

The scent of Persian Wood

We always remember our first love.

I remember mine vividly— even the exact day I fell hopelessly in love.

It was the Tuesday after Labour Day, 1957, my first day of school, when I started Grade 1.

At six years of age, a man is somewhat vulnerable and falling in love can be sudden, and the damndest things will set him off.

I was no exception— her name was Miss Quinton, and she was my Grade 1 teacher.

Every morning, she'd stand at the front of the classroom (which included Grades 1 to 4) and she'd start the day with "Good morning, class," to which we'd all respond "Good morning, Miss Quinton."

For some reason however, more often it came out sounding like 'Miss Squintin'.

Anyway, I was hopelessly smitten with her.. of maybe more specifically, the smell of her.

You see, she wore a perfume that completely captivated me. It was from Avon, and was called Persian Wood.

I was becoming a Persian Wood junkie.

As the days of fall turned to winter, and Christmas loomed in the future, I had to get more of Miss Squintin's scent— I approached my Nana to do some Christmas shopping for me. I asked her to buy some Persian Wood perfume for me to give my mom for Christmas.

If I couldn't have Miss Squintin' I could damn well have her scent around me.

Nana agreed, not knowing the full reason behind my request, and I then had my world permeated with the scent of Persian Wood.

I tell ya, I was in 'smitten kid heaven'.

At the same time, there was a teenage guy who worked after school on our farm for my dad and grandfather. His name was Bert Benton, and although he was 13 years my senior, I considered him 'my big brother'... matter of fact, I still do.

At age 14, Bert had approached my dad and grandfather to ask about working after school and the summer, helping with chores, spring planting, summer haying and fall harvest, while learning more and more about farming.

Ted Brown



While he was in training, Bert also taught me a few things out behind the barn I suspect my father and grandfather weren't aware of...

Anyway, seems Bert also got a sniff of Miss Squintin's scent. And he too was smitten by her overwhelming perfume. After some prodding from Dad, Bert caved in and asked her out.

I was crushed— I'd figured Miss Squintin' was all mine, but if ya gotta lose at love, it ain't all bad to lose her to your 'big brother.'

The Monday morning following their first date, for some inexplicable reason, when Miss Squintin' said "Good morning, class," a few of us replied with "Good morning, Mrs. Benton."

I'm pretty sure she heard it— she blushed.

Anyway, big brother Bert and Miss Squintin' did indeed marry in 1959, and I attended the wedding. I even went up to the head table and kissed my Grade 1 teacher (for a dollar from my dad) as the guests tinkled the glasses.

So Miss Squintin' became Mrs. Glenda Benton, and just this week, she was chosen as Georgetown's Citizen of the Year for 2006.

I had the honour of sitting down with Miss Squintin', a.k.a. Mrs. Benton, now Glenda, as I interviewed her for the story.

It was a real nice feeling for me.

Bert and Glenda are my through-the-fields neighbours and my life-long friends, and I'm very proud of her being honoured in this way.

But one thing still remains.

I can't get over that smell of Persian Wood...

—Ted Brown can be reached at tbrown@independentfreepress.com



Site Leaders Needed For 2006 Georgetown Build

Habitat for Humanity Halton is a volunteer driven organization that builds simple, decent affordable housing in partnership with qualified, low income families and partners in the community. We have exciting opportunities for two individuals to play key volunteer roles in our single family home to be built in Georgetown this spring

Site Supervisor -

With general knowledge of most trades involved in single family home construction, this key volunteer position must have understanding of current building practices and construction site safety. With the ability to work cooperatively with both experienced trades and a predominately volunteer workforce of differing skill levels, this individual will lead on-site efforts to construct the home following approved building plans.

This position requires experience in construction or related skills which may have been acquired through job training or other practical experience. This is an ideal opportunity for a recent retiree or other individual who knows how to get the job done.

Project Manager -

Working closely with the Site Supervisor, this project volunteer position plans the work schedule, orders materials, and generally ensures the day-to-day activities are proceeding on track.

This position requires experience working with budgetary guidelines and at planning multi-step projects. A general knowledge of blueprint drawings and home construction concepts are important.

For more information or to apply please call Deanna Smuk, Volunteer Coordinator, at 905-637-4446 x103 or email to volunteer@habitatthalton.ca



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Halton Hills COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND INFORMATION

Halton Hills Community Support and Information would like to thank everyone who contributed to the success of our 2006 'Champions for Youth' Gala. The Gala, held on March 4th, raised over \$11,000 for Open Door and Off The Wall Youth Centres

Special thank you's go out to: our many volunteers; the staff at North Halton Golf & Country Club— your hospitality and professionalism was, as always, outstanding!; our MC's Josey Bonnette & Bryan Lewis — You gave us some laughs, and kept the evening moving along; Brent Cooper & Don Ablett — Your classic guitar was the perfect addition to the cocktail hour; Rolly Rocker & The Hemi Heads — You definitely Rock!!!

Thank you all!!

Lastly, we would like to thank our donors and sponsors of the event, as follows:

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Someday, you'll be offered a cigarette or be tempted to smoke. Before you start, think about it: every drag you take screws up your body.

Smoking can cause permanent damage to your body. Once a person starts, it becomes extremely tough to quit. And did we mention all that cash you'll be blowing in the process?

So, if you're tempted to start, ask yourself, "Is it worth it?"