

There's nothing like a good scratch

Have you ever had poison ivy? I've been lucky, all my life, able to avoid any plant that even closely resembles the dreaded weed. Those little white berries and dark green leaves are enough to prompt me to take a wide berth every time I see it.

It seems, however, one of my co-workers wasn't quite so lucky. It was early one Wednesday morning. He was already in the office when I arrived, and he had a concerned look on his face.

"Ted," he said, "Will you look at this rash? It's been driving me crazy all night, and I don't know what it is."

My automatic reaction is to back off about three paces, and view the rash from a distance.

"Hmmm," I said, giving the youngster the impression I knew what I was talking about. "It looks bad."

The little bumps were even weeping a bit, and I must admit, they did look itchy.

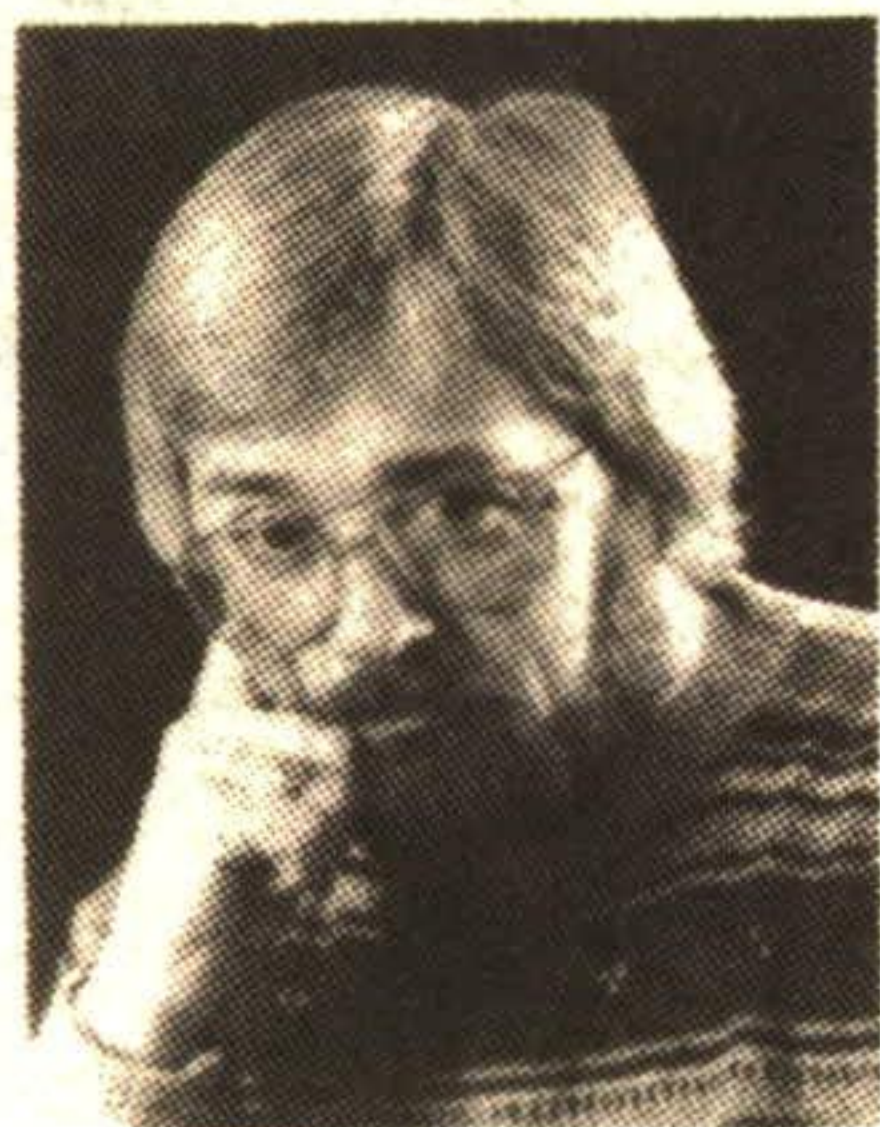
"What have you been into?" I asked, still acting the expert. I was tempted to ask him if he had any new friends, but better judgement prevailed.

"Damned if I know, but it kept me awake all night," he replied. "It's just about driving me crazy. What do you think I should do?"

I thought of telling him to stay away from me at all costs, but he seemed so distraught, I didn't have the heart. He needed support. So I

A TED BIT

By TED BROWN



told him to get to a doctor, real quick.

That's all it took. In a flash, he was out the door headed for emergency at the hospital, returning an hour later with a little bag from the drug store.

