



May happiness, success and health be yours in the year ahead.

Bill Smiley



New Year's resolutions seem rather pointless, when one looks back over the past year and realizes what a mess one made of it.

But hope springs eternal in the human breast (note to ed. — that's breast, not breast), and most of the time I feel as though I'm still animal, although I have a lot of calcium in the wrong places — not teeth, but elbows, knees and shoulders — and there are moments when I feel pure vegetable, maybe a withered turnip. So here goes.

The very first thing I'm going to do in '72 is get my rake and lawn chairs out of the backyard and into the basement. Provided I can find them under the snow. Same goes for my woodpile, which has been sitting there, "drying out", since August.

The second thing I'll do is stop listening to my wife and make her start listening to me. She is eternally getting into jams because she won't listen to me because she never has because she thinks she knows more than I about practically anything you can name. And she is forever getting me into jams because I listen to her because she thinks etc. . .

That will clear a lot of the fog in our

domestic air, I know. You think that's like a mouse dragging that he's going to straighten out an elephant. And it is. But it's also a fact that we mice have been known to panic a whole herd of elephants. Anyway, it'll be fun trying. That old spirit of adventure, you know. Even if it does cost me a broken nose or a couple of thick ears.

Another thing I'm going to stop is stop worrying. I'm a terrible worry wart. Some weeks I worry a total of twenty-seven minutes, about something I can't do a thing about. I'm going to cut that down to twenty-seven seconds, do it once a week, and get it over with.

I'm going to give up late nights. They take a terrible toll on a fellow when he must work next day. No more of those. Except on exceptional cases, such as Friday and Saturday nights and anytime I really go to a party or have one. Or anytime I really feel like staying up.

I'm going to put a stop to my daughter falling in love. This will be one of the trickier assignments. I just get nicely adjusted to the fact that she's deeply in love and settling down when I get word that it's off with the old and on with the new, and this time it's "real".

In the past year she's been in love with an English professor, an American (imagine!), student; twice engaged to the same guy, name of Joe; and is currently head-over-heels with a sculptor. How much does a struggling sculptor make? I don't really care, but I don't fancy the old idea that two can live as cheaply as one, if I'm paying the bills. I don't know what technique I'll use to stop her, but I'll come up with something fiendish that will guarantee her a long spinsterhood.

I'm going back into the arms of the church for a long-awaited (on her part) embrace. I am steadily growing more sinful, just like the rest of you, but it's time to start straightening the accounts.

Well, that's enough to keep me going for the year. A nice mixture of physical and psychological problems.

In closing, thanks to all those who have written during the year. Forgive me if I haven't answered yet. Have a good year.

And a special wish to all those in trouble: Western farmers, the unemployed, the old and the mentally ill. Keep your chin up. Things can only get better. And remember somebody is thinking about you. Maybe Edgar Benson won't, but I will.



by Hartley Coles

COLES' SLAW

I left you on the threshold of Florida's new Disney World last week. Our junket to Florida and a side trip to the Bahamas was supposed to take most of the nights in two short weeks—and we did pretty well, thank you, but Disney World was one of the bonuses.

From the moment we paid admission of \$4.75 which includes seven attractions at the Magic Kingdom, and rode on the ultra-modern mono-rail system, to the moment when we took the exits about nine hours later, we were entranced. The Magic Kingdom is 100 acres of enchantment, topped by Cinderella's castle, a gleaming cream and blue confection that can be seen five miles from the site.

Transported from the gate to the Magic Kingdom is like leaving the world of reality for a dream where the first attraction is a turn-of-the-century main street on which policemen in bobby hats, horse drawn trams and ancient trucks and cars ramble through the streets in mint condition.

Bring your camera to your eye and the driver will stop, doff his bowler or straw, cordially salute you, the world and anyone else he can take in with the benevolent sweep. This genteel atmosphere, provided by pleasant dreams of a bygone age, pervades the whole Kingdom, which is divided up into six separate areas—Main Street, Adventureland, Frontierland, Fantasyland, Tomorrowland and Liberty Square.

You can be in the world of Mickey Mouse one minute, or lolling on a real river boat on a small river, fighting rhinoceros and giant pythons in Africa, in the next.

You can bathe in the atmosphere of early American architecture and events at the time of the American revolution at another time or splitting your sides at numerous shows like one we attended where 20 mechanical bears grind out country music via a new amazing invention called audio-animatronics.

Eating is no problem either. Low cost meals are readily available in deluxe surroundings. Waitresses in long, old fashioned dresses serve at a replica of the

Crystal Palace. Sweet-faced beauties, they are obliging to the point of embarrassment.

