

Driven to distraction

It's hard to break a bad habit, but the Ontario Provincial Police will be trying to get Ontario drivers do just that.

The lack of voluntary compliance by many motorists regarding the use of hand-held devices, and other forms of distracted driving, has prompted one of the largest enforcement campaigns in recent OPP history.

The week of May 16-22 will be the first of four one-week enforcement campaigns focusing on distracted driving, over the next year.

"People need to understand the level of risk they are dealing with; distracted driving kills! We know it is seriously under-reported in our statistics and is a major cause of collisions in Ontario," says Chief Superintendent Bill Grodzinski, Commander of the OPP Highway Safety Division.

Distracted driving is defined as engaging in any secondary activity which takes a driver's attention away from driving and can include: adjusting the radio, searching for something in the car; eating while driving, watching an entertainment monitor or using a hand-held communications device or other entertainment device.

Using a cell phone or device capable of texting while driving can result in a fine of \$155 under Section 78.1 of the Highway Traffic Act (HTA). Watching an entertainment device can result in a fine of \$110 under Section 78 of the HTA. Other forms of distracted driving can result in a charge of careless driving with fines ranging from \$400 to \$2,000, a possible licence suspension of up to two years and/or a jail term of not more than six months.

In 2010, the OPP charged 8,522 drivers for using a hand-held device while driving but more alarming was the fact there were 7,733 collisions on OPP-patrolled roads where the driver was deemed to be inattentive/distracted, resulting in 35 deaths, 1,040 injuries and considerable property damage.

Increased enforcement of the law will not eliminate distracted driving but raising the public's awareness of this problem can only help.

WEB POLL RESULTS

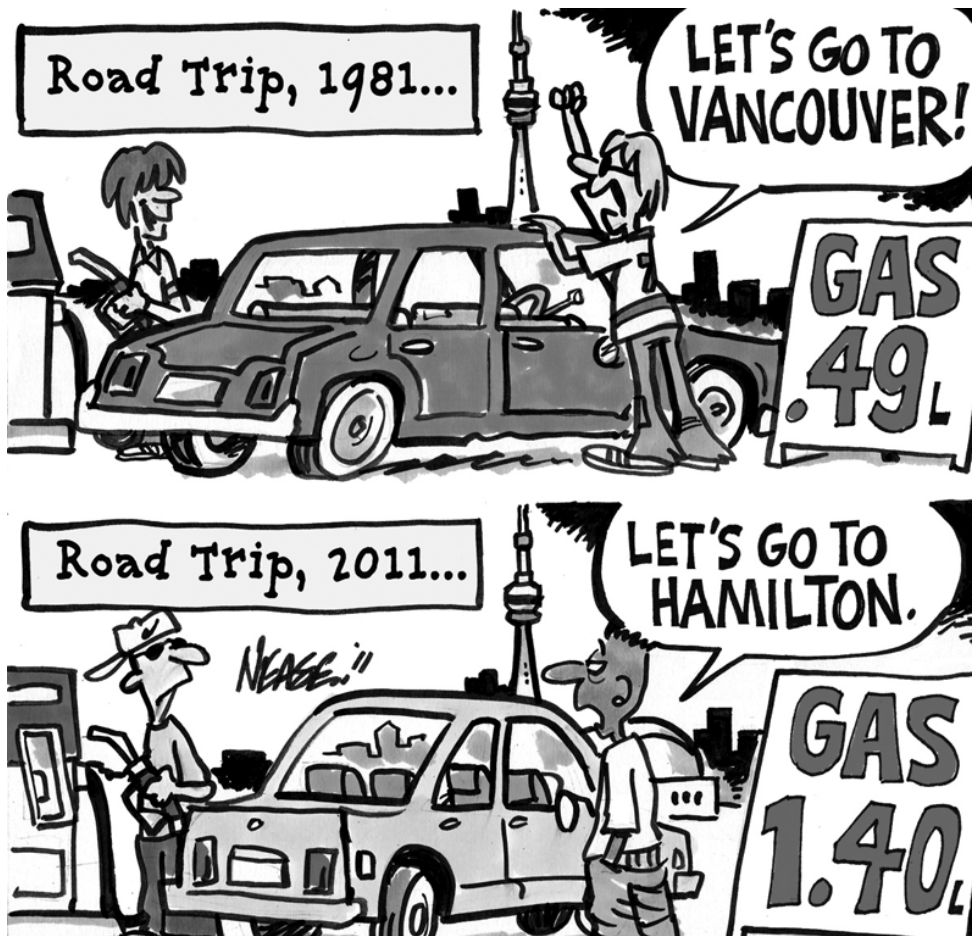
(Go to www.independentfreepress.com)

The Ontario Hockey Federation has announced it is banning bodychecking for most youth house and select leagues in Ontario. Do you agree with this decision?

- Yes (76%)
- No (24%)

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Letters to the editor

Blaming media for loss 'rubbish'

Dear editor,

I would like to comment on Rick Hall's May 5 letter, 'Media to blame for Tory victory'.

I think Mr. Hall's comments are typically Liberal—assign blame to everyone but themselves. Blaming the media for not being nice to you is complete rubbish. Forget about the fact that Ontario has had a Liberal government for years, bumbling and fumbling its way through its mandate, wasting billions of our tax dollars with nothing to show for it but a much poorer populace. Don't tell me that that is provincial, the other federal. Liberals are Liberals and Conservatives are Conservatives.

Perhaps you (Liberals) should have elected a real party leader, not the pseudo-Canadian man from America who used to trash our country on a regular basis, and who nobody liked, not even most Liberals. Perhaps you shouldn't have helped to bring down the Conservative government at this time. Maybe then you wouldn't have had to cobble together such a weak

platform to campaign on, that of basically shoveling the same old garbage at us. Voters are getting more sophisticated and we're not falling for being bribed with our own money anymore.

Mr. Harper's Conservatives fought a good campaign based on sound financial principles and defeated you. Take some lessons from them for the next election, if the Liberal Party is still viable at that time, and in the meantime, live with it. Liberals have no one to blame but themselves.

Oh, by the way, Liberal majority governments have been elected in the past with about the same support percentage.

Darrel MacCrae, Georgetown

Teacher left her mark

Dear editor,

I enjoyed reading the letter written by Cynthia Tobin's former students (Apr. 28).

I was a colleague of Cynthia's for many years. She was a very dedicated person who worked exceptionally hard in any role she served in, whether it was teacher, principal or as a senior administrator for the Halton Catholic District Board. Cynthia had a great impact on the

Georgetown community over the years.

She also opened St. Brigid and St. Catherine as principal. It was fitting that her funeral was held at Holy Cross church. Father Dave said that once you were a friend of Cynthia's, you were a friend for life. This was reflected at her funeral as the church was full to capacity with her friends.

So on behalf of her friends, colleagues and former students, we say farewell dear friend. You will live on in all of our hearts forever.

Peg Graham, Acton

You're welcome

Dear editor,

The Acton Branch of the Canadian Cancer Society would like to thank *The Independent & Free Press* for the great support and coverage we received during our April Campaign.

It is only because of the information provided by the local papers letting people know of the ongoing need for research funding and the advertising informing the public of event locations that make our efforts as successful as they were once again. Thanks to everyone.

Pat Kentner, publicity rep, Acton Branch CCS