

EDITORIAL

Editorial -- n. 1. an article in a newspaper presenting the opinion of the editor or editorial staff.

Smoking stinks

By Wendy Long

Tomorrow, January 24, is the last day of National Non-Smoking Week.

I'm fortunate. I'm not a smoker myself, and no one in my family is. At least, not now.

But before I get to that, let me say how saddened I become when I see someone, anyone, light up. You've heard the statistics before and I'll try not to bore you with the gory details. Personally, I don't see the pleasure in sticking a rolled up weed in my face and inhaling toxins. I may have once, in the murky depths of adolescence, but thankfully common sense prevailed.

No, wait. I think I will reiterate a few scary numbers. Barbara Rieger of the Halton Hill unit of the Canadian Cancer Society, and the Halton Council on Smoking and Health, tells us that 13,000 Ontarians die annually from tobacco usage. (Not 500, not 1,000, or a couple of thousand, but 13,000.) Tobacco use causes about 80 per cent of all lung cancers, and lung cancer rates among women have tripled in the last 20 years.

Lately, researchers have also been pinpointing even the damage of second-hand smoke, or Environmental Tobacco Smoke. If you smoke, everyone around you is affected is one way or another.

What exactly does all this mean?

If you like yourself, don't start smoking. If you do smoke, it would be to your benefit to quit, ASAP. Smoking doesn't guarantee health, but your odds are sure as heck better when you throw your dice in this game of life.

Some people treat their pet's health better than they treat their own.

If I climb down off my soapbox, I admit that I feel great compassion for those smokers whose cigarettes are their emotional lifeline. I shiver in sympathy as I drive or walk past smokers huddled in frigid doorways holding their smokes between purple and blue fingers, shuffling to keep warm. And who can feel happy about shelling out six bucks for a pack of puffs.

My smoking friends happily ignore any negative information I try to tactfully convey, even if I'm clutching my throat for air in a blackened room. (I hope you read this, Laura.)

Indeed, smoking is a chemical addiction. Like any addiction, whether it be alcohol, drugs, or food, its take a great deal of courage, strength and humor to gain control.

Back to my family. My grandfather was a heavy smoker from the time he was a teenager. Lung cancer claimed his life while he was only in his fifties, leaving a bereaved family and a granddaughter who would always wonder what he had been like. It would have been nice to meet him.

His wife, my grandmother, also a smoker, quit cold turkey after more than 40 years of sucking soot. Yep, cold turkey! At fifty-something! Well, Nan celebrated her 80th birthday last summer, and the doc says it's a mighty good thing she butted out. Cliff would have been proud.

So to National Non-Smoking Week, by-laws restricting smoking in commercial places, and those who find the strength to quit — or never start — I salute you.

Letters Welcomed

Halton Hills This Week welcomes your letters. Letters must be signed and include your full name and address. Names will be withheld on request.

Halton Hills This Week reserves the right to edit, revise, or reject any letters on the basis of factual

errors, punctuation, spelling errors or as a result of space limitations.

Send your letter to:

The Editor
Halton Hills This Week
232 Guelph St., Unit 9
Georgetown, ON
L7G 4B1

Parade awards



The Lion's presented their annual Santa Claus Parade Awards on Tuesday night. Left to right, Commanding Officer of the Air Cadets, Captain Greg Siekierko, accepted the award for Best Marching Band, Knights of Columbus, Wally Mozil, was a judge, Dennis White of the Kiwanis Club, and Peter Welling of the Optimist Club were also judges. President of the Lioness Club, Mary Tenant, accepted the award for Best Overall Float and Best Service Club. Sales and Marketing representative for Challenger Motor Freight, Gary Carter, accepted the Honorary Award. Lil Chapman also represented the Lioness Club, with Bob Jackson and President Denis Borotsik representing the Lion's. Congratulations to all.

Readers' writes

A letter "grudgingly" written

Dear Editor:

I am writing this letter grudgingly, as I am trying to walk the fine line between expressing my indignation at the appearance of the KKK in Georgetown and Acton, and trying not to give extremist groups any further publicity.

There is no excuse for advocating violence and racist behavior. In my opinion, it is partly because of the lessons on "tolerance" imparted to us by some civil libertarians that we have to contend today with extremist groups, often promoting illegal activities.

One recent example comes from a group calling themselves QUALADA, an anonymous "Queer Action League" inciting their homosexual members to "break the law" (vandalize, steal and destroy private property of their "homophobic" opponents) in order to further the homosexual cause.

These suggestions were contained in an open letter publicly circulated and posted in a downtown Toronto church.

The letter contained target names of individuals and organizations (such as the Family Coalition Party, the SUN, the Salvation Army, the

Reform Party) with their telephone numbers.

Obviously some behavior (e.g., when explicitly advocating violence) cannot be tolerated. Society has the means to protect itself, through legislation and Law enforcement, and it should use these means.

The members of the KKK and

those of QUALADA should be brought to justice and charged. If the police feel that they have no power to arrest people who openly advocate violence, then there is a need for legislation and possibly Court reform.

The irony is that the Ontario NDP government is now considering legislation forbidding non-violent picketing and street counseling by pro-lifers, while hatemongers and violent (possibly armed) groups are allowed "free speech".

Giuseppe Gori

Where are all the artists

Dear Editor,

Where have all the artists gone? Since the early part of December 1992 the Arts Alive committee has been running a competition to find an artist to create a design for a small bronze medallion that will eventually be made at Art Cast Inc; on Armstrong Avenue, Georgetown.

This medallion is then to be presented every five years to citizens in Halton Hills for their achievements in the areas of visual and performing arts. As of writing we have had only one entrant!

The entry forms with all the requirements have been available from the libraries, Recreation and Parks, local high schools and mid-

dle schools. Also, forms are at Office Magic and the Brass Thimble in Terra Cotta. We have also advertised the competition in local newspapers.

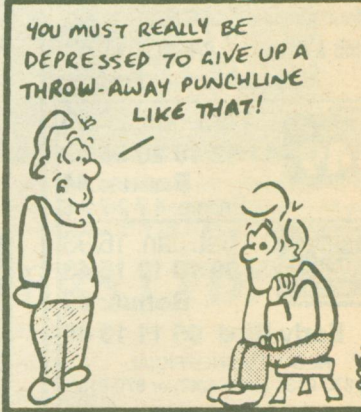
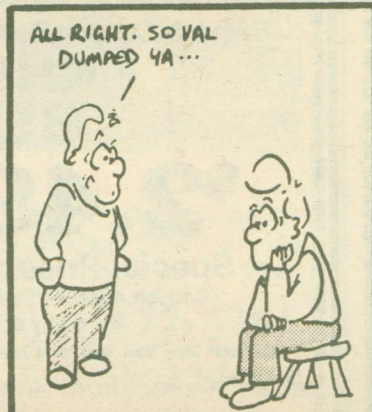
There is a generous remuneration for the winning design plus another sum if the same artist can sculpt a model (out of any material) of the design that would be ready for casting. Our deadline is fast approaching we urge anyone who is creative to pick up a form at one of the above locations and put their talent to work on this project and be rewarded for their efforts.

Linda Parker
Committee member
Arts Alive

THIS WEEK

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For Pete's Sake



by Roe