For instance, while I served myself at the buffet table, I was torn between eyeing the waitresses and lading the food onto the tray. As a result I knocked over a tall glass of ginger ale into my dinner, spoiled the gravy, and sprinkled nearby salads with bubbly dressing they could well do without.

I was embarrassed. But the waitresses took it all in their stride. They furnished me with a new dinner, quieted my stammer with sweet talk and had me out of the line and sitting down pronto, before I could do further damage.

I was still dazed when an auburn-haired enchantress walked by and said a pleasant "Hello —how are you?" to our group of four wandering Canadians. I smiled back and nodded my head. My wife did the same

and almost in the same breath asked, "Isn't that Anita Bryant?"

"Yes, and that is the governor of Florida with her," an official voice beside us informed. Sure enough along came the rest of the official entourage guided by Disney World officials.

Anita Bryant? I scratched my beard, then asked: Who's she?

For someone who often mistakes Bing Crosby for Rock Hudson and settles down to watch a TV program thinking it is Charlton Heston starring when it is really Frank Sinatra, this is not an extraordinary happening. My wife, used to my quirks, pointed out that Anita was kind of the official for Florida and sings the orange juice commercials on the tube.

I immediately identified her in my own mind and wondered aloud how such a busy gal could be so pleasant. I learned as the day went on that was all part of the charm of Disney World. As one person has said, when you get 6,000 people smiling at you every time you turn around it does not require a gargantuan effort not to smile back.

And it is contagious. The whole place beams with smiles and cordiality.

Apparently the company had 70,000 applications for jobs at the park and about six out of seven were turned down because they could not meet the strict personality and appearance requirements. Those who passed are the pick of the crop.

Officials are well aware that the entire fairyland effect could be spoiled by poor personalities. They have made sure there are no bad apples in the Disney World barrel.

It is the same anywhere you go. The most magnificent attraction can be spoiled by one surly person. The human factor is the most important.

So just in case you might think I'm being a little surly in not mentioning the holiday season at this time of the year, let me wish all the very best in '72 and make sure you have plenty of aspirins on hand if you welcome the new year too boisterously.

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Hunters need protection . . .

We were surprised to learn that under the present laws in this province it is not an offence to carry a firearm and hunt while under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Nor does the gun-bearer need to have good eyesight if he wears a gun license.

These are ridiculous oversights. Impaired hunters are just as dangerous as impaired drivers and myopic shooters have already taken their toll in the woods.

Recently a man was killed by a shotgun blast because he looked like a bird to the hunter behind the trigger. Before the current hunting season ends it is probable that other victims will meet a similar fate because they resemble deer, moose, rabbits or other species of game.

Hunter safety training has reduced the number of hunting accidents since the program became mandatory in Ontario.

Now it is time to cut the toll further by charging drunken hunters and instituting an eye test for the issuing of gun licenses. There is no doubt that strict adherence to new laws would save many lives that otherwise could be a mistaken target.

We were really surprised hunters have such wide latitude when all other facets of life require strong regulations to protect human life.

"Trudeaumania" still potent . . .

The recent sweeping victory of the Conservative party in Ontario apparently bears little relationship to the federal scene, if the enthusiastic reception given Prime Minister Trudeau in the London area a few weeks ago is any indicator. It was very evident from the crowds which followed the P.M. everywhere and jammed all halls wherein he spoke that the "Trudeaumania fever" is still a very potent force.

The outspoken editor of the Aylmer Express gave the reasons very clearly in a recent editorial, from which we quote:

"We can't help thinking that the great attraction about Mr. Trudeau is

his essential personal honesty. He says what he thinks, shrugs about what he doesn't know or where there is no answer and gives the people some home truths which may not be palatable but are frequently much more plausible.

"In his remarks to a crowded auditorium of students in Petrolia high school there was something almost Churchillian—I offer you nothing but blood, sweat, toil and tears—in his frankness about prospects for prosperity and job opportunities.

"There's no assurance for any of you that you are going to have it easy or you're going to have the kind of nice job you would prefer in tomorrow's

world," he said, adding bluntly "the world of tomorrow will belong to those who grab it and take hold of it." We didn't think this would go down so well with the young people. He sounded too much like everything they oppose until he added the human touch "perhaps what we can do together is to change the values to make it a little less aggressive and protect those who are not strong and able to fend for themselves."

We all can't help noticing that Mr. Trudeau wasn't blaming anybody but ourselves for the present troubles. He was simply telling us all to get busy and use our own ingenuity, enterprise and industry to get going again."

—St. Marys Journal Argus

Free Press

back issues

20 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press Thursday, January 3, 1952.

