

Man's arm catches fire — vows to quit smoking

A Milton smoker caused a \$5,000 fire and almost burned off his arm after lighting a cigarette while filling his car with gas at the Petro Canada station on Main Street.

The sleeve of the man's coat went up in flames Friday night after he spilled gasoline on himself while trying to pull a cigarette out of his back pocket.

Witnesses said his coat burst into flames a split second after the clumsy man attempted to light the cigarette. He began screaming and ran into the station variety store.

Flames from the man's coat set the newspaper stand and candy shelves on fire, and the blaze went out of control. He fled the store and was later seen diving into the Mill Pond.

The Milton Fire Department arrived at the scene and quickly extin-

POLICE FODDER

guished the blaze. Customers and employees of the gas station managed to escape unharmed.

The whole mess could have been avoided if the man was wearing a smoke detector, said Deputy Fire Chief Harold Penson.

Halton Regional Police Inspector Ron Sullivan said he had no choice but to arrest the man.

"I can understand a person indulging in the occasional cigarette, but he almost burned the whole gas station down," said the inspector. "He'll fry for this one."

Charged with possession of a dangerous firearm is a 105-year-old Milton man. He suffered severe

burns in the incident. "I'll never smoke again," he vowed.

The man has also requested that Health and Welfare Canada print "Smoking May Burn Your Skin" on the front of cigarette packages.

Thief

A Milton resident planning to spend a quiet Saturday night in front of the television was greeted by an unexpected house guest.

The 33-year-old man returned home from the corner store to find a youth, dressed in dark clothes and carrying a sack, stuck half way through his living room window.

Pointing at the pathetic thief, the homeowner told the teen he was in for the night of his life. He taught the youth a geometry lesson, fed him brussel sprouts, and entertained him

with Stompin' Tom Connors records.

Two hours passed before the man called police. "We don't recommend that citizens take the law into their own hands," said Chief James Harding, "but what the heck."

The boy pleaded with police to free him from the window. "Please, I'm begging you," he said. "No more Bud the Spud."

Pot seized

Two acres of cannabis was destroyed last week after an anonymous caller tipped off police that marijuana plants were growing in a Derry Road field.

The only positive outcome of the crime was that it brought people together, said Chief Harding.

"It's good to see people taking a stand against drugs," he said. "A

few hundred civilians showed up to help police burn the plants."

Talking chicken loose

Halton Regional Police are seeking the public's assistance in locating a talking chicken that escaped from a farm half a mile north of Milton early yesterday morning.

Farmer Fred MacDonald said the animal jeopardizes the safety of Milton citizens because it once threatened to strike back at those who enjoy consuming the fowl.

"Last month I heard him tell a farm hand that if he ever got out, he'd take revenge on chicken eaters," said Mr. MacDonald.

Halton Regional Police are taking the matter seriously. The town's top cops have been assigned posts at Kentucky Fried Chicken and Swiss Chalet, said Detective Sergeant Mike Eacrett.

"We have to get this turkey . . . I mean chicken," he said.

Anyone who has seen or heard a talking chicken is asked to call Crime Stoppers immediately, stressed Halton police spokesperson Sgt. Carey Smith.

"It's important that we apprehend this bird right away," he said. "I feel like chicken tonight."

Late breaking news

A woman who the Milton OPP originally thought was a drunk driver turned out to be the victim of a mental breakdown late last night.

The OPP say the woman was seen driving erratically on Highway 401 near Campbellville at about 11 p.m. Her journey ended when her car broke down half way up a hill at Glen Eden Ski Area.

The woman told police she became temporarily insane after stopping at a traffic light on Martin Street. "A chicken standing on the sidewalk asked me for a lift," she said.

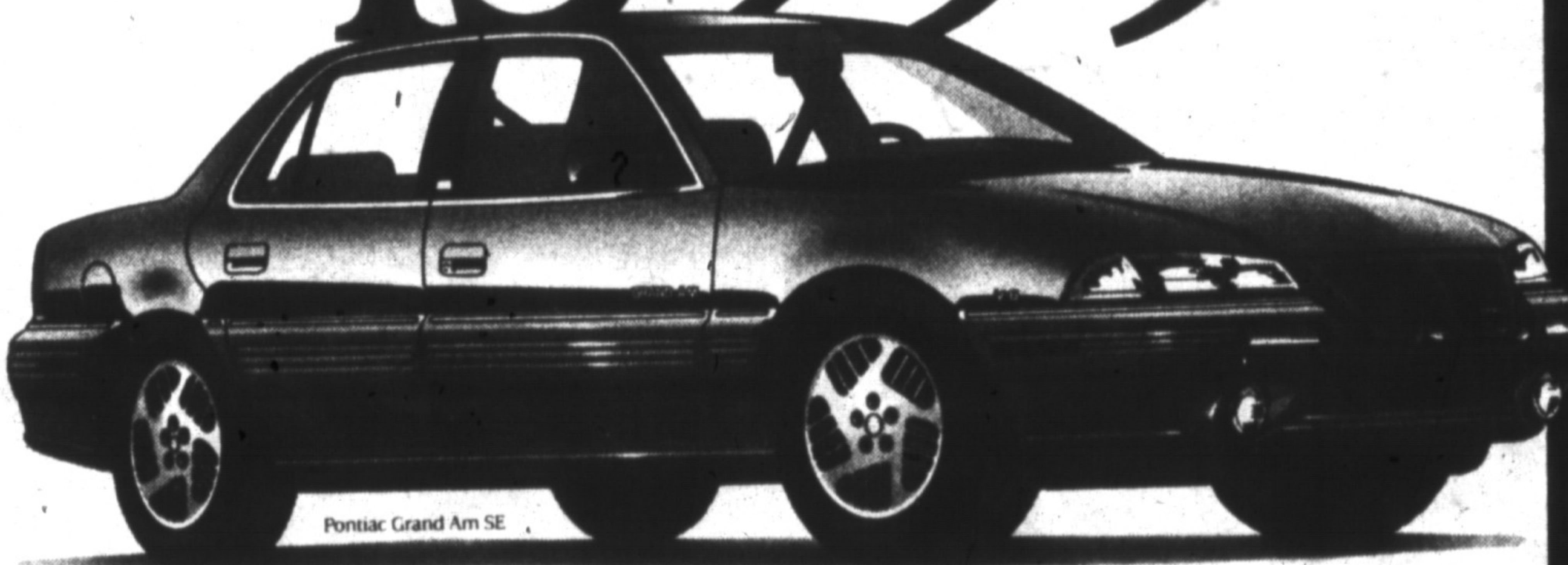
The unemployed 55-year-old Milton woman ended up pleading guilty to dangerous driving and was sentenced to hang out at the *Canadian Champion* newsroom for one month.

"That should teach you a lesson," said the judge.

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