

EDITORIAL COMMENT

It Isn't Halloween

Destruction of outdoor Christmas lighting, which last season reached epidemic proportions, is threatening again to blight the holiday season for the majority of residents who spend time and money on these seasonal decorations.

Already we have heard of one home where a large number of coloured light bulbs were removed, almost from under the nose of the occupants, and later in the evening the vandals returned, this time snapping a couple of strings of lights against the brickwork and utterly destroying the exhibit.

The situation was brought forcefully to our mind Saturday when we unearthed our light strings and found that the marauders had taken a total of 50 bulbs in their post season foray last December. At 20c a bulb, this meant a ten dollar purchase. Thinking back, we remembered that we had been almost cleaned out once, and several times half a dozen bulbs were missing. So in money, it cost us about \$25.00. Plus the fact that on both occasions, the lights were taken on the evenings preceding each holiday and our carefully planned display was

In darkness for the very times we wanted it most.

We don't think there is any one gang of bulb snatchers at work. The damage takes place in widely separated parts of town. It seems to be a mass thinking among youngsters that Christmas is replacing Halloween as a time for pranks.

Some years ago, the Chamber of Commerce, inaugurated a campaign to beautify Georgetown for the holidays. It was so successful that a few years later the Chamber dropped its competition, feeling that maximum results had been achieved. Residents have gradually built up a stockpile of lights and decorations, and Georgetown is truly a beautiful town in December.

If the destruction continues, however, there are many who will drop the idea altogether, and we will miss just a little of the happiness of Christmas.

It is scarcely a matter with which the police can be expected to deal. It is rather up to each of us, as parents, to stress that Christmas is not a time for destruction. For we must realize that while other youngsters are playing their pranks on us, our own boys may be doing the same elsewhere.

A Happier New Year

As council's year draws to a close, we hope that the men who guide our town affairs will wish each other a happy new year and each make a little private resolution that they will keep some of the holiday spirit in the year to come.

Seldom in our quarter century of reporting council meetings have we seen so many displays of ill will and downright childishness as at a majority of the year's council deliberations. Every member was guilty, though some more than others, of actions which had a cancerous effect on the conduct of town business. And it reached a point where even an innocent jibe, or a well-intended pleasantry, was taken wrongly and brought a caustic retort.

No one, least of all a reporter, expects each council meeting to be full of sweetness and light at all times. Nor does the

public expect our politicians to be Pollyannas with a buddy-buddy attitude to each other.

Council meetings, like a good stew, need to be well-seasoned. But just as a stew can be ruined by too liberal an application of pepper, so can town business be undermined if the shaker isn't used sparingly.

We hope, in 1966, to see some keen debates in council, to have each councillor stick to his guns and work for what he believes to be the best interests of the town, and, when the occasion demands, to try every fair means possible to win his point in an argument.

But we equally hope there will be a minimum of personal attack, and an absence of the "Don't blame me, I didn't vote for it" tactics after a majority decision is made by council.

An Excellent Parade

Saturday's Santa Claus parade can be counted as one of the best in the 34 years that the Lions Club has been sponsoring this annual Georgetown event.

The general excellence of the floats was, to our mind, the best ever. And the majorettes, cheer leaders and all the paraders proved real show business veterans as they marched a couple of miles through an icy drizzle to put on a real good show.

It was not the first time that the Lions have been plagued with bad weather. It would seem that the second Saturday before Christmas is more often rainy, foggy and miserable than it is bright. But despite the rain, there was still a glow in the hearts young and old as jolly old St. Nick approached on his sleigh, high atop the

last parade float, to dispense his usual bags of goodies to the hundreds of eager youngsters.

The Lions deserve a real hand for continuing the traditional parade, and for constantly trying to improve it. There were years when it wasn't the attraction it is today. We can still remember when the firemen joined forces with the Lions to create a handsome sleigh, and when one resident replaced Santa's somewhat shabby suit with one which gave the jolly gentleman a much better perspective.

To the Lions, and the dozens of people who made Saturday a memorable day in Georgetown, go our thanks. We'll be looking forward twelve months from now to Santa's 35th visit.

Some Winter Tips to Help Cars Survive

For those who haven't already conditioned their cars to the rigors of winter driving here is a list of items to be checked out.

- Check the battery and have it charged if necessary or replaced.
- Check the ignition system, points, condensers and plugs.
- Have car lubricated for winter driving.
- Change to light weight motor oil for better lubrication and to reduce starting drain on battery.
- Have the radiator checked and flushed and thermostat installed along with antifreeze.
- Radiator and heater hoses should be checked.
- Wiper blades should be checked.

and adjust automatic choke. Inspect, adjust and replace fan belt if necessary.

- Either mount snow tires or have tire chains available.
- Have brakes checked to make sure they are not sticking or grabbing.
- Have complete lighting system of the car checked out.
- Investigate the possibility of having rear window defrosters installed.

In addition, carry along emergency items such as ice scrapers, shovel, bag of sand or Track-Treds, heavy rope or chain, rags or paper towel for cleaning the windshield and lights.

After a prolonged cold spell be sure to have the car re-checked to determine whether there have been severe strains on the car's electrical system. Furthermore, under no condition should a motorist run a car in a closed garage because the concentration of carbon monoxide from the car's exhaust can be deadly.

TIMELY HINTS

Don't carry a pile of packages to obstruct vision.

Keep packages on easy-to-reach shelves or drawers, never on floors or stairs where they can trip someone.

