

Killer tigers bought here

BY DOUG HARRISON
The Acton Tanner

As a rule, no fewer than two people should tend to caged animals, says a local owner.

Unfortunately, there are those who break rules and, more often than not, they pay for it.

One of them is Graydon Edwards, the 16-year-old Hanover youth who was recently found dead after entering a cage alone. The cage housed two Siberian tigers and a cougar at his uncle's farm in Wingham.

His father has reportedly said his son played with the tigers — which had their claws removed — and was friends with them.

However, one day the tigers got too aggressive in their playful manner, catching Edwards with his back turned in the 6-by-24-metre cage, and took a fatal bite of his neck.

"To me, the incident was caused because someone was careless. Being in the pen alone is out of character and if someone was there to warn him and yell at the cats, the

animals would have backed off," said Acton's Tim Height recently.

Height, who owns Tiger Paw Exotics and Petting Zoo, owned the tigers — estimated to weigh 400 pounds each — before selling them to Larry Bott when they were a week old.

"But he (Edwards) was careless and it cost him. They were good cats. As long as you are facing them they'll sit, but he turned his back and they jumped at him. I would say they were playing, because if they attacked him viciously they would have torn him apart."

Height doesn't regret selling the tigers to Bott, who, according to Height, was knowledgeable about tigers, had a zoo license and housed the tigers in a safe environment at his private facility.

The barn at the Bott facility was L-shaped and therefore forced workers to walk through the tiger pen to access the other pens in the barn. Height feels that barn setups such as this should be regulated — not necessarily by government or

zoos, but by somebody.

"It's not good. It hurts the whole business," said Height, 27, of the tragic incident. "And it's even worse when it's someone you know. A lot of people think (exotic animals) shouldn't be in captivity and this (accident) gives them more of a stand."

Height, who studied Agriculture and Biological Science at the University of Guelph, doesn't feel there will be an adverse effect on his business, since he deals with people inside the industry who realize there are risks like this.

Height deals mostly with breeding stock and handles such animals as lamas, pygmy goats, yaks, tigers, lions and cougars, but not all are housed in Acton.

After Edwards' death the tigers were put down. Although they shouldn't have been put down, Height feels, Bott didn't have much of a choice, since he wouldn't keep them after his nephew's death and no one else would want to buy them after this kind of accident.

Height says this latest incident will make him be a little sharper when placing his animals in the future, especially when dealing with a private facility.

"It could have happened to me just as easily — we all do these foolish things," he admitted, adding the Wingham incident was the first in a rash of careless happenings, including a loose tiger in Bolton and two lions running freely in Niagara.

Share your harvest

It's harvest time and Acton FoodShare is appealing to local gardeners to share their bounty with less fortunate families.

FoodShare's Joan Waldie explained yesterday (Tuesday) that the Perth Street food bank can use fresh vegetables from over-abun-

dant backyard gardens.

"If you have extra vegetables, please don't let them go to waste; give us a call," urged Waldie.

You can call FoodShare at 853-0457. If there's no answer (due to reduced summer hours) please leave a message.

McDonald man counts trucks for Councillor

A McDonald Boulevard resident, concerned with increased truck traffic, is doing a truck traffic count for Acton Councillor Gerald Rennie.

"This resident is very concerned with the number of trucks that are avoiding the downtown by using McDonald as a short-cut from Hwy. 25 to Hwy. 7," Rennie said following Council on Monday night.

"I asked him to keep track and give me some figures so I can take the issue to staff and see what can be done. With the curves on McDonald and the number of trucks, this resident thinks it is a very unsafe situation."



