

# No moos is bad news...

Udder bewilderment reigns in the head offices of the Ontario Milk Marketing Board because milk-drinking, like motherhood, seems to be declining in popularity.

For the fifth consecutive month, milk consumption has dropped, in spite of cute and massively expensive advertising campaigns. Sales of cheddar cheese are whey off too, and the marketing board can't figure out why.

Well, I wish those chaps had come to me with their problem. I could have suggested a number of reasons why milk sales are declining.

For one thing, Canadian families are smaller, and when there aren't as many kids around the place, you just don't buy as much milk. This is not necessarily because children drink a lot of milk.

It's because they spill enormous quantities of the stuff. Before she is twelve, the average child has dumped enough milk across the dinner and breakfast tables to fill a backyard swimming pool. So if the marketing board wants to sell more milk, it ought to persuade Canadian couples to produce more than 1.5 children and coincidentally to encourage the sale of tall, tippy drinking glasses.

I think the disappearance of the milkman has something to do with the souring of sales. It's hard to believe that a new generation is growing up without milkmen and milkman

## Shirley Whittington



jokes. And who could forget that tender and tuneful hit, "Milkman, Keep Those Bottles Quiet"? They certainly don't write them like that any more.

Older houses and apartments bear mute evidence to the passing of the milkman in their boarded-up milk boxes. And what is a milk box?

It's a small, double-doored compartment beside the back door where the milkman could make his pre-dawn deliveries without waking the household. Later, the bottles were retrieved from the kitchen, using the inside door. Milk boxes also admitted newspapers, small children, drafts and skinny burglars. Now they are extinct, like galoshes and the passenger pigeon.

The milkman, with his rattling basket of bottles, left a predetermined amount of the stuff daily, and this is why mothers of yore were perpetually making pallid puddings and

creamy soups.

They had to keep ahead of the supplier who pushed his product with unrelenting regularity until somebody remembered to leave him a note.

Today milk is something you have to remember to go out and get. If you forget, you can usually make do with something else.

No cream for breakfast? You can lighten your coffee (and obstruct your arteries) with a heaping teaspoon of glucose solids, hydrogenated coconut oil, lactose, sodium caseinate, dipotassium phosphate, mono and diglycerides, sodium, aluminum silicate, lecithin, artificial flavour and colour.

The stuff in our cupboard carries the Carnation label, and I can only assume that it comes from if not contented cows, at least from contented chemical engineers.

I don't know how to tell you chaps down at

the marketing board this, but frankly your packaging is intimidating and unlovable. A four litre bundle of milk is like a huge wet fish. With no handles and a tendency to shift its wobbly weight in unexpected directions, it doesn't exactly beg to be taken home and cuddled.

Old-fashioned milk bottles on the other hand, had a certain charm, and at least you could get a grip on them. Today you can buy those slope-shouldered babies in antique shops, and they cost more than they did twenty years ago, with milk in them.

Before the cows went metric, milk came in three quart glass jugs with red plastic handles. What a boon those antique empties are those of us who make a little wine now and then!

So there you are, marketing geniuses. Bring back milk bottles with handles, itinerant milk delivery persons and large families, and I guarantee an increase in sales. You and your farmers will smile again.

In the meantime, we can approach left-over milk the way my folks used to deal with surplus tomatoes and raspberries. My father put it this way: "We eat what we can, and what we can't we can."

There are lots of hungry kids out in the world who could take those extra cans of milk off our hands.

# Now an item on the price of things!

IT'S pretty difficult these days to ignore inflation, unless you live in a cave, have a good, warm wife, a root cellar full of spuds, turnips and carrots, and a private income of about \$200 a week.

But somehow, I've managed, though I've done my share of whining, until recently. I've done some shopping, and for a change looked at the prices. My conclusion is that capitalism is a lost cause.

I know it dates me, but somewhere back there in the murk of my mind, I still had the idea that a loaf of bread was a dime, a pound of butter two bits, a quart of milk 10 cents, hamburger was something you ate a lot of, but was cheap, coffee was 10 cents a cup, beer was about 15 cents a pint, and cigarettes had shot up to about 35 cents a package.

