

A costly battle

It took six years and an undetermined amount of your money, but eventually the Ontario government was ordered to release data on where sex offenders live across Ontario.

Freedom of Information requests were filed by Global News and Ann Cavoukian, Ontario's information and privacy commissioner. And then the long wait began. The Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services put up a fight, arguing that the information shouldn't be released for fear of vigilantism.

In its decision, the Supreme Court ruled in a 7 to 0 decision that Ontario residents had a right to know where the province's 7,400 registered sex offenders live.

The data was released based on partial postal codes.

You aren't able to know exactly where sex offenders live, but you are able to know the general area.

The release of the information is a win for transparency.

But should Ontarians have had to wait six years for it and at what cost?

The government refuses to say how much of your money was spent on the back and forth battle. We're guessing it doesn't come cheap.

The case is a win for long overdue government transparency but one that should have happened six years ago.

WEB POLL RESULTS

(Go to www.theifp.ca)

The Farmers' Almanac is predicting a warmer than usual summer.

What's your preference?

70 F or 20 C all summer long (50%)

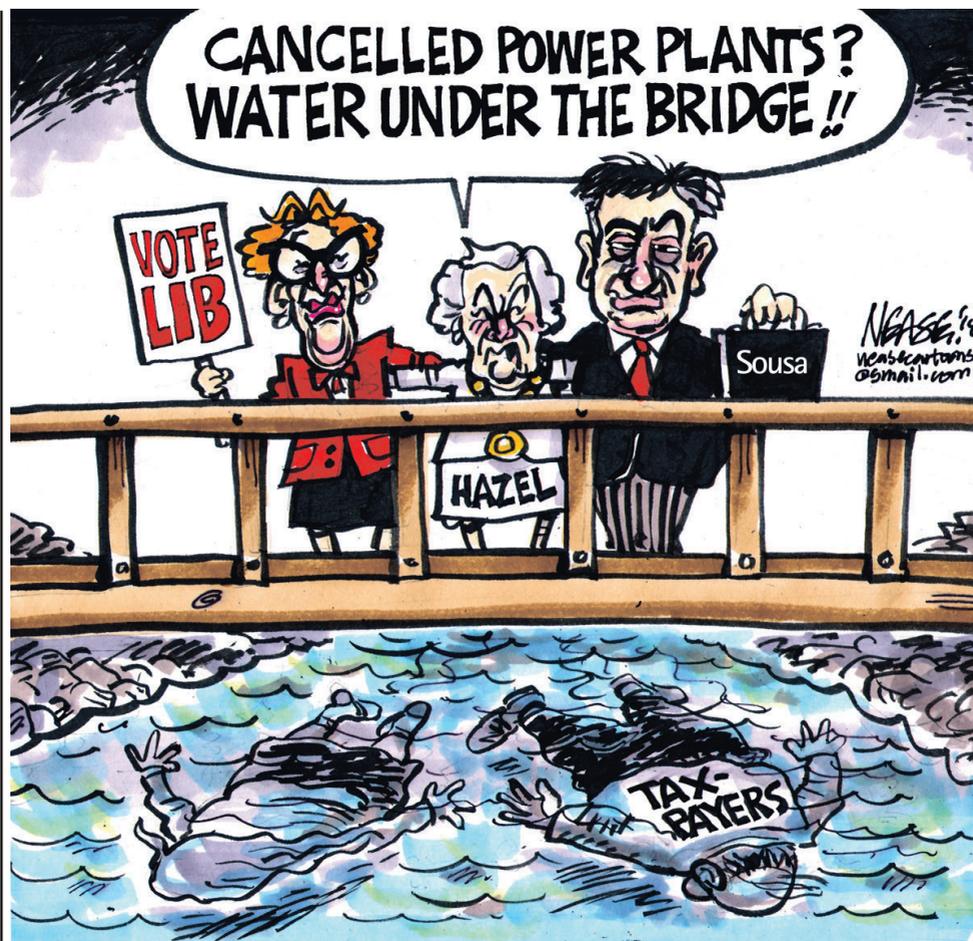
Whatever, as long as the weekends are warm and sunny (27%)

Hot, hot, hot (23%)

The Independent & Free Press

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Don't blame everything on cigarettes

Re: Letter, ban cigarettes by Vrinda Sanghrajka, May 15.

So, it's time to ban cigarettes. Cigarettes kill more people than the use of other "illegal" drugs. Last time I checked, cigarettes were not on the list of illegal drugs.

I agree that there is nothing wrong with banning something that will fundamentally kill a person, so let's take that argument from cigarettes to, say, alcohol.

How many people are crippled, or worse, because of impaired driving?

How about fast food and cardiovascular problems.

Aren't obese people a burden on the health care system? Anyone who drives a car is slowly polluting the Earth, which will cause more problems for our children than ourselves, so let's ban those evil

things too. And they are not getting enough exercise. Cardiovascular disease comes to mind again.

Some factories belch out many more pollutants than the world's smokers combined could ever do, so let's shut them down.

Heck, what about the methane gas produced by the world's population of bovine friends slowly depleting the ozone layer.

Wait, those animals are around to help produce some of the ingredients in our McFast food.

Do not blame everything on smoking. There are worse killers out there.

Did someone mention guns?

Hans Tunney

Butt dilemma

I don't know how many times I have done this over the years. I have smoked on and off for 30 years, using the planet as my ashtray.

And, I am not the only one.

Since I started smoking, I have travelled the countryside, disposing of my butts in the wake.

I remember when people could

smoke on Greyhound buses and you could light up while flying.

The bars were full of cigarette smokers and second-hand smoke was on the menu at your pizza joints and restaurants. Those were the days for many.

Today, and for the past decade, I have been disposing of my cigarette butts by taking the heater off and putting the butt in my pocket, disposing of the waste in the garbage.

This past weekend, my family and I took part in community clean up and I was appalled with what I found. Butts everywhere! Many years ago I wrote a letter to the editor about the number of cigarette butts that filled a large size Tim Hortons cup – now the new medium.

Teresa Villeneuve

Letters policy

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