

# OPINION

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## Don't get burned

With the fast-paced lifestyle many of us lead, forgetfulness and fatigue can be a deadly combination that can turn special times into tragedies.

This is especially true during the holiday season, when many people find themselves burning the proverbial candle at both ends in preparation for sharing some quality time with family and friends.

Ontario's Fire Marshal Patrick Burke is asking residents to be extra diligent over the holidays to avoid becoming the victim of a momentary distraction or memory lapse.

Between Nov. 1, 2005 and Jan. 31, 2006, 24 Ontarians lost their lives in preventable house fires.

Burke emphasized how misused and forgotten candles are one of the most common causes of house fires at this time of the year.

Other contributors to holiday celebrations going up in smoke include improperly used space heaters, pots left unattended and careless smoking.

"People need to pay attention to potential fire hazards in their homes," Burke said.

Simple tips that could save your home — and your life— include:

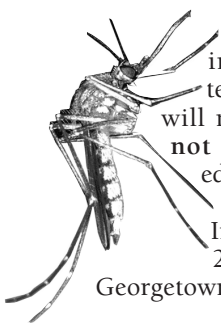
- never leaving pots unattended while cooking;
- smothering pot fires with lids and turning off stove burners rather than attempting to remove an ignited pot from a stove;
- never removing batteries from smoke alarms that have activated while you're cooking; instead relocate the smoke alarm or purchase an alarm with a 'hush' feature;
- always placing lit candles in sturdy candleholders with glass shades and displaying them away from children, pets and any combustible items;
- keep matches and lighters out of children's reach;
- drink responsibly and keep a close watch of others who do not, since alcohol consumption is a contributing factor in many residential fires.

The fire marshal reminds us that more than 90 per cent of residential fires are preventable.

By paying more attention to how we celebrate the season, we can all avoid becoming the next holiday fire statistic.

## Something bugging you?

Send us a letter!



Letters to the editor must include an address and daytime telephone number. Unsigned letters will not be published. Letters should not exceed 200 words and may be edited for content and/or length.

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The Independent & Free Press is published every Wednesday and Friday at 280 Guelph St., Unit 29, Georgetown Ont., L7G 4B1. It is one of several newspapers published by Metroland Printing, Publishing & Distributing Ltd.

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Price: Store copies 50¢ each; Subscriptions \$26.00 per year by carrier; \$92.50 per year by mail in Canada; \$130.00 per year in all other countries. Plus G.S.T.

Second Class Mail Registration Number 6869. The Independent & Free Press is a member of The Canadian Community Newspaper Association and The Ontario Community Newspaper Association.



Steve Nease



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Grinch vandalized Christmas display

Dear editor,  
This time of year we are all beginning to prepare for the holiday season— Christmas.

I want to take this opportunity to tell all of you planning to decorate outside to have your decorations very secure.

On Nov. 11 sometime between midnight and 1 a.m. our yard was vandalized by what I call "no good

trash". To whoever did this, I hope you are reading this letter.

A night of what you thought was hellish fun took away many a smile, not to mention all of our hard work. The decorations that were in our yard were for the children on our crescent on Christmas Eve where Santa will be visiting.

My Christmas wish to you is for the Grinch guilt to get to you. How

can you be so cold-hearted, disrespectful and ignorant? I bet you're hoping for gifts under your tree, right?

You can just imagine how many I hope you get.

B. Vieira,  
Georgetown

### Beloved rosary returned to grateful owner

Dear editor,  
As a follow-up to my Dec. 6 letter, Purse thief stole a treasured rosary, I am very pleased to report a happy ending.

Imagine my surprise upon receiving a phone call from Famous Players Theatre in Trinity Common Mall in Brampton advising me they had my purse which was found in the lobby of the theatre. (The purse had been stolen from the Georgetown Market Place food court).

All my personal things were intact and especially the rosary from my

father. At least the thief did put the purse where it was found by an honest person.

I'm most grateful to have my very special rosary back and I thank the thief for not throwing it in a dumpster or garbage can where all would have been lost.

To the thief, I forgive you for stealing my money and I hope that you will not make a habit of stealing in the future. I am simply very thankful for a happy ending to a very upsetting situation.

Mary Blackmore,  
Georgetown

### Chong praised for not following 'puppet' MPs

Dear editor,  
Kudos to MP Michael Chong, the only minister who spoke for the people of Canada by not voting with the 51 traitors and the rest of the puppets under orders to support the motion to recognize Québécois as a nation.

Mr. Harper, Canadians across the country do not agree with your cheap ploy to gain a few political points. You will pay for it at the polls.

The Conservatives would do well to look for a new leader.

Edward M Cachia

### Food bank volunteers thanked for efforts

Dear editor,  
Recently you published a thank you to the community for all the help the Georgetown Bread Basket received for the 16th annual food drive. The community always comes to our aid.

Now, I want to issue a very special thank you to all the volunteers who came out that day to unload and load trucks and to drive them, to sort and box food, to tape the boxes and weigh them, to make coffee and hot dogs and to clean the church at the end of the day.

This was a wonderful team effort and it couldn't have been done without them. The volunteers are also there every week as we open our doors to serve the food bank clients of our area.

To this group I say thanks. Volunteers you are the best.

Marian Viant,  
Director, media co-ordinator  
Georgetown Bread Basket

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