I knew better, but I pushed it to the back of my mind, as one does thoughts about death.

Back there in that foggy area, I still felt that bananas were a nickel apiece, lettuce, carrots, cabbages and radishes were something you grew in the back yard, and eggs ran about two or three cents each.

On Sunday you killed a chicken, and had a big dinner, for a total cost of about 85 cents.

On Saturday night you went to the movies, and it cost you about 75 cents for two, and they threw in a piece of china or something. After the show, two hamburgers, two pies, two coffees for 60 cents.

Well, my dreams have been dispelled, and I

## Bill Smiley



know now that, after working for 35 years, I have no money in the bank, no cattle out west, and it costs me about five dollars a day to avoid freezing.

I asked about the prices of some staple items, and almost went into a coma.

My mother used to send me to the butcher's for two pounds of hamburger, "and tell him we need some dog bones." The hamburger was a quarter, or 25 pennies, and the dog bones, with hunks of meat on them, were free. We made soup from them.

Today, if there were such a thing as a real, live butcher (they are now meat-cutters), the hamburger would cost me about four bucks, and the dog-bones, without a shred on them, another 60 cents a pound. Poor Rover.

When I was a kid, we "put down" a barrel each of MacIntosh and Spy apples, in the cool cellar. They lasted most of the winter. Today, with four ordinary Delicious apples going at a quarter each, you'd have to take a second mortgage to do that.

Since my boyhood, butter is almost 10 times

as much, bread, the same, milk the same.

Eggs are only about six times as much.

Hamburger is up more than 10 times as much.

I wouldn't even guess on cheese, which used to be about 20 cents a pound.

A head of lettuce is no longer something you feed the rabbits. Recently it was running about \$1.50 a head, and there was almost a riot when a local store offered some at 48 cents a head. Pastry white junk, full of water.

Celery was something you used to chomp by the stick, maybe with some cheese tucked into its cleft. Now you hoard it, and eat the leaves in soup and serve it in little curls, keeping an eye on who is hogging it at the party.

Party? What-party? About 20 years ago, people still had parties, and supplied all the food and booze and coffee. Nowadays, the acronym BYOB has crept into the language. It means bring your own booze. And a salad, or a hot dish, or buttered rolls, or a dessert.

Perhaps it's a good sign. Instead of everyone trying to out do everyone, by having

a bigger and more lavish party than the last couple, we've got back to the pioneer potluck idea. And nobody seems to suffer.

Ten years ago, backyard barbecues were the thing, and people vied to see who could cook the thickest steak. Nowadays, you've got to be practically one of the jet set to see steak once a month. The rest of us just see it as we walk past the meat counters, looking for some stewing beef or a nice bit of brisket or tripe.

Twenty years ago, we could go to a hotel in the city, spend \$22 on a double room, take in a theatre, top quality, for eight bucks, and order delicious cold roast beef sandwiches from room service, for about \$1.20 a throw, with all sorts of chips and pickles and a pot of coffee for 50 cents.

Today, a similar room would be about \$85, the theatre \$50, the sandwiches \$10, the coffee \$5.

We scarcely ever go to the movies any more. Seven bucks for two and mini chocolate bars, stale popcorn at about 50 cents a rattle. No wonder people watch reruns of I Love Lucy.

No wonder our doctors and lawyers and politicians need about \$100,000 a year just to keep up. They can scarcely put bread on the table.

And no wonder old people are eating dog-food. They can't even afford a can of beans.

### Mel Curtis on the mend after a fall in his home

Midland's Mel Curtis, who has been keeping track of snowfalls for the province's Atmospheric Environment Service since the '40s is on the mend after suffering a fall at his home last month.

### HDH's top brass to meet on the evening of Jan. 23

Board of Huronia District Hospital meets next on Monday, Jan. 28.

A report concerning the meeting will appear in this paper on Jan. 30.

