

## THE WAY WE WERE

Situated on Main Street in the location of the present day CIBC building, McDermid's Star Grocery could be thought of as the early day predecessor to today's Superstore. Established in 1881, J.M. McDermid sold groceries, as well as crockery and glassware. After his death, his son, J. McDermid Jr. added boots and shoes to the store's assortment. Today, with online grocery shopping and delivery, shoppers don't even have to get in their horse and buggy to get the groceries they need

Submitted by Heritage Halton Hills



### OPINION

# WHAT'S THAT SMELL?

## THERE'S SOMETHING ROTTING IN THE L'IL RED ROCKET, WRITES BROWN



TED BROWN  
Column

First things first: I have no sense of smell.

It's called the olfactory nerve, which directs information to the brain, allowing one to smell.

Unfortunately, my olfactory nerve gave up the ghost about 10 years ago, so I essentially cannot smell anything.

It's not really a big deal to me; my dad lost his sense of smell when he was in his

50s as well, so I just assume it's one of those hereditary traits. And to be honest, it ain't all that big a deal - there are times I don't really want to smell some things.

In fact, it can be useful.

When we had a cat, I cleaned out the litter box. No problem.

But there are times I feel cheated, especially Christmas morning, when I can't smell the turkey in the oven.

I did have one instance where it was a bit hazardous.

My youngest daughter Jenn and I pulled the car into the garage. "Why can I smell gas, Dad?" she asked.

I couldn't smell anything, but upon closer inspection, I found a puddle of gasoline under the

truck; the fuel tank had sprung a leak and I couldn't smell it.

Wow, a potential explosion waiting to happen.

I now use The Sidekick as my official "sniffer."

She has sniffed out things burning, rotting food, even gasoline on my shoes - anything you can imagine, she'll detect it.

Recently we had an exceptional "sniffing job."

The L'il Red Rocket is stored in the shed, and one day I took my grandson Andrew for a ride. Heading out, I turned on the air conditioner.

"Ew Grandpa, what stinks?" he said, covering his nose.

I couldn't smell anything.

Later, back at the ranch, er, shed, I drafted the offi-

cial sniffer into service.

"What d'ya think?" I asked The Sidekick.

"Well, it's definitely something dead," she said, "Can't you smell it at all? It's bloody gross!"

Loosely quoting Shakespeare, "There's something rotting in the L'il Red Rocket."

But I couldn't smell a whiff, and I was sitting inside the car, she was outside, backing away.

I started humming the old Lynyrd Skynyrd song:

"Oooh that smell/Can't you smell that smell/Oooh that smell/The smell of death surrounds you."

The fact that the blower fan vibrated when I turned it on high told me whatever it was had to be inside it.

And pulling that blower from under the dash was not easy.

I struggled to remove the last screw - I was nearly beat.

In walked Perry, who

was working out in the field. He asked what I was doing and I explained.

Now, conveniently, Perry is a mechanic. And he offered to take a look - until that initial whiff.

"Wow, that stinks," he grimaced. "How can you stand to be under there with that smell?"

Just lucky, I guess ...

However, Perry took a deep breath, dove in under the dash and removed the fan assembly lickety-split. I think perhaps the smell might have been an incentive.

Once out, I found the culprit: a wizened up field mouse in the centre of the fan - that little varmint kicked up a real stink.

I scrubbed the fan and soaked it in Lysol spray.

Back to the shed and Perry returned. I asked if he'd put the fan back in place, I couldn't get it.

Another deep breath and in he went, back out in

minutes. Again, the smell was the driving force.

The next day, The Sidekick, a.k.a. official sniffer, checked it and reported there was a lingering scent, but 100 times better, especially with that handful of dryer sheets in the car.

So "that smell" is no longer "all around me."

Apparently, the car smells more like a "spring morning," or so the printing on the box of dryer sheets claims ...

But sadly, I'll never really know.

*Ted Brown is a freelance columnist for the IFP. He can be reached at tedbit@hotmail.com.*

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