

Horses on the road

The law . . . and you

Drivers—Did you know—the law still obligates you—to allow a horse and rider half the road—to treat horse and rider with respect? Penalties can be \$200 or 30 days!

Riders—Did you know—there's a fine for drunk riding—horses don't have the right of way—There's a fine for speeding and racing horses on the road?

(Editor's Note—A reader asked The Free Press to reprint this article on horses from Country Magazine, by Wendy Thomson, formerly of the Acton area. The reader points out that many riders use roads in the spring, to avoid damaging fields and pastures. Mrs. Thomson describes the situa-

tions which result and the law governing both rider and motorist.)
By Wendy Thomson
As relief from tedious circles in the back pasture, riders often take to country roads. Almost every rider has had unpleasant experiences with cars. Here in Ontario, there are no trails specifically

for horses as there are in England. Riders are at the mercy of motorists who seem entirely unaware that horses do have rights on the road.

Even with a well-traffic-broken horse, it's best to practice "defensive riding."

While riding a rather high-strung horse, I've noted four kinds of motorists. First is the noisy type who leans on the horn or shouts out the window as he comes level with the horse.

This is especially annoying if he is another horseman, trucking to the same meet you're hacking to, roaring past waving one hand, honking with the other, trailer

swaying and gravel flying. Some friend!

The second type proves his car's superiority by gunning while passing. This can frighten the horse enough to make it bolt and rear, or put it into the ditch. The rider is too busy getting control to note the licence number to lay charges.

The third driver is the most common and the worst. He's often a family man with a car full of youngsters or a guy taking his girl for a drive. He seems oblivious to the presence of 1,000 pounds plus of horse. He'll drive straight down the middle of the road, without slowing, or looking left or right.

When a car comes close and fast to the horse it is a "potential enemy" and the animal might try to get his defence ready by swinging his hindquarters toward the car in readiness to kick. This can cause a collision.

There are a few motorists in the fourth category. They pass a horse and rider correctly—carefully, quietly, and SLOWLY, stopping if need be. Farmers, police, and horse-owners, who know the unpredictability of horses (and other farm animals) on the road, often prefer to stop and let the rider pass before continuing on, whether the horse seems skittish or not.

Those who think horses are an old-fashioned idiosyncrasy ignored, or who have an active dislike for them and shove it on the road may be liable for a fine of up to \$200, imprisonment for up to 30 days, plus suspension of their driver's licence for up to six months.

According to the Ontario Highway Traffic Act, any vehicle, be it car, motorcycle, bicycle, or tricycle, and also snowmobile, overtaking a ridden horse must pull to the far left when passing, leaving the horse one half of the road.

When approaching and passing a horse coming toward them, they must pull to the right and leave half the road free. The driver must operate his vehicle in such a manner as to prevent frightening the horse and to ensure the safety of the person riding or leading the horse. A car going at even a moderate speed throws up a considerable amount of stinging gravel that might panic even

the most well-behaved horse. When portable or traction engines (farm machinery and such) are on the road, the driver of the engine must pull over if he can and stop, if asked to do so. According to the Act, the person in charge must see that the machine makes no noise by whistling or otherwise, when any horse or animal is passing or nearby.

A rider has obligations too. Damage done to sod, shrubs, trees, poles, lights, signs, or other highway property by his animal must be reported to the police.

A horse-drawn sled or sleigh must have at least two bells on the harness. No person shall race or furiously drive any horse on the roads. A person must not ride while drunk, or is liable for a fine and imprisonment. A rider must allow a passing car half of the road. A horse is considered a vehicle and should be ridden on the right hand side of the road.

A common misunderstanding among many horse people is that "Horses have the Right of Way!"; that is, everything must get out of the horse's way. This is not so. A horse has "consideration"—he is entitled to peace and one half the road.

The practice of riding into the ditch when a car approaches is dangerous on three counts. The ground beside the road is often littered with broken glass lying under the long grass. Secondly, the horse becomes accustomed to this move and might panic if there is no verge to "escape" to.

Thirdly, this move strengthens some motorists' belief that he is indeed, King of the Road, which he is, indeed, not. But then, although he might think he is, neither is the horse.

Opens

Halton County Radial Railway opens its season of operations weekends starting May 20. Trolleys will operate Sundays and Holidays from then until October 31.

Erin beavers make waves

High water resulting from a new scattering of beaver dams threatens at least one of the Erin Township's roads.

Ed Barden, Erin Twp. road superintendent, said beavers are building dams on every stream and causing considerable flooding. Township workers had to use a boat to get at a dam which threatened to flood 17 Slide road at the First Line, near the bridge.

Workers have pulled down many dams, but the beavers build new ones the next day. Barden said the animals

breed relatively quickly. Federal law protects beavers, because so many of them were killed off in the 1800's. A certain number of licences are granted to municipalities each year for trapping.

However, Barden said trapping is not good at this season because the pelts are not at prime, and the young are nursing. It is also against the law to shoot beaver.

