

# It all begins and ends with Neg-Prod

SOME people, like me, believe in rolling with the punches, rather than sticking out our chins to show how many we can absorb. I have found that, in general, if I avoid trouble, trouble avoids me.

If I know that some pain in the arm has been trying to get me on the phone, I also know immediately that he or she wants me to do something that I don't want to do. Therefore, I take the phone off the hook and leave it off until the pain has found some other sucker.

Another invention of mine to stay out of trouble is patented as Nega-Prod. This is short for Negative Production. The theory is simple. The more you produce, the more problems you have, whether it is children, manufactured goods or farm products.

The more children you have, the more emotional and economic problems you create for yourself. The more goods you produce, the more you have to hustle to find customers and meet payrolls. The more farm stuff you raise, whether it's beef or beans, the greater your chance of being caught in a glut on the market.

Our great national railways caught on to this years ago. When they had lots of passengers, they had lots of problems. People wanted comfort, cleanliness, decent meals, and some assurance that they would get where they were going on time. There was much more money to be made, and fewer problems, by transporting wheat and lumber and cattle.

## Bill Smiley



So the railways began treating people like cattle. Passenger trains became uncomfortable and dirty. Quality of the food dropped like a stone. And they never arrived on time.

Presto. End of problems. No more passengers. So the railways were able to cut off non-paying passenger lines, get rid of all those superfluous things like station agents and telegraphers and train conductors, and concentrate on taking from one point to another things that paid their way and didn't talk back: newsprint, coal, oil, wheat.

Perhaps this is the answer for our provincial governments, which, are quickly and quietly building massive mountains of debt for future taxpayers.

Perhaps they should just stop building highways, and repairing those already in existence. We'd all be sore as hell for a while, but as the roads got worse and worse, most of us would stop driving our cars. The governments would save millions of dollars now spent on highways, and they could fire two-thirds of the highway cops.

I don't quite see how the governments could use Nega-Prod to get out of the liquor

business, which certainly produces plenty of problems. The booze trade is so profitable that asking government to abandon it would be like asking a millionaire to forsake his country estate for a run-down farm.

Perhaps if they had a Free Booze Day, once a week, every week, say on a Saturday, it would solve a number of problems. It would certainly reduce the surplus population. This, in turn, would cut down, drastically, the unemployment figures.

Should the provincial governments find that Nega-Prod is all I've suggested, some of it might spill over into the federal government, usually the last to catch on to what the country really needs.

Instead of the manna and honey flowing from Ottawa in the form of baby bonuses and pensions, we might get some terse manifestoes:

"People who have more than one and a half children will be sent to jail for four years. Note: separate jails."

"Persons who plan to live past 65 and claim a pension will be subject to an open season each year, from October 1 to Thanksgiving Day. Shotguns and bicycle chains only."

"All veterans of all wars may claim participation by reason of insanity, and may apply to Ottawa for immediate euthenisation."

These might seem slightly Draconian measures, but they sure would put an end to a lot of our problems and troubles. Think of what they would do for such sinful activities as sex, growing old, and hanging around the Legion Hall, playing checkers.

But we must also think of the economic benefits. With a plug put into that river of paper money flowing from Ottawa, taxes would drop, inflation would vanish and undoubtedly, separatism would wither on the vine. People would lined up six deep at the U.S. border, trying to get across, and that would solve, in one swell foop, our unemployment difficulties.

We could go back to being hewers of water and carriers of wood, which was our manifest destiny before the politicians got into the act. Fishermen or lumberjacks, in short, which most of the rest of the world thinks we are anyway.

Nega-Prod may seem a bit lofty and abstract at first glance, but it works. I know from personal experience. Every time I try to make something, or fix something, it costs me a lot of money, and I get into a lot of trouble.

So, I have a policy of never trying to fix something or make something. It's a lot less trouble to put up signs: "Beware of falling bricks; Not responsible for slivers from picnic table." and so on.

# Expect a garage sale when the beds bulge

All you gentle readers are cordially invited to a garage sale. (I don't know when, but we have to have one). We'll make all kinds of money, and the house and contents won't look a scrap different.

All the stuff we will unload on the unsuspecting public is currently hidden in corners, the basement, and closets. If your practice is to look under the bed before retiring, no problem, we have stuff under our beds, no room for anything else.

We've never had a garage, lawn, patio, lean-to, three, two, or one family sale. But we've attended plenty. Like thousands before us we've faithfully followed flimsy fragments of cardboard for miles, and chalk signs, and professional looking stapled-on-a-hydro-pole-at-eye-level-in-a-car-seat signs.