Give the children a box for gifts. Toys scattered around the house may send Grandma tumbling.

Use a sturdy ladder, never a makeshift such as a chair or piled books or boxes.

Never reach from a ladder. Get someone taller or with longer arms to put the star on tree top.

Holidays always increase fire hazards around the home, claims NSL. Fires, burns and fire-associated accidents accounted for 23 per cent of last year's home fatality victims. For Christmas, the League suggests:

Never place candles near trees, curtains or other flammable materials. Use hurricane lamps over them for safety and added attractiveness.

Keep matches in hard-to-open containers away from children.

Discard frayed electric cords before a short circuit produces shock or fire. Make sure lighting sets carry CSA labels.



"See George - More of a Boomerang Effect"

SUGAR AND SPICE by Bill Smiley

The Christmas Game

People become a bit frantic as Christmas approaches, and I don't blame them. Every year, despite fervent pledges to keep it simple, the holiday season seems to begin earlier, grow more garish, and finally turn into a three-ring circus before the last stocking is hung.

While we all deplore the expense and exhaustion involved, we are all ardent players of that great North American game known as "Needle Your Neighbour."

That's why the simple little candle in the window has evolved into that hideous phantasmagoria of coloured lights all over the front of the house. That why the few sprigs of evergreen over the mantel have evolved into a living-room resembling a spruce swamp.

Regardless of such things as a happy family gathering, the pleasure of the old carols, the joy of giving, Christmas is not really a success unless we can come up with something that will put the neighbours' noses out of joint.

And this is where I come in. I can't bear to see people unhappy. Except my neighbours. After a lot of thought, I've come up with a few pre-Christmas suggestions that will turn your neighbour green with envy, red with rage, in the proper colors for the season.

How about a Yule log this year? Get that old mattress out of the attic. Or off the bed in the guest room, saturate it in

gasoline. Roll it up, tie it with ropes and hide it in the garage. On Christmas Eve, when your neighbour is gloating through the curtains at the vulgar nativity scene in four colours on his front lawn, take out your Yule log and burn it on your lawn. When he rushes out — and he will — tell him it's the genuine article ordered from England. Then watch him burn. By the way, don't overdo it. Don't try burning your Yule log in your two-foot wide fireplace.

A variation on this theme is an eternal flame. If you don't have gas, have a line run in to your front lawn. Tell your neighbour the guys who are tearing up your lawn are looking for a leak in your sewer. This will please him.

Then, some night, half an hour after he turns on his electrical monstrosity, flip your gas switch, and slip out and light your eternal flame. The fendish ingenuity of your plan, the simple dignity of your little light burning away, in wind and snow, will drive him wild. It'll be worth the few hundred bucks it costs.

This year, forget all about that junk for your living room. Christmas candles, spruce boughs, sprigs of holly, colored lights in the chandelier. Oh, let your wife go through the motions. Women enjoy such futilities.

But a couple of nights before Christmas, when your wife is on a last mad shopping scramble,

throw all that garbage out. Then take two gallons of paint, one red and one green, and paint everything in your living room one or the other. Your neighbour will be livid with envy when you ask him over for refreshments. Your wife may be any color.

A variation on this is to let your kids help you paint, and not ask your neighbour over Christmas morning, you send the kids over at seven a.m. in appropriate colors, and they ask him over.

It's An Ill Wind

The Hydro's kept and nothing will work. Come go unmitted, we grope in the dark. To find an odd candle, a flashlight or two, And something, just something, to cook up a stew.

With a whine and a rattle machinery stops, The Gross National Product takes a h... of a drop; The furnace won't work and everyone freezes And puts on old sweaters and shivers and sneezes. The Yankess are mad at poor Johnny Canuck, And Ontario Hydro passes the buck.

Toronto "cliff dwellers" and workers upstairs, Elevator-imprisoned or trudging downstairs, Discover, surprised, the vulnerability Of civilization is hamlet and city.

But think of the benefit disaster begets To a people (they say) less fit and more fat. The muscles (unused) that came into play, The coxae that were balked in the old fashioned way, The exercise gained in descending the stairs, And those in the lift, remembering prayers, And even for want of mundane occupation, Keiving the lost art they call conversation. And those without money for progess and frills, Thought of their bleeding, instead of their ill.

Their woad fires worked just the same as before, They heed press no button, in vain, for the door Of the garage to open, supposing they had one. Though the food safe outdoors, after all not a bad one. And anyone left that still lived in a cave, Felt it a more functional way to behave.

The U.S. and Canada could work off aggression With back jarring, hane calling, instead of regression Into a war and a victory pyric (And now I have come to the end of my lyric) Except that in passing I think I should mention The absolute lift that it gave without question To the campaign, advertising that natural gas had, Who, try as they might, just couldn't sound sad.

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Speaking of refreshments, how about a wassail bowl this year? It's quite simple to make, and bound to impress. Take any large bowl or small wash tub. Half fill with nut-brown ale. It's an old Elizabethan recipe, and don't forget to tell your neighbour this.

Sit in several wassails. There are small, ancient Englishmen pickled in alcohol. Something like the shepherds in the shepherd's pie, but no garlic. Flavour to taste with nut-meat, nut-brown madder, mistletoe and garlic salt. Fill bowl with gin. Pl neighbour generously but don't touch the stuff yourself.

If you haven't got him by now, there's no hope for you, and you might as well relax and enjoy Christmas with all the old familiar horrors of last year.

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