Cable 4 this week

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- 6:00 C.V.C.A.
- 6:30 Let's Talk About South Africa



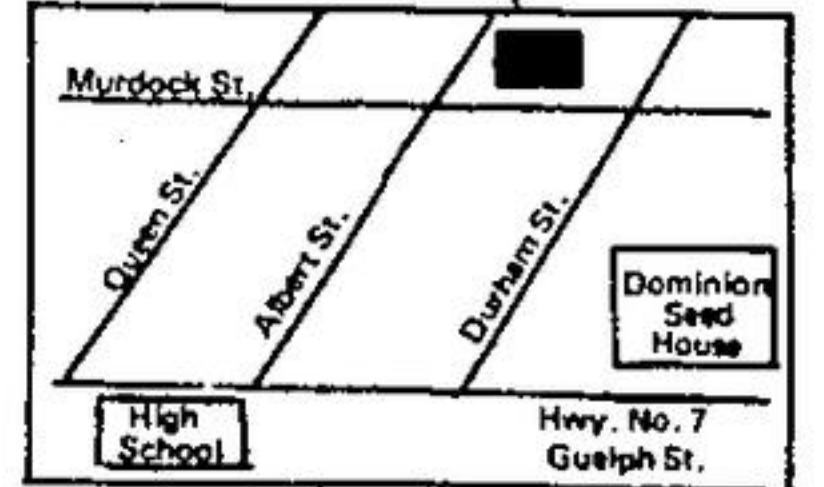
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ACCIDENTS ARE INEVITABLE when thoughtless drivers choose to disobey the law which requires car drivers to provide one half of the road for horse and rider. Elizabeth Brisley, riding Pete, has experienced several very close encounters when inconsiderate drivers sped by her, throwing stones and frightening her horse into the ditch. Most horses scared by such driving will either jump for the ditch or back towards the car in an attempt to kick in defence.

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Antique car days

Once again, the popular Antique Car Days will be held at Doon Pioneer Village near Kitchener. The event will be run Saturday, June 3 and Sunday June 4 from 10 a.m. till 5 p.m., featuring scores of vintage automobiles in

operation and on exhibit. Highlighting the old cars will be the grand-daddy of them all, the "LeRoy". Built by the Good Brothers of Waterloo in 1900, the car is now on permanent display at Doon Pioneer Village.

Planters out soon

The downtown planters will come out soon, ready for flowers.

Scheduled for the Saturday activities in addition to the exhibits is a Flea Market where antique car parts and accessories will be for sale.

On the Sunday, the judging and competitions for the automobiles will be held.

LET'S TALK FLYING!

GUELPH AIR SERVICES is having a . . .

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THURSDAY, MAY 18th
at
7:30 p.m.

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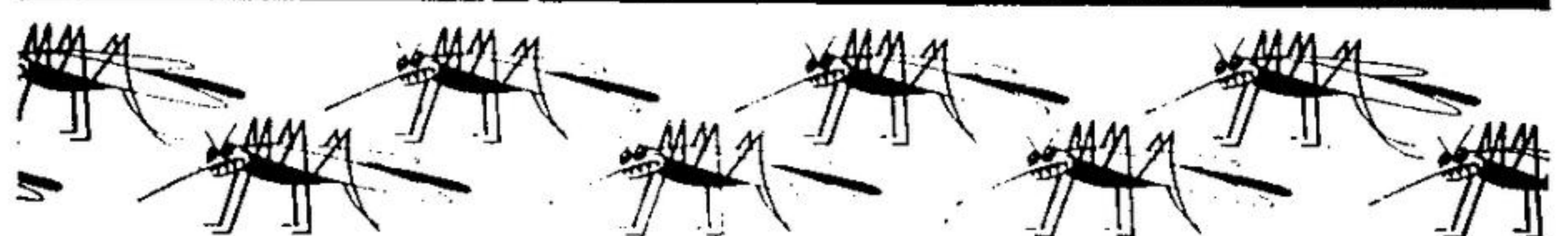
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Your guide to Mosquito Control.



How to stop them from biting.

Mosquitoes are most active in the evening and in wooded areas. It is only common sense to reduce mosquito bites by keeping out of their way as much as possible.

- Repair holes in your screens and make sure they fit tightly.
- Mow your weeds and grass frequently, trim hedges and remove all unnecessary vegetation, which protects adult mosquitoes from sun and wind.
- Provide netting for the protection of babies and young children.
- Close the damper on your fireplace when it's not in use.
- Wear loose protective clothing with long sleeves where mosquitoes are abundant.
- Lighter coloured clothing attracts fewer mosquitoes than dark clothing.

Many efficient insect repellents are available, but always read the label and follow instructions.

How to stop them from breeding.

Mosquitoes usually develop in still water so the best way to eliminate them is to do away with still-water breeding sites, wherever they exist. You can do your share.

- Eliminate all standing water around your home.
- Fill in low areas to prevent water gathering.
- Make sure drainage ditches and gutters aren't clogged with trash.
- Clean blocked drainpipes and drain water from flat roofs.
- Dispose of empty cans and old tires, and up-end buckets and other containers left outdoors.
- Change water in wading pools, ponds and bird baths every few days.
- Keep your swimming pool properly chlorinated and filtered.

Insecticides and pesticides should be used carefully. Follow the manufacturer's instructions.

In 1975, St. Louis Encephalitis spread by certain mosquitoes was reported in Ontario for the first time. There were about 70 human cases, mostly in Southwestern Ontario. During the 1976 and 1977 mosquito seasons a combination of factors—including, public awareness and care, and municipal mosquito control programs—reduced the number of cases to four in 1976 and to none in 1977.

We will be prepared again this summer. Since a recurrence of the encephalitis virus is difficult to predict, it is necessary that scientific surveillance and mosquito control programs be continued during the summer of 1978.

There is no known treatment for the disease so prevention is essential. Symptoms of encephalitis include drowsiness, loss of appetite, fever, headache, nausea and vomiting.

It must be emphasized that most mosquito bites this summer will be simply a nuisance. However, should symptoms occur, you should consult your physician.

A free pamphlet on mosquito control is available on request from your local health unit or any office of the Ministry of the Environment.



Hon. George R. McCague,
Minister of the Environment
Hon. Dennis R. Timbrell,
Minister of Health

Ontario