"Poison Ivy!" he triumphed, although I got the feeling there was a hint of relief that he hadn't contracted some dreaded social disease.

"I guess I got into it while on vacation," he explained, "Or maybe I got it running in the backyard to retrieve the baseball the other night. I'm sure that's what it is."

I'm still not sure if he was trying to convince me or himself.

A few in the office wondered aloud how he could get it only on the back of his arms and the front of his legs, but we all resisted the urge to make suggestions.

The main thing was he had a rash diagnosed as poison ivy, and it wasn't contagious.

Of course that didn't seem to matter. Did you ever notice how everyone suddenly starts treating you like you have the plague the moment you break out in a rash?

Most of us tried to be polite, and show him a little compassion and understanding so he didn't feel alone in the world, but one co-worker wasn't quite as subtle as the rest.

"The doctor might say it's poison ivy, but if you think I'm going to touch him over the next week or so, you're nuts!"

I'd say that about echoed the true sentiments of the rest of the office.

A multitude of home remedies were suggested, ranging from a bath in oatmeal (honest!) to cold compresses. I told him to try putting baking soda in his bath tub and soak for a while, like, say, overnight.

Another cheerful soul in the office told him all about her daughter contracting a dose of poison ivy, years ago.

"It took her more than six weeks to get over it," she proudly states, "and every summer for the next five years it kept coming back!"

The beads of perspiration dotted his brow.

"Five years?" he echoed, "Gawd, that's awful! At that rate, I could

still have poison ivy in my thirties!"

"Oh yes," she went on, "but she got really good at treating it. Every time it reoccurred, she would just spray Arrid Extra-dry on her legs and wrap them and"

We all politely agreed her legs wouldn't sweat, anyway.

Anyway, as the days (and itching) progress, my friend has had to endure a lot, especially from me.

It's almost entertaining (almost, I said) watching him fidget and squirm, just dying to scratch, but he doesn't dare. He carries a regular mini-drugstore with him consisting of ointments, salves and anything else that may help relieve the itching.

I even tried helping him out a couple of times, standing beside him, scratching my arms and legs with obvious delight, to help take his mind off the itch.

He wasn't impressed.

Actually, I admit I do feel sorry for him, walking around with that crazed look of anxiety carved into his face. It can't be pleasant feeling itchy all the time.

But I keep telling him, it will pass, in time.

Those six to eight weeks will just fly by. Wait and see.

And we won't even think about it reoccurring next summer.

But in the meantime, ahhh, there's nothing like a good scratch....

GREEN THUMB GARDENING



By CHRISTINE COLE

ESPALIERING

This is the practice of training and pruning a plant to grow flat against a wall or fence. Since the plant is 2 dimensional, rather than the normal 3 dimensional (round), they take up little ground and air space. This makes espaliered plants particularly suited to small gardens.

The plants are usually trained into an interesting and balanced pattern. The most common espalier patterns are: Candelabra - with three main arms reaching out and then up; Lattice - more than one plant is required to develop this criss cross design; Fan - branches radiate from a central trunk.

Plants appropriate for espaliering include: Cotoneaster, Linden, Crabapple, Russian Olive, Forsythia, Snowball and Fruit trees. The warmth and protection provided by a house wall prevents frost and winter damage and hastens flowering and fruiting development on fruit trees. For this reason slightly tender fruits (cherry, peach) can successfully be grown as espalier. However, extremely high summer temperatures against the wall may damage the fruit. This can be prevented by training the surface of the espalier plant at least 6 inches from the wall.

Begin to train and prune young plants on wooden slats or wires attached horizontally on a wall or fence. Bend and tie main branches in place with a soft twine. Some branches may take several months to bend into place. Once the main framework is established, pruning can be done in mid to late summer to maintain the design.

Each week Christine Cole of Tuitman's Garden Centre and Landscaping, Highway 25, 1 mile south of Acton, 853-2480, will be presenting helpful tips and information to assist you in creating your garden show-place!

TUITMAN'S GARDEN CENTRE
ACTON
853-2480

Milton constituency office on the move

In addition to all the committee meetings and public hearings happening at Queen's Park and across the province, an important event has also been scheduled for this week at my Milton office. In order to allow you easier access to my main constituency office, I have decided to move from the upstairs unit of the present location to Unit #1 downstairs. Some of you have found the stairs difficult to negotiate.

Although improvements are still necessary to allow for complete wheelchair access, the new location will eliminate the need for you to climb the stairs when you choose to visit the Milton office. Many of the files have been packed in boxes for the move and the telephones will have to be relocated so I apologize for any inconvenience created over the next few days by the change in location.