Never in all its history did Acton have such a gigantic audience as on New Year's eve when C.B.L. carried on a Dominion network the frolic of the Y's Men's Club from Acton town hall. The hall was packed to capacity. Don Fairbairn of Neighbourly News fame was Master of Ceremonies and Acton's own Ernie Packer was caller for the square dances. President Garnet McKenzie of the Y's Men introduced Don Fairbairn. Promptly at midnight Mayor Ted Tyler came to the microphone bell-ringing above the other din and wished Canadians everywhere a Happy New Year on behalf of the citizens of Acton. Mr. Tyler was at home recovering from a painful operation on her hand. There were streamers and signs all over the town hall and the old wood-burning heating stoves poured forth a warm welcome.

George Leslie was acclaimed reeve of Esqueving township. George Currie withdrew to contest a seat on council. About 100 attended the nomination meeting in Stewarttown hall. The election is Monday.

Fire destroyed the home of Mr. and Mrs. Arnold McEnery in Ballinacoff.

Pension cheques will start flowing soon as Canada's new social security program for aged citizens comes into effect. The pension of \$40 a month is provided to all over 70 regardless of means.

Chester Plank died suddenly Dec. 22 while visiting at Stayner.

Mr. and Mrs. Angus Lawson celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary Christmas Day.

Dr. A. J. Buchanan was installed as Master of Walker Lodge.

Miss Nellie Anderson was speaker at the annual meeting of the Bible Society. Murray Coles was elected president.

50 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press December 29, 1921.

The usual success attended the annual High School "At Home" in the town hall. The Christmas function reflected credit on the teachers, Miss Knapp the principal and Mr. Lewis. It comprised the following numbers, choruses A Hoving, Tripoli and A Capital Ship by the school; chairman's remarks Harold Mowat; duet Olive McLaughlin and Jean Orr; school paper read by editor Viola Runley; piano duet Misses Laura Gray and Jean Kennedy; numbers by school orchestra; folk dances; Trial Scene of the Merchant of Venice with Mary Gibbons, Marie Mowat, Jack Robertson, Earl Cooper, Laird McDonald, Laird Duncay, Ray Gamble, Angus Kennedy; Dialogue, The Rivals, with Telford Kenney, James Matthews, Marguerite Ryder, Laura Scott, Beatrice Blair, Ex-Principal and Mrs. W. H. Stewart and Misses Marguerite and Elsie, and Masters Willie and Robert, of Milton were the honored guests of the occasion. A brief address from Mr. Stewart was enjoyed most especially by those who had had the privilege of attending high school under this beloved ex-principal.

Due to ill health, H. P. Moore resigned as superintendent of the Methodist Sunday School. A. T. Brown was elected superintendent. He is the grandson of Alex Brown Esq., the first superintendent, who controlled its destinies for 18 years. Mr. Moore's grandfather Thomas was also an officer of the school when it was founded 76 years ago.

Secretary Earl Vincent reported enrollment of the school is 225 and the average attendance 115. Average offering for the year for each member was \$4.82.

At the annual meeting of Lorne School Mrs. Harry McDonald was elected a member. The other members are R. L. Davidson and John D. Brown.

75 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press, Thursday, January 7, 1897.

Many will remember the light-fingered propensities of Wm. Bell who spent several years in Acton. He has lately been resident in Georgetown and his thieving ways have landed him in Kingston penitentiary for two years. Last week he was charged with stealing a pair of horse clippers and pleaded guilty.

About one o'clock on Tuesday morning it was discovered by a party returning home from a social gathering that Grindell's machine shops were on fire. The flames were bursting through the roof and the entire town was illuminated by the vivid glare.

So rapid was its progress that when Mr. Grindell was awakened the window in his bedroom fell in with the heat as he arose from his bed. When the firemen and citizens arrived the shops were far past saving and attention was directed on the house which was also on fire. The contents were removed and although the house was gutted the firemen prevented the flames from reaching the neighboring buildings and perhaps the heart of the town as the wind was blowing due east.

The estimated loss is \$2500 on the shop and \$1500 on the dwelling and he is insured for \$1400 on the shops and \$500 on the dwelling. General sympathy is felt for his hard-working machinist who during his six years in Acton built up a good business. The building was erected about 10 years ago by Hugh Hyder for a Salvation Army Barracks. The mercury has fallen 60 degrees since Sunday.

Monday was a dismal day for election but not only did the male voters exercise their franchise, the ladies in considerable number braved the elements. Councillor Nicklin was elected reeve. Councillors are W. H. Denny, W. E. Smith, William Brown and H. T. Arnold.



Mild, wasn't it?

PLENTY OF RAIN AND LONG GRASS prompted one Elizabeth Drive resident to don all his Christmas presents and get out and mow the lawn on Boxing Day. Jack Carpenter trotted out his new lawn mower, put on his shorts and mowed away while Christmas decorations stood mutely, soaked by days of rain and unseasonable warm weather.—(Staff Photo)