

OPINION

List those calories

Here's a skill-testing question that Ontarians may soon be forced to consider: Which has more calories — a cheeseburger or a bran muffin from Tim Hortons?

According to Ontario's Minister of Health, those mid-morning muffins are more fattening than greasy burgers, every time. It's enough to make your waistline expand in horror.

Caloric details like this will no doubt shake the foundations of nutritional beliefs— and hopefully change eating habits— if Health Minister Deb Matthews' food labeling bill is passed.

Matthews' bill would force posted-calorie counts on food sold in fast-service chains, restaurants, supermarkets and convenience stores with 20 or more locations.

The number of calories would be posted beside each item on the restaurant's menu. There are cash fines to remind restaurants of the duty to label, although at \$10,000 for a corporation's second offence, the deterrents could be higher.

The point of the exercise is to educate diners before they order unhealthy meals that contribute to the problems of obesity and rising health care costs. No one expects obesity rates to drop overnight, but making consumers face up to calorie counts could inspire restaurants to offer healthier choices. That beef burrito might look lean, but it's actually loaded with an entire days' worth of calories.

While some, including the Heart and Stroke Foundation, call the bill a "big win," others such as the Canadian Restaurant and Foodservices Association, are less than thrilled. It promotes posters and brochures for nutritional information, instead of menu labeling focused on calories. But however detailed those brochures may be, they simply won't provide the shocking immediacy of a calorie count right on the menu.

WEB POLL RESULTS

(Go to www.theifp.ca)

Do you plan to go away for March Break?

- No, I can't afford to go anywhere. (67%)
- No, there's lots to do here. (20%)
- Yes, get me out of here! (13%)

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Letters to the editor

Rural drivers lack courtesy

Dear editor,

An open letter to drivers on rural roads.

It is about time that drivers on our rural roads adopt some common sense and good neighbourly attitudes with regard to pedestrians using the same roads you drive.

Courtesy alone should dictate that when you are approaching someone walking along a rural road, especially when there is absolutely no escape due to high snow banks, you slow down— at least to the posted speed limit if not a little less and pull to the opposite side of the road to provide a wide, safe distance between the vulnerable pedestrian and your big, heavy vehicle.

Moreover, when a vehicle is coming in the opposing direction, slow down and yield to the pedestrian. It's common sense and it is the law. You do not have the right-of-way.

One day, you'll be responsible for

maiming or killing another resident or their pet.

Ask yourself, isn't it better to modify your driving habits now before taking someone's life?

Dan Poirier
Acton

Distracted driving must end

Dear editor,

Just the other day on CityTV news they showed a film of a distracted driver using a cell phone, causing a severe accident in Kenora.

I can sadly report that Georgetown has these crazy drivers as well.

On Thursday, March 6, I witnessed a lady make a right turn from Armstrong onto Mountainview north without stopping at a red light.

As I came up beside her, I noticed her talking on her cell phone.

This lady was driving a white VW SUV.

I assure you lady that you were

definitely wrong. I sincerely hope that you see this letter and correct your insane driving habits before you become the next driver involved in an accident caused by this insane habit.

Georgetown recently had a lady killed by a careless driver.

It's time this law, that recently had the fines increased, was strictly enforced.

Ed Yearwood,
Georgetown

Residents praised

Dear editor,

Kudos to those residents that cleared the Hungry Hollow trails after the ice storm. Much appreciated.

F. Leslie, Georgetown

Letters policy

Letters must include the author's name, address and daytime phone number. Anonymous letters will not be published. Letters should not exceed 150 words and may be edited for content and/or length. Publication is not guaranteed.

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