A couple of weeks ago I mentioned that different legislative committees would be touring the

Queen's Park Report

By NOEL DUIGNAN
Halton North MPP



province to hold public hearings on various issues including the provincial budget. The Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs began making its way across Ontario in late July and has met with positive responses from many sources. The Chief Economist at the blue-chip Conference Board of Canada has already called the budget a "confidence builder." And Harvard University's renowned economist, John Kenneth Galbraith, supports Ontario's decision to use public investment to boost economic growth in hard times. One key address to the public budget hear-

ings, signed by 59 Canadian economists, praises Treasurer Laughren's decision to fight the recession, not the deficit. The report states that he "made the right choice."

I know that many of you are concerned about the size of the \$9.7 billion deficit and I share your concerns. But I reiterate that because Ottawa has continued to refuse to pay its share of health care, education and social assistance costs, Ontario has been forced to step in and pick up the slack. We could have drastically cut services but these cuts would have affected you and your family, your friends and your co-workers, not just "someone else." And such cuts would not have been a matter of eliminating a few hospital beds or shutting a couple of wards. It would have meant closing entire hospitals. Instead, as one example of our government's anti-recession program, we allocated fund to undertake necessary repairs and improvements to the Milton and Georgetown hospitals. Due to the recession, the cost of programs has skyrocketed while revenues have fallen. Economists estimate that under any government, and with no new programs, the deficit would have risen to more than \$8 billion. Raising the deficit was the most responsible move we could make this year, given the economic and fiscal conditions we inherited as a new gov-

ernment. And our new spending to maintaining and create jobs and to improve Ontario's infrastructure has been quite modest.

The province's financial situation remains healthy and we are determined to keep it that way. For example, Queen's Park currently pays about 11.6 cents of every dollar to service the accumulated Ontario debt. By contrast, those charges consume 34 cents of every dollar spent by Ottawa. And that's after years of cutbacks, downsizing, and privatization by the federal government.

The budget helps our residents to ride out the recession. And it protects the health care and education programs we need. But it also lays the groundwork for sustainable prosperity in the 1990's. To reach that goal, we must ensure that all residents have the tools to become productive and independent.

More than ever, for Ontario to meet the challenges of a changing world economy, there has to be a partnership between business, labour and government. Last week I mentioned the new incentives the government has been working on to make it easier for you to invest in Ontario companies. A greater sense of partnership and fairness in the workplace will give employees a stake in economic progress and encourage workers to contribute their skills and their energy toward change.

Hay wagon ignites

A hay wagon suddenly erupted in flames while it was being pulled along the Fifth Line near Limehouse Monday afternoon. According to the Fire Department, spontaneous combustion is to blame for the small blaze, which caused approximately \$1,000

damage.

The driver of a truck behind the wagon was the first to notice the fire, and warned the tractor driver. They immediately unhooked the wagon, but forgot it was on a hill — the wagon rolled away and flipped over on the road.

THE HALTON ROMAN CATHOLIC SCHOOL BOARD
ADVANCE REGISTRATION
1991-92 School Year
FOR NEW STUDENTS - NOT PREVIOUSLY REGISTERED

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS: J.K. to GRADE 8
Tuesday, August 27th, 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.
Proof of Age required.
FOR INFORMATION: Call Local School.

BISHOP PAUL FRANCIS REDING SECONDARY SCHOOL: Grades 9-13
1600 Main Street East, Milton - Serving Milton, Georgetown and Acton
Monday, August 26th to Friday, August 30th
9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

FOR INFORMATION CALL: (416) 875-0124
CLASSES BEGIN WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 4TH, 1991
BUS ROUTES POSTED AT THE MAIN ENTRANCE OF EACH SCHOOL.

D.W. Schrenk
Chair.

C.G. Byrnes
Director of Education

LE CONSEIL DES ECOLES CATHOLIQUES DE HALTON
INSCRIPTION SCOLAIRE
pour la rentrée en septembre 1991

L'inscription scolaire pour tout enfant admissible mais pas encore inscrit aux niveaux de la maternelle à la 8e année aura lieu à l'Ecole Sacré-Coeur (Georgetown), à l'Ecole Sainte-Marie (Oakville) et à l'Ecole Saint-Philippe (Burlington)

le mardi 27 août 1991
entre 9 h et 15 h

Une preuve de l'âge de l'enfant est nécessaire.

La rentrée des classes pour tous les élèves aura lieu

le mercredi 4 septembre 1991

Les routes d'autobus sont affichées à l'entrée principale de chaque école.

Gilbert McCraw
Président de la

C.G. Byrnes
Directeur de l'éducation