

# Entertainment Outlook

## Dispute Centre keeps neighborhood harmony

"News Item: Residents of Whimpey's north end have formed the Community Dispute Centre, a volunteer organization which mediates in neighborhood disputes. Spokesmen say these disputes are usually minor to begin with, but can develop into serious threats if left untreated..."

The Chairman of the Pleasantide Estates Peace-Keeping Task Force licked his lips nervously as he called the summit meeting to order.

"Excuse me? Friends? Neighbors? Do you think we could

begin, please?"

The dark mutterings of the assembled neighbors subsided, and a stony silence descended upon the hall.

The chairman's heart descended with it as he saw the ominous scowl on the face of Farrington, the leader of the residents on the west side of Maple Street. Farrington shifted his bulk in his chair, and glared blackly at MacPhee, who lived across his back fence on the east side of Elm.

The chairman sighed tragically, and tried to remember how blissful life had been before the back-fence

border war had broken out.

Like all irreconcilable hostilities, it had begun innocently enough. A complaint about overhanging tree branches. A mild dispute about dog-droppings. And then came the fateful August night when MacPhee's prized possession, a splendid gas barbecue, had mysteriously exploded in his back yard.

Although nothing was ever proven, MacPhee clung tenaciously to his belief that gas barbecues do not just explode all by themselves in the middle of the night. Suspicion

fell on Farrington, who professed his innocence. But he did not help matters by giggling uncontrollably while doing so.

The Elm Streeters sided with MacPhee, the Maple Streeters with Farrington, and relations deteriorated rapidly. In place of the neatly-trimmed hedge that had once divided the MacPhee and Farrington yards, there were now rolls of barbed wire, patrolled on one side by Farrington's Rottweiler (who terrified the MacPhee children) and on the other side by Mrs. MacPhee (who terrified the Rottweiler).

And on summer evenings, MacPhee was often to be observed standing with friends in his back yard, gazing bleakly at the crater the explosion had caused and muttering distractedly about Maple Street and Evil Empires.

The Chairman cleared his throat. "Friends, Neighbors, To start with, let's tackle the more minor disputes. For instance, Elm Street might demonstrate its good faith if Mr. Fitch returned the lawn mower he borrowed from Mr. Farrington in 1978."

Fitch, seated at MacPhee's side, smiled mischievously. "I'm afraid that's impossible," he said in a slow tone. "Following the destruction of MacPhee's barbecue, the lawn mower was crushed."

With a bellow of rage and disbelief, Farrington leaped to his feet. But he was quickly restrained by his comrade Carruthers.

"Wait," urged Carruthers. "Just wait, and remember... that I have Fitch's snow-blower."

Fitch stiffened in his chair. All color drained from his face. "You wouldn't," he whispered hoarsely. "Oh, yes," giggled Carruthers. "Oh yes, indeed, yes, I would."

Fitch moaned, and began to rock

back and forth in his chair. But MacPhee stood by him, a consoling hand on his shoulder. There had been a MacPhee at Bannockburn, and it showed now in his steely demeanor.

"Be still, Fitch," he said in a calm, quiet voice. "I anticipated such treachery from Maple Street. And this is why, late last night, I took possession of Carruthers' golf clubs."

"Please!" cried the Chairman, over the dreadful din that followed this shocking announcement. "Please, for the sake of our children..."



Weir's View

Hy Ian Weir

But as soon as the words were out of his mouth, he knew he had blundered dreadfully. He should never have mentioned the children.

Not when it was universally believed that Farrington's son Wade was behind the firecrackers that kept getting tied to the tails of Elm Street cats, and that MacPhee's boy Angus had the death-squawk that had inflicted such carnage on the Maple Street rhododendrons...

"Men!" roared Farrington. "Let there be no more talk of peace. Fetch the snow-blower, and build a beehive!"

"Lads!" cried MacPhee, splendid in his wrath. "Let us lay our hands upon those golf clubs and break them one at a time, beginning with the pitching-wedge!"

As the Chairman gazed in despair at the tumult that raged all around him, his eye fell by chance on little Twitchell, who was sitting off by himself at the very back of the hall.

Twitchell lived in a little bungalow at the corner of Maple and Larch. He kept to himself, and seldom spoke to anyone. And now he just sat there, smiling enigmatically.

The Chairman stared at him, wondering how on earth Twitchell could remain so calm at such a terrible time.

