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## Most residential fires preventable, says fire marshal

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

That's 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 asks residents to be extra diligent over the holidays to avoid becoming the victim of a momentary distraction or memory lapse.

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

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

And that message is also one of the Milton Fire Department.

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 says.

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;
  - keeping matches and lighters out of children's reach;
- · drink responsibly and keeping 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.

When it comes to sports, it doesn't take

At the risk of taking some ribbing from

those in local competitive circles, I'll admit I

get downright choked up during more than a

few sports movies, usually those involving

arena maintenance guy building a makeshift

dressing room for the young girl definitely

toward breaking down barriers that I find

especially heartwarming. Like many who are

passionate about sports, the idea that they

should be open to everyone - regardless of

age, sex, background or physical limitations

And as far as I'm concerned, the same

- is one I hold quite dearly.

triggers the waterworks for yours truly.

David vs. Goliath clashes or the always-

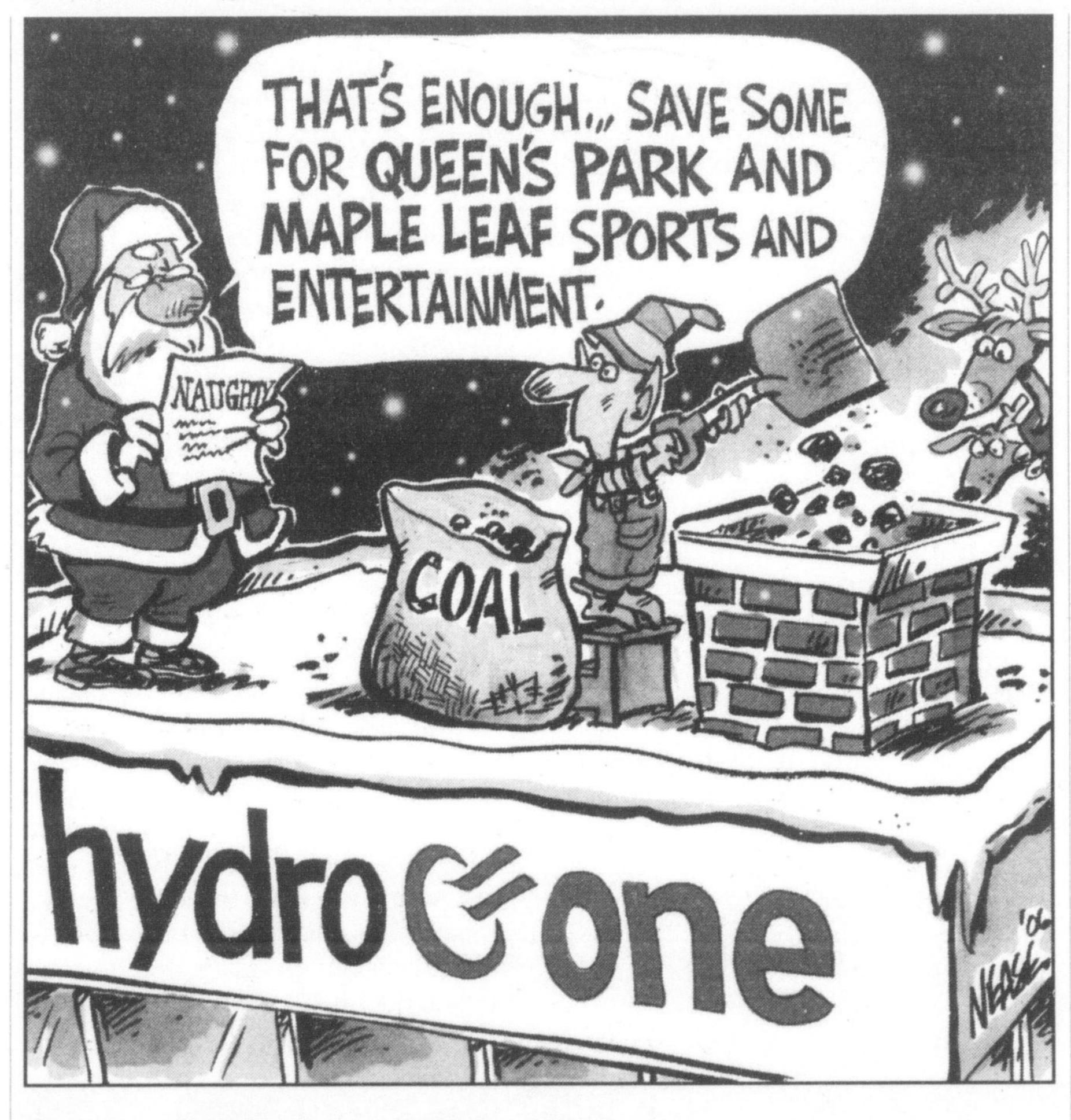
And that RBC commercial about the old

In that particular case, it's the effort made

much to push my emotional buttons.

touching father and son moments.

Upfront



## ReadersVrite

Send your letters to miltoned@haltonsearch.com or drop them off at 875 Main St. E.

### Take time to know where exits are

**DEAR EDITOR:** 

I wanted to write and clear up a misconception that may have been left with some Miltonians after reading last week's article about the grease fire at the new movie theatre.

The issue concerns the practice of evacuating a building once the fire alarm sounds. When a fire occurs in a building, any building (especially your home), it's always safer to be outside than in.

