

On the Brown Farm, there is no backup for the backup

*Tied to a toilet
no way to spend
Christmas,
laments Ted
Brown*



TED BROWN
Column

Let's face it, we all pick up a bug now and then.

It really doesn't matter how much sanitizer we slosh all over our hands after shaking hands with a bunch of people, that nasty little virus will find a way to hang on, and ultimately infect ya.

A couple weeks ago I was the target, I was the 'infectee'.

I could point the finger at a few people who were a bit too close to me - but I suspect my infection was comprised of three different bugs.

It started with the cough when I came home from a meeting. It was one of those annoying, tickling coughs that was just 'there,' not really productive, a clear-your-throat-ahem-type of cough.

Until next morning. By then I was hacking and coughing like a good thing. I knew it was going to be nasty. I had to cancel a few meetings and hoped I could fight it off with some Buckley's cough syrup, (you know, 'tastes awful but it works'.)

I was holding my own. Thursday, my eldest daughter called to see if I could keep granddaughter Sadie for a few hours. I was glad to keep her.

Daughter No. 1 and Sadie arrived and I was told "If Sadie's a bit fussy, she had a bit of a flu bug yesterday."

Sadie and I spent a wonderful afternoon dozing on the sofa, watching TV. Mom picked her up later and was pleased she's slept so soundly on my lap.

Next morning, Daughter No. 1 called to let me know she was throwing up, just like Sadie was the day before.

"Well, get better," I said, between my own coughing fits.

Two days later, the coughing fits became a prelude to my 24-hour relationship with the toilet.

I swear, I had aches and pains I'd never felt for a very long time.

One of the most difficult aspects of being a farmer is, for the most part, we're a one-person operation. There isn't much in the way of a backup for chores.

I was dragging myself to the barn, coughing all the way there and back, in an effort to feed the animals.

When I get sick enough, my backup becomes The Sidekick.

She always steps up, and does the chores before or after she is done work.

She is my life-saver.

But in this particular situation, well she waited for two days, then she started.

Yup, she got it too and

missed two days of work talking to the toilet.

On the Brown Farm, there is no 'backup' for the backup.

Somehow, we got through it, and though I was still coughing (and by then had picked up a prescription for some really good cough syrup), I got up to look in the mirror, to see why my eye was itchy. I had pink eye!

At that point in time, one could have purchased a flock of sheep really cheap, maybe even the farm at that point.

OK, back to the doctor, back to the drugstore, drops in the eyes three times a day.

By then we had cancelled one of the family dinners planned, we missed three church services and were basically hermits in our own house.

Fortunately we were finished Christmas shopping before we got sick, so our only commitment was to do chores, which we did together. We finished decorating the Christmas tree Dec. 24.

And on Boxing Day we managed to pull off entertaining my daughters and their families, but that was it.

So it seems Christmas was but a fleeting memory this year.

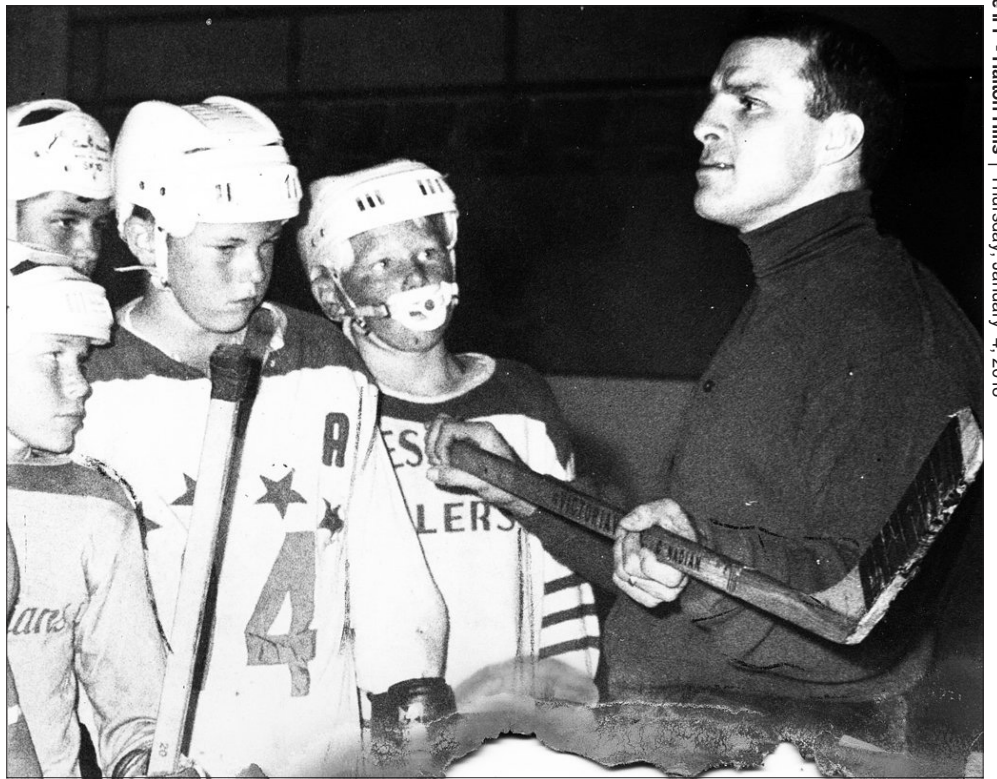
We've rescheduled one of the Christmas gatherings later in January, so we are catching up.

After being sick, and getting well, one thing comes out of it.

I wonder if I could train Hamish to be the 'backup' for the backup.

To reach Ted Brown, email tedbit@hotmail.com.

THE WAY WE WERE



Esqueusing Historical Society photo

Known as much for his toughness on the ice as his skills, former NHL defenseman Carl Brewer is pictured giving instructions to a group of young players at the Georgetown Hockey School in 1967. By this time, Brewer had left the Toronto Maple Leafs in a dispute, and spent several years playing for Canada's national team and in Finland before returning to the league with the Detroit Red Wings in 1969.

OPINION

There must be an election coming

To the Editor:

I had to chuckle at the new lanes open article on Highway 410,

I will go out on a limb here and suggest that not one of these fine Liberal politicians in the article travelled the 410 on a daily basis like the rest of us suckers have over the last what five-six-seven years, while this poorly planned disaster went on?

I have seen this highway ripped up and repaved in the same spot numerous times for god only knows what reason, it never seemed to end, but yet it continues.

I remember one night (early morning) going to

work at Derry and Kennedy Road in Mississauga and because of lane and exit closures I was sitting at Carlingview and Dixon Road at 3 a.m. because of those exit closures and no body could care less because it didn't affect them. Thankfully, I knew the city and where I was going so that I could navigate this mess.

Did anybody ever call the 410 hotline? Apparently, they forgot to hook it up at the other end. I called and was met with dead silence.

No doubt all of these fine Liberal politicians were home soundly asleep in their nice warm beds while this egregious mess continued.

Nobody can possibly imagine the billions of litres of fuel wasted, tens of millions of lost man hours, the number of smash ups that have gone on while this disaster continued.

I'll bet there are a million horror stories out there.

An organized mess is and was the only way to describe it, and actually it is still under construction to this minute.

There is one reason and only one reason why this part of the highway is finally open. Are we all that naive?

Can anybody smell an election coming?

Steve Panchuk

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