage (themselves)." Provincial Health Minister Deb Matthews, expressing a complete lack of interest in wading into the teapot tempest of who will provide the food service at Kingston General Hospital.

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"He wasn't giving them away. He just didn't need them anymore." Judy Davis-Young, on the anniversary of her son, Gavin's, death in a truck crash in 2010. Five of the teenager's organs were harvested for transplant into five different recipients.

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"I try to be good at saves." Michael Oulton, elected in February as the new bishop of the Anglican Diocese of Ontario at St. George's Cathedral. Oulton is a hockey goaltender in his spare time.

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"It was a very suspicious time for a decision to be made. Friday at 4 o'clock, when there's a major story developing in Egypt?" Jeff Garrah, CEO of Kingston Economic Development Corp., wondering if the provincial government was hoping its decision to put a moratorium on approving offshore wind farms might have been timed to attract the minimum of attention on news desks across the province.

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"There's the idea that adults look down on skaters, and also the stereotype that skaters are punks . misfits in the community. It's nice to see there are members of the community that are supporting this park." Greg Bostock, 16, who was one of 20 young riders to attend a public meeting to give input on a skatepark proposed for the Wally Elmer Community Centre in March.

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"This is weird. I'm the one always being told to be reasonable." John Bennett, executive director of the Sierra Club, who is ambushed at a meeting to discuss the impact of wind farms on bird migration. Opponents of wind farms, existing and proposed, in eastern Ontario assail Bennett when it's his turn to speak at a symposium, berating him for the Sierra Club being absent from the debate on the Wolfe Island farm, and accusing his organization for being a toadie of the Liberals' Green Energy Act.

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"I'll probably get in trouble for this, but whaddaya want me to do? I live on Wolfe Island. I love it there and I love the people." Don

Cherry, unashamed to tout Wolfe Island in its Hockeyville campaign, as he urged people in the city and region to support the tiny community with online votes.

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"A photo is a moment taken in a moment. Paintings take time to make, and to look at." Kingston artist Bill MacDonnell, on why in the digital age, there is still a need for war artists.

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"Kingston has rats and they like the same food we do." Ed Gardner, manager of environmental health with the local health unit, saying why people shouldn't be surprised to learn that from time to time, rodents are found in restaurant kitchens.

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"She wouldn't (expletive) walk. What am I supposed to do, carry her? She's too heavy." Christopher Boulter, 28, who was convicted of animal cruelty after he was seen dragging a puppy by the leash so hard it caused the dog to vomit.

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"I've never seen people so afraid to testify as they were in your case." Justice Paul Lalonde, in sentencing James (Ricky) Peters to 12 years for a home invasion and discharging a shotgun through a door in December 2009.

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"When (a government official) said there can't be meaningful skills for today's society (learned from) working on a farm, it was such an insult to me, my family and to all the farmers in the country I had to take up this cause." Save the Prison Farms advocate Jeff Peters.

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"They're all fine people, every one of them, but we're not interested in having a debate." Eric Welbanks of the pro-turbine group Citizens of Amherst Island for Renewable Energy, on the subject of meeting with the group opposing the wind farm proposed for the island.

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"It will be scary in five or 10 years from now, seeing the hand, neck and shoulder issues from all the chronic texting people were doing as teenagers." Kingston chiropractor Dr. Peter Pain, who has seen an increase in neck and back pain and believes hand-held devices are to blame.

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"I haven't heard anything from the university, I haven't heard anything from the police, I haven't heard anything from the coroner's office about what happened when he was dying, and what caused it." Minhaj Khan, at a ceremony to dedicate a tree in the memory of his son, Habib, who died when he fell through a skylight at McArthur Hall in December. More than four months after the tragic accident, authorities still were disclosing no details of their investigation.

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"I sat there for 24 hours with them telling me I didn't have the right to see him - he was property of the federal corrections program. That's my son. He's not the property of anybody." Allen Erdodi, on having to wait to see his son after he arrived at a Kingston hospital from Sarnia. Joshua Erdodi, 23, was stabbed 47 times in an uprising at Joyceville Institution in April.

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"A guy at the feed store said to me that it was a good growing day, but seed doesn't grow if it's still sitting in the bag." Rick Kelderman, a Napanee-area farmer, lamenting the soggy spring and how it delayed getting his barley planted.

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"It shows the world is actually all right, that it's not going to hell in a handbasket. We don't want politicians and their platforms taking over our lives." Queen's University political studies professor Christian Leuprecht, on rescheduling the French-language leaders debate around the Montreal Canadiens playoff schedule.

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"There's an expression: The ark was built by amateurs; the Titanic was built by professionals." Danielle van Dreunen, speaking

about newly elected Quebec MP Ruth Ellen Brosseau and people who in the wake of the election were critical of her lack of political experience. Van Dreunen taught Brosseau in the business program at St. Lawrence College.

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"It doesn't matter how many days I give him. It's not going to alter his conduct if the last 31 years are an indication." Justice J. Peter Coulson, on sentencing habitual thief Robert Rowe in April. Coulson decided 150 days behind bars was appropriate. "You can't steal from us while you're in jail."

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"I haven't seen one yet that a beaver can't figure out. You can't baffle a beaver." Wilf Deline, president of the Frontenac-Addington Trappers Council, on the effectiveness of fences and other means of discouraging the presence of nuisance beavers.

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"We've always tried to provide kids with healthy choices. They had choices. When we turned the fryers off and offered alternate products, the immediate reaction was, 'That's not good enough for me.' They leave school and eat lunch elsewhere." Don Landon, vice-president of operations for Brown's fine Foods, on new restrictions for school cafeteria food scheduled to be put in place in September.