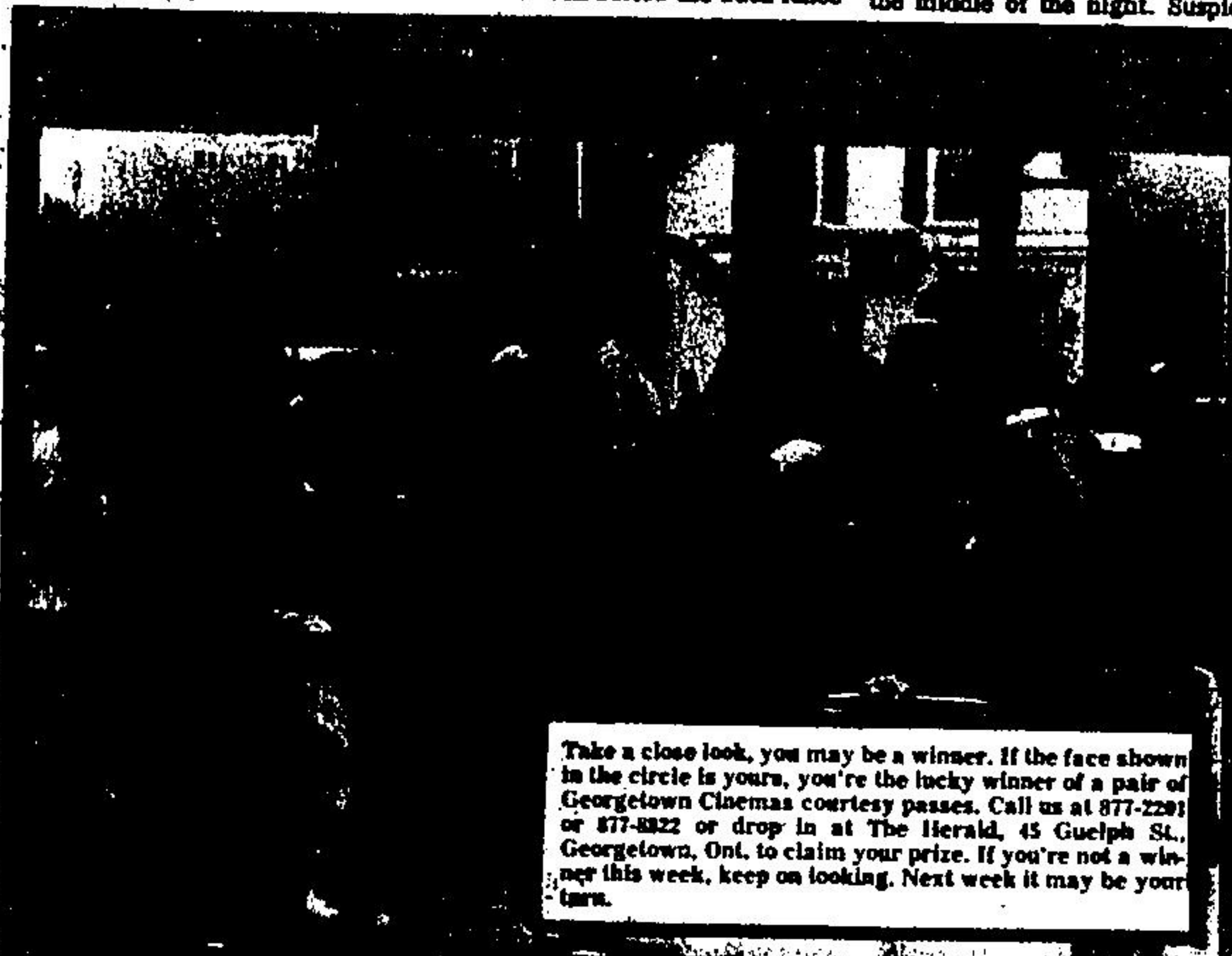
But Twitchell just smiled enigmatically, and kept his secret to himself. He had nothing to fear. Not when he was the only homeowner on the block who had achieved nuclear capability...

### Redesign Enzymes

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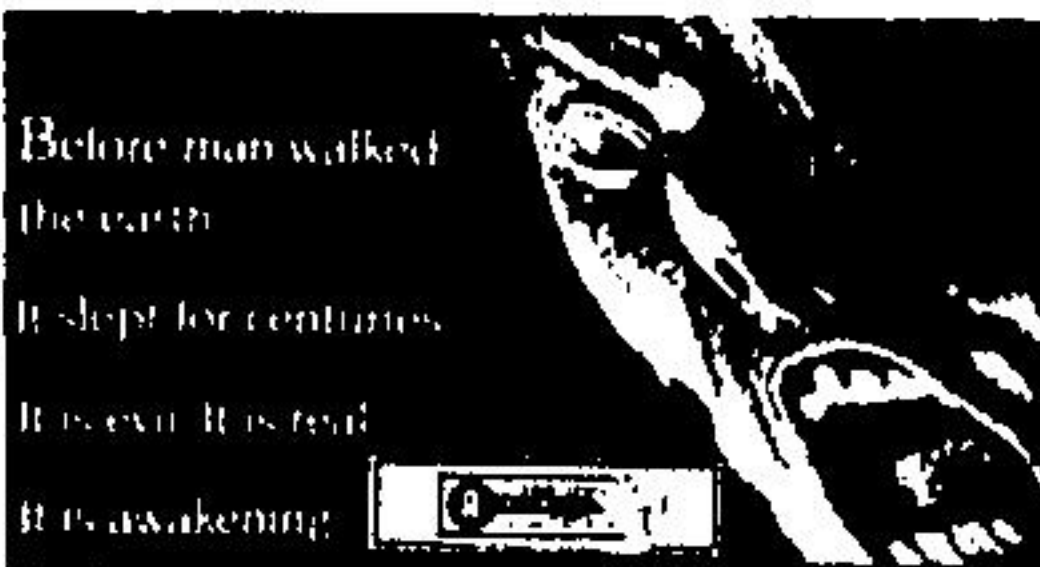


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