

## ACROSS THE FENCE

With Joanne Stevenson



### It's all in the bag!

As a little girl, I remember my mother's purse being a thing of mystery and wonder. It was something that needed to be watched, something that couldn't be forgotten, something I wasn't allowed to get into.

The purse seemed to hold the very thing needed to solve the current crisis — a Band-Aid, a Kleenex, a piece of gum, a penny. Kind of like Mary Poppins's carpet bag, without the hat stand.

When my mother got a new purse, my sisters and I would add the old bag to our dress-up box. A cheap necklace, a hat, an old pair of high-heeled shoes, and of course, the purse, were all we needed as we pretended to be "grown ups."

Now that I have my own purse, the mystery is gone. It's a job to make sure I pack Band-Aids, Kleenex, gum and such, because I'm sure to need them if I don't.

Remember the TV game show *Let's Make a Deal*? Monty Hall would ask for the strangest things from his audience. Before I had kids, I packed my purse as if I expected to run into Monty on the subway.

"Here's \$100 if you have a flashlight in there."

"How about an umbrella, a pair of sneakers, and a date book from three years ago?"

After I had kids, I traded in my purse for a diaper bag. Venturing to the mall, I packed as if I might end up on *Gilligan's Island*. Diapers, wipes, creams and lotions, hats, mitts, sunscreen, cheerios, raisins, juice, toys, books, blankets ... you get the picture.

The Professor could have built a space shuttle to rescue "the tiny crew" with the contents of the diaper bag. And only Ginger had more changes of clothes than my baby.

I quickly realized all I brought for *myself* was a hairbrush, a tube of lipstick, and my wallet. Why, I don't know, because I never had time to brush my hair or touch up the lipstick, and the wallet was always empty.

The problem with big purses is that they end up holding everyone's junk. A recent cleaning unloaded gum wrappers, expired coupons and old grocery lists, Band-Aids that don't stick any more, keys for locks long forgotten, and a bunch of loose change at the bottom. I feel 10 pounds lighter and I have room for my glasses again!

I've been looking at those purse/wallet deals, trying to decide if they would be big enough to hold everything I need, but small enough that I don't end up carrying a lot of garbage.

Our new government will be cleaning out the public purse in the next few months. According to their election promises they will unload some old garbage too — they'll get rid of programs that no longer fit and pare down the grocery list to what's essential and affordable.

I hope they leave enough room in there for a few Band-Aids and pieces of gum because we're sure to have a crisis or two.

And wouldn't it be great if they found some loose change at the bottom.

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Tonight's (Wednesday) BIA meeting will be the Board of Management's last gathering until September.

If you own or operate a downtown business, plan to attend the meeting, slated for 7:30 pm at the Red Dog Cafe on Mill Street.

The BIA continues to discuss prospects for improving parking in the downtown core, but in the meantime, merchants and staff are being urged to park well away from Mill Street in order to open up spaces for customers.

Good idea!

## Get It Off Your Chest!

Why not write a Letter to the Editor?  
(Monday morning is deadline.)



## LETTERS

### Give me a dish!

To the Editor,

Halton Cable Systems doesn't care about its Rockwood customers. Why do I say this? My experience with Halton Cable's service — for nearly four years now — has not been good. No, scratch that — it has been awful!

We in Rockwood get fewer channels than cable TV subscribers in Acton. Of those, there are weekly service interruptions, mostly on the American channels. These interruptions last anywhere from five minutes to three days.

I have given up calling their service people. I used to call when service was interrupted for more than 20 minutes but I was always met with an air of skepticism; they normally wouldn't accept the possibility of error on their part.

They implied that the interruptions and blackouts were due either to my own TV, or a figment of my imagination.

Was I hallucinating while watching the boob tube? Not entirely impossible, but I would press them more and receive some unconvincing promise, such as "I'll look into it for you." And that would be the end of it.

Then some time later the problem would be rectified. I never once got a follow-up call to ask if things were OK. I got the feeling they didn't really care.

For years, the Cable 4 channel

has been a joke here in Rockwood — the place to get info on last month's coming events.

Today, I see that Cable 9 from Toledo is still not operating properly (it's been three days now). Fox is still regularly blacking out.

But to top it all off, there will be no hockey game tonight (June 8). The CBC is broadcasting the Ontario election results on its main network throughout Ontario.

The game in question — Game 4 of the Detroit-Chicago series — will be seen on CBC stations outside Ontario. Through an arrangement with the CRTC and cable companies, the CBC has made this game available to Ontario cable subscribers via satellite. Cable companies will bump programming it considers less-than-essential, like digital news on Guelph's Maclean-Hunter service.

Not Halton Cable, however. During my call to them, I learned that Halton Cable was planning to put the game on Cable 24.

When I told them I was from Rockwood, I was put on hold. Then I was informed that Rockwood would *not* be getting the game! They wondered if I knew anyone in Acton — maybe I could watch the game on their TV.

How would my friend in Acton feel if, at 7:30 pm, I showed up and invited myself in to watch the hockey game. "Well Joe, Halton Cable said I could come over here and watch the game!"

Why plan to exclude Rockwood from receiving the game, especially when you include Acton?

One thing is for sure, I want a dish!

David Quaile  
Rockwood

### Sports report upsets

To the Editor,

As an Acton resident of 20 years and a high school teacher and coach of 26 years, I was appalled by the tone and content of your lead sports article in last week's *Tanner*.

This report detailed a semi-final softball loss by the Acton High Lady Redmen softball team.

Both your reporter and the team coaches severely criticized and assigned responsibility for the loss to an individual player on the team.

In my coaching experience, up

to and including OFSSA level competition, I have never seen one player win or lose a game. Clearly, the young student-athlete in question did not walk on the softball diamond with the intent to perform poorly.

As educators it is our mandate to encourage our students to their best effort. In sports, as in life, our best is, at times, not quite good enough, but that does not diminish the effort put forth by the student-athlete.

Arthur Finley  
McDonald Boulevard

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