

Opinion

Message still hasn't sunk in with everyone

With a new year begun and 2012 fading into our collective memories, some disturbing statistics courtesy of the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) remind us of a resolution some of us need to keep in 2013.

Impaired driving — thought to be a preventable human behaviour headed for almost certain extinction by way of tougher laws and law enforcement and almost constant public education campaigns — has again battled back against the popular trend not to drink and drive, according to police.

Just-completed holiday season Reduce Impaired Driving Everywhere (R.I.D.E.) campaigns by local and provincial police officers netted plenty of charges against people who apparently still can't comprehend that when you consume alcohol, driving is no longer an option.

How many times do we need to be reminded, to be shown gruesome images from scenes of traffic fatalities, to hear the cries of spouses, children, parents or siblings left behind each time an impaired driver claims another innocent life? How often do we need to be asked to think of loved ones before getting behind the wheel of a motor vehicle after having consumed alcohol, before we all finally get the message?

Apparently we're not shouting the words loud enough or repeating them often enough because it definitely hasn't sunk in with everyone yet.

During its 2011 holiday campaign, the OPP charged 682 motorists with impaired driving and issued 'warn' suspensions to another 583 drivers.

During the just-completed holidays of 2012, 693 drivers were charged with having more than the legal limit of alcohol (80 mg per 100 ml of blood) in their system, while 625 received warning licence suspensions for having between 50 to 80 mg of alcohol in 100 ml of blood.

Although it's impossible to know for sure why a small percentage of the population continues to be willing to risk their licence to drive, their own lives and the lives of innocent bystanders, what we can predict is that the resulting carnage (and incarceration) is practically inevitable.

While these recent statistics may mean we're still far from winning the battle, this fight is far from over and the message must not be silenced.

There remains nothing to be gained from drinking and driving and yet a laundry list of things to be lost including your right to drive, employability, freedom from imprisonment and the biggest one of all — your life.

While numbers like this year's OPP R.I.D.E. statistics may prove discouraging to anti-impaired driving organizations such as MADD Canada, we hope they also serve the dual purpose of sounding a renewed battlecry.

Society's work here is still far from done.



Out for a walk

Germin and Cathy Proulx of Milton enjoy the warm weather this past weekend while Nordic walking with poles. The exercise is said to use 90 per cent of your muscles and burn 46 per cent more calories than walking without poles.

Graham Paine / Canadian Champion (Follow on Twitter @halton_photog)

Letters welcome

The Canadian Champion welcomes letters to the editor. We reserve the right to edit, revise and reject letters.

Letters must be signed with first and last name, and the address and the telephone number of the writer included for verification purposes.

Email your letters to editorial@miltoncanadianchampion.com or send by mail to 555 Industrial Dr., Milton, Ont., L9T 5E1, or leave them at our office.

Our office hours are Monday to Friday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Letters

Garbage dumping disgusting act, violators should be heavily fined

Dear Editor:

Nice piece regarding illegal garbage dumping (Editor's Desk column December 27).

People who dump garbage like this are disgusting.

I walk quite regularly around the Mill Pond and the small park behind my residence, which runs down behind a strip mall.

What a disgusting mess there.

It's unfortunate that the taxpayers of Mil-

ton will likely have to pay to clean up the mess.

It's my hope that the scum responsible be caught, made to clean it up, charged and heavily fined.

I generally carry a cell phone with me and if I see someone acting like this, I photograph it and see that it's dealt with in the proper manner.

Bob King
Milton

The Canadian
CHAMPION

555 Industrial Drive, Milton, Ont. L9T 5E1

905-878-2341

Advertising Fax: 905-876-2364

Classified: 905-875-3300

Circulation: 905-878-5947

www.miltoncanadianchampion.com

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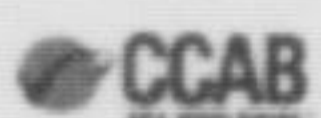
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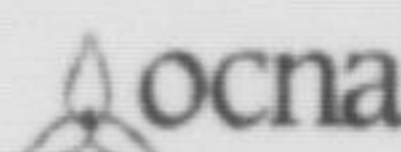
Daniel Coleman


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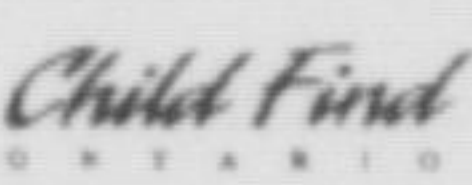
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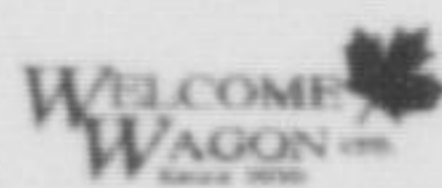
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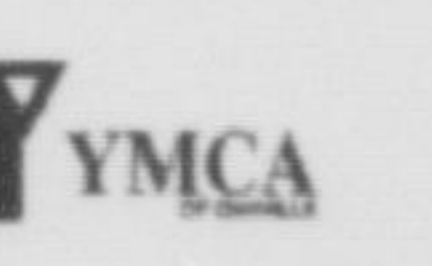
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