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"You can take potato chips out of the vending machine, then turn on the TV and see an ad for potato chips where the mom puts chips in the kid's backpack. How does that help?" Landon again, on how effective the new guidelines will be.

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"Normally I have no trouble speaking publicly, but I've got to be honest with you. I'm at a real loss to express my outrage of what you did." Justice Rommel Masse, sentencing Richard Charles Joyce to 12 years in prison in June for sex crimes committed in 1990 against girls nine and 11 years old.

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"When you're trying to tell a ghost story, it's tough to speak over the sound of people swatting mosquitoes." Rowena Brook, of the Haunted Walk of Kingston, on the impact of what is a bumper crop of the pesky insects this summer, after an uncommonly damp spring.

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"If I've got one regret, it's that I didn't make the manufacturers responsible for their end-of-life products. There should be no eco fees." Kingston and the Islands MPP John Gerretsen, the former environment minister, says he would handle the contentious fees differently if he had it to do over again.

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"We can't offer anything. The City of Kingston doesn't stockpile beds or space." Mayor Mark Gerretsen, explaining why the city didn't offer to house any of the people evacuated from northwestern Ontario whose homes were in the path of out-of-control forest fires.

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"I'm disappointed we didn't help out because I think we should. If any of our citizens' houses were burning down, hopefully someone would be helping." Coun. Rob Hutchison, on the city's failure to step forward to accept evacuees.

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"She can hate the book as much as she likes but she can't knowingly tell lies about me." Kingston-born author Sarah Thornton, who successfully sued a British newspaper for libel over a review of her 2008 book, *Seven Days in the Art World*. London's High Court found that the review contained factual errors and Thornton was awarded more than \$100,000 in damages.

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"The money was not being used for the site. some of it was misspent. Some of it was misappropriated. We just couldn't control the project very well." Jeff Wilson, president of Stirling Bridge, a developer whose River Park project on Montreal Street was plagued by stories of tradespeople not being paid, to the tune of more than \$500,000.

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"I feel bad for the trades. It is bad if a guy does work and doesn't get paid for it." David Morrison, owner of Morrison Financial, the backer of the River Park project. How badly does he feel? He was asked if there would be payment for any workers who didn't apply liens against the property. "It won't happen," he said.

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"Some marketing guy said, 'Hey, put a bar code on it, you'll look hip.'" Jonathan Rose, association political studies professor at Queen's, on how useful it might be to include a QR code on an election sign, as some candidates did in the campaign for the October provincial election.

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"It's absolutely amazing to be part of history, to be in Parliament, to be participating in the political discourse at this level." Rookie Scarborough NDP MP Rathika Sitsabaiesan, who obtained her master's degree at Queen's University.

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"Some of the poorest people in Kingston are working in full-time jobs . they don't have enough money to eat healthy food, live in adequate shelter and afford the things we take for granted." The authors of Vital Signs, an annual report on the state of the community published in October by the Community Foundation of Greater Kingston.

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"The biggest decision I wanted to make today was what colour suspenders to wear." Conservative Lanark-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington MPP Randy Hillier, after he was returned to Queen's Park in October's provincial election with a comfortable margin of just under 10,000 votes.

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"I'm proud of my father, proud of his values, proud to have been raised by him, but the work I do with young people is my own and the reason young people keep coming out to see me is not just the draw of the last name, it's because of the legitimacy (of) engaging with them in a way that very few politicians will." MP Justin Trudeau, who spoke to students at St. Lawrence College in October.

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"Any humiliation or dishonour certainly cannot be made up through murder or killing. That in itself is dishonourable and shameful, because it is something that is prohibited and reprehensible. I'd ask you to find me one Islamic classical religious text that talks about family members killing other family members who do something you consider dishonourable. It just doesn't exist." Imam Sikander Hashmi of the Kingston Islamic Centre, on the occasion of the start of the Kingston Mills murder trial. The Crown is alleging the three people on trial killed four family members in the name of the family's honour.

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"Even if they hoist me up to the gallows, nothing is more dear to me than my honour. There is nothing more valuable than our honour . may the devil shit on their graves." Mohammad Shafia, from a wire-tapped conversation presented at his trial for murdering three of his daughters and his first wife in June 2009 at the Kingston Mills locks.

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"If we choose not to lead on the issue as members of council, then citizens will continue to put out garbage instead of recycling. We're trying to brand ourselves as Canada's most sustainable city. If we want to be true to that, our decisions should make citizens think about what they're putting in their garbage bags." Councillor Rick Downes, on reducing the maximum number of bags households can place at curbside each week from two to one.

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"People want one-stop shopping these days. Not everyone, but a lot of people do, and you can't blame them." Dave Minaker, on the closing of the family greenhouse business after 59 years. "When they go and get their drywall material, their pizza for dinner their groceries, their clothing, their flat-screen TV and while they're there, they get some flowers. Just like S&R, just like Alford's, we don't have convenience."

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"You don't expel children when they have trouble in math. (Expulsion) is not an educational alternative. We need to support these children to develop the skills they need in order to be successful in their relationships." Queen's University psychology professor Wendy Craig, discussing new legislation to curb bullying in schools, which includes a provision for expulsion.

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"This is totally not a religious thing. This is about Christmas." Brigitte Klepy, one of two school bus drivers who was ordered in December to remove holiday decorations from her bus, under threat of having her employer lose his contract with the agency that provides transportation services to three local school boards.

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"To suggest that a few decorations on a bus is a dangerous distraction to other drivers on the road is ridiculous, and is a weak attempt to cover the true motivation." MPP Randy Hillier, reacting to the ban.

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"There will be no storm stay. Everyone can leave on time. The in-laws can go home." Dave Phillips, senior climatologist at Environment Canada, on the probability that there will be no snow on Christmas Day.

Tomorrow: Oddities in the news.