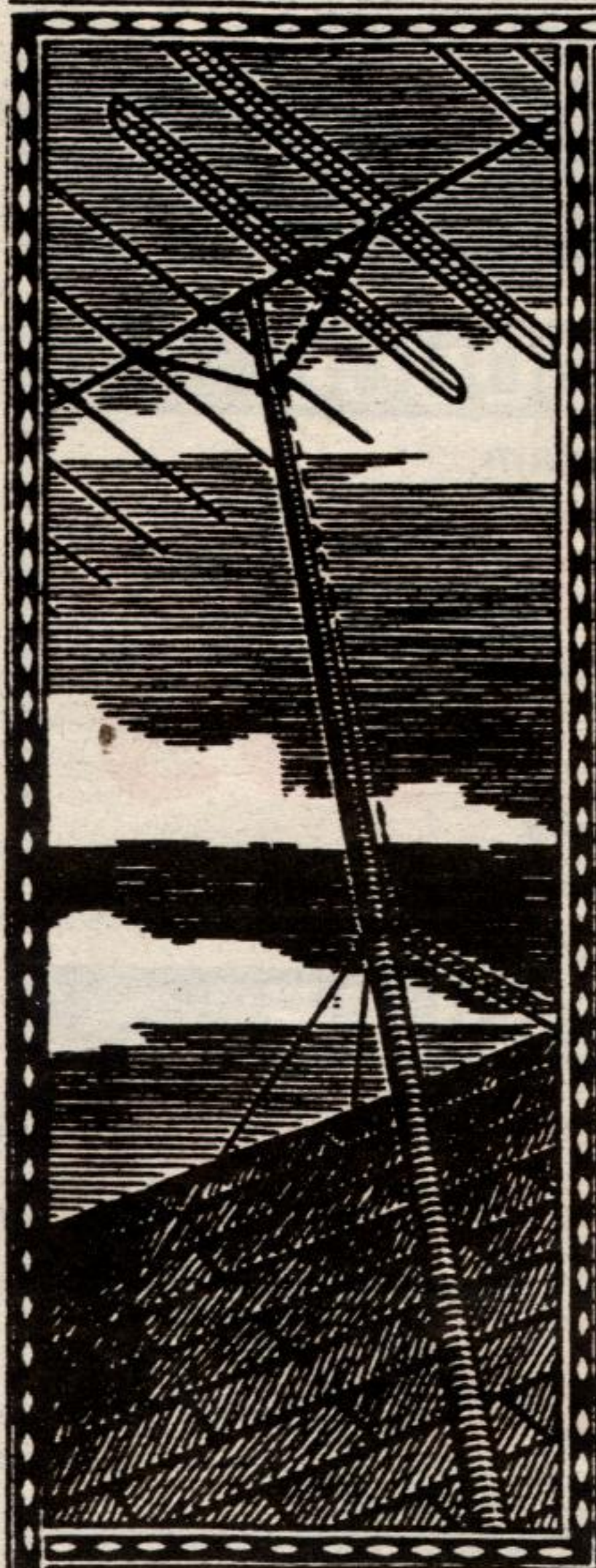
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Every year people install or take down television antennas. And while this can be a do-it-yourself job, it's something that should be done with caution. One of the potential dangers of this job is accidental contact with a hydro line. So before you attempt to install or remove an antennae, check the location of lines around your property. Because holding on to an antenna that touches or even comes close to an overhead wire could severely hurt or

even kill you. Don't let a do-it-yourself job turn into an adventure story. Work safely.

ENERGY HINTS

How to Keep Your Cool

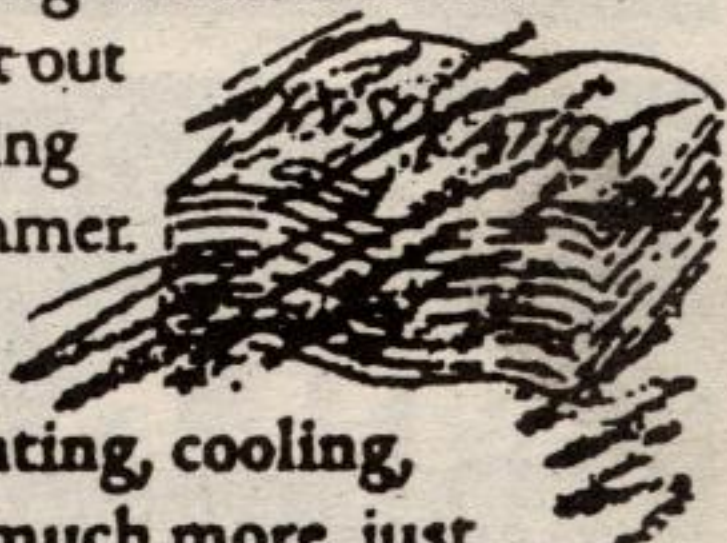
Put Shades on Your Windows!
Keep the hot summer sun out by closing your drapes and blinds. Awnings or wooden louvers will provide further shading.



Install Ceiling Fans!
Ceiling fans can make you more comfortable by circulating air. They are becoming popular as an efficient and relatively inexpensive way to make homes more comfortable.



Insulate Your Attic!
The sun beating down on a roof during a summer day can heat the attic to an overwhelming 54°C (130°F). This heat is then radiated down into your home. A well insulated attic helps keep the heat in during winter and the heat out during summer.



For more free energy tips on heating, cooling, appliances, lighting and much, much more, just drop by our office today. Ask for your FREE Energy Tips Package!