Though different buildings have different levels of fire protection, when a fire occurs many different things can go wrong, so it's generally safer to attempt to leave a building at the first indication of trouble.

I would encourage all Miltonians to make a conscious decision to be aware of their surroundings at all times, especially during the holiday shopping season. When you go into a store or a

#### see FIRE on page A7

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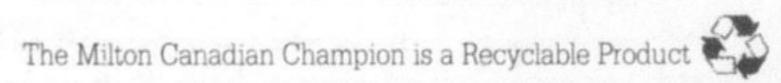


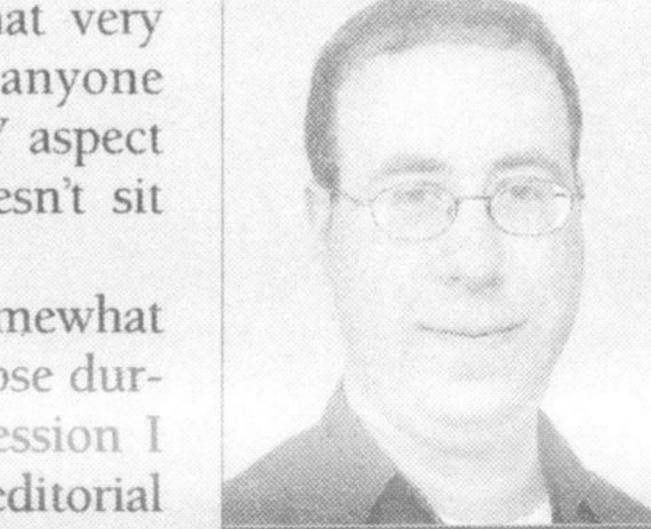




GALA Awards







Steve LeBlanc

holds true for sports coverage. As long as you've got a story to tell with enough success

Sports, and its coverage, should be open to everyone

and/or general appeal attached, it should be told. I take that very seriously. The idea of anyone being excluded from ANY aspect of sports is one that doesn't sit well with me at all.

Which leads me to a somewhat concerning notion that arose during a diversity training session I and others in Metroland's editorial ranks recently attended. With the presenter also hailing from Milton

- and providing the best work seminar I've ever been part of — a fair portion of the day revolved around how our town's cultural make-up is slowly but surely changing, and how that's relevant to its newspaper.

Having said that, I had to question if there

are some newcomers in our community who for one reason or another were reluctant to

> bring their sporting stories to my attention. After all, some might figure that they haven't been here long enough to warrant coverage, or feel that because their particular sport isn't of the traditional or mainstream variety found in Canada I'm not likely to be interested.

> If either of those arguments is what's holding you back, hold back no longer.

The only criteria for getting in The Champion's sports section is that you've got an interesting — and timely (please) — story to tell.

And if I'm not familiar with your sport, hey, I'm always willing to learn.