### Stats tell story from HDH for month of Dec.

Last month, a total of 78 operations were carried out at Huronia District Hospital.

As well, there were 1,281 visits to HDH's emergency ward. And a total of 31 births also took place at the hospital in Tiny Township, located just west of Midland.

### Sally Ann's Citadel to be dedicated soon

The new Salvation Army Citadel, under construction at the corner of Second and Dominion, will be dedicated on the afternoon of Saturday, Feb. 23, reports Lt. Ray Braddock, commanding officer of the local Sally Ann's.

### A word to the wise motorist

The weatherman is calling for more snow for later this week.

Motorists are reminded to drive with care and caution and to leave their headlights on until 30 minutes after dawn and 30 minutes before dusk.

### Long distance walkers honoured for job well done

Donna Murton and George Lindblad, two Tiny Township residents who walked from Penetanguishene to Ottawa last summer, are the

honorary chairpersons of this year's local Heart Fund fund raising drive.

The duo walked 300 miles in 14 days, neither losing or gaining weight along the way, and raised \$6,000 for the Ontario Heart and Stroke Foundation research fund.

### Snowmobilers are warned to watch out for 'tracks'

Snowmobilers are being warned to keep an eye open for both the CCGS Griffon and CCGS Montmorency.

Both ships have been working this part of Southern Georgian Bay of late and have been leaving "tracks" in both the ice-covered harbour and bay near Midland.

## North Simcoe Newsbriefs

### Lights, camera, action?

#### Town council on TV tonight

Monday's meeting of the Midland Town Council can be seen at 7:30 tonight on Community TV 6.

This meeting was council's first in 1985, and it will be shown unedited. Maclean Hunter Cable TV will be taping meetings of the Midland Town Council now through June, with the exception of the Feb. 25 meeting when Community TV 6 will be involved with the annual Rotary Auction.

The council meetings will be cablecast in entirety Wednesdays following the meetings beginning at 7:30 p.m. on Community TV 6.

### Election of new officers official

North Regional Committee of the Simcoe County Board of Education will be chaired this year by Mrs. Lois LeBarr.

Vice-chairman of the committee will be Jaon Jensen. Both are SCBE trustees.

Mrs. LeBarr is the SCBE trustee for Area 2 while Mrs. Jensen is the trustee for Area 3.

### Snow count starting to creep up on last year's total...

As of Monday, a total of 121 centimetres of snow has fallen on this area since Nov. 2 of last year.

That works out to 47.63 inches. By this time last winter a total of 169 centimetres or 66.53 inches of snow had blanketed the Gateway to the 30,000 Islands here in the Heart of Huronia.

### Legal leader coming

#### to Huronia on Jan. 23

Claude Thomson, president of the Canadian Bar Association, will be in Huronia on Jan. 23 to address the Midland Rotary Club and students at Midland Secondary School, and to tour the Penetanguishene Mental Health Centre, including the Oak Ridge division.

### Midland Historical Society

#### revival gets breath of life

Midland Historical Society is being revived. The inaugural meeting will be held Jan. 23 in the Midland Public Library. Slides of Wyebridge will be a part of the meeting's program.

All those interested in the history of the Georgian Bay area are urged to attend this important meeting, to demonstrate support for an entertaining and historically educational Midland Historical Society, organizers say.

The earlier incarnation of the society occurred in the period 1977 to 1981, society supporter Stanley Redman estimates.

### Fourth suspect arrested in Toronto

Keith Vivian, of Port McNicoll, the last suspect to be arrested in connection with Jan. 3 armed robberies in Wasaga Beach and Barrie, appeared in court in Barrie on Monday, and is to appear in court again today.

Vivian, 25, was arrested by Toronto police last Friday.

### Three-day suspension upheld

Simcoe County Board of Education trustee have upheld a South Regional Committee recommendation that an appeal of a suspension of a Grade 11 student at Barrie Central Collegiate be denied.

The student, who was not identified, was suspended from the high school for three days (Dec. 12, 13 and 14) for "conduct injurious to the moral tone of the school."