So we know the ground rules, newspaper ads, on a Friday to catch the weekend traders with mad money to spend, and the opening times with people arriving two hours early for the fabulous bargains.

## Ray Baker



### CRITICAL PLANNING

The last time I was up at the crack of dawn was the opening of the trout season. The only thing I caught was an early breakfast special in a Coldwater restaurant. But for our garage sale I promise to be up before the crack of dawn for you early bird bargain hunters.

Luckily we have a double garage, so rain or shine, it's a good place to start, as it's also bursting at the seams. In fact I might leave my Beetle in there and sell it at the same time.

You are asking yourselves right now, What

kind of art treasures and unique collector's items can you expect to purchase at a mere fraction of their original cost, what kind of goodies will you be fighting over?

### ALADDIN'S CAVE

To whet your appetite and give you specialists an adrenaline rush, feast your eyes on this lot as a sample.

Item One. A brand new barbecue spit with electric motor, no barbecue, just the spit, you add the polish.

Item Two. Four matching cups and saucers obtained in 1967 from a Sunoco gas station in

Etobicoke for buying gas there during a price war.

Item Three. A 14th century recipe from England on How to seethe a carpe. Ideal for the harassed housewife, sick of hamburger helper and instant noodle soup, who is looking for something different. I mean really different!

But enough! I will have you drooling. I'm just not sure what to charge for things, and again, we will need trestles, table tops, masking tape, magic markers, money aprons. Maybe we should go to a couple of garage sales to pick these things up, and get some first hand experience.

On second thought, better not. We will finish up buying things, and there is no more room under the beds.

This week's quote: Join the Marine Corps. Meet lots of interesting and exciting people, and learn how to kill them.

Ray Baker is a freelance writer. He and his family live in Penetanguishene.

## St. Mark's date changes

Rev. Alden Cathcart will be the guest preacher for the 10 a.m. service in St. Mark's Church, Midland, on March 17, not April 17, as previously announced.

Rev. Cathcart was the rector of St. Mark's from 1945 to 1954. This year is St. Mark's Church's anniversary.

## Facing a series of charges

Russel Gordon Balmer of Ouida Street Waubaushene, is to appear in Penetanguishene Provincial Court tomorrow charged with impaired driving, refuse to provide breath sample, obstruct justice, driving under suspension, possession of a narcotic and wilful damage.

The charges stem from a March 9 incident in the parking lot at Huronia District Hospital.

On Monday, Balmer was remanded into custody until tomorrow's court appearance.

## PMCL takes to the waves

A little sister to the famous "Miss Midland" tour boat has been created over the winter in a temporary shelter behind the PMCL building on Bay Street in Midland.

The new 40 foot long welded steel cruiser, to be christened "Ste. Marie", is currently about 85 percent complete and right on schedule to be launched by May 1, reports PMCL General Manager Brian Dubeau.

The interior is complete, with engines installed, and the little ship awaits only sanding and painting.

The boat's superstructure and wheelhouse was built on the hull of the old "Stewart C" tour boat.

Although the new ship closely resembles the 215 passenger "Miss Midland", she is designed to carry 75 people on return trips from the Town Dock up the Wye River to Ste. Marie among the Hurons and the Martyrs' Shrine.

## Fog rolls in where once the sun shone brightly

Fog greeted early-risers in some sections of North Simcoe, Monday.

It came on the heels of an almost perfect Spring-like weekend.

## 35 motor-vehicle mishaps in the Town of Midland

Midland police, last month, investigated 25 reportable and 10 non-reportable motor-vehicle accidents in the town, according to a report prepared and tabled by Police Chief Ernest Bates at Monday night's council meeting.

## Give from the heart, March 20 at blood donors' clinic at MSS

Don't forget to give "the gift of life" at a Red Cross Blood Donors' Clinic to be held at MSS on March 20 from 1:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Plan to roll up your sleeves for a good cause.

## Good weekend flying weather

Huronia Airport in Tiny Township turned out to be a very busy place both Saturday and Sunday thanks to the weatherman.

With at least 2,000-foot ceilings six visiting

aircraft and 40 "locals" used the facility on Saturday while another 14 visiting planes and 50 "locals" used the tri-municipal airport and its 3,000-foot north-south runway, Sunday, reports Airport Manager John O'Hara.

The airport was also visited by one deer on Sunday, the four-legged kind that marched up to the office in time to have its picture taken before bounding back into the nearby woods.

## A safety reminder to public

Despite the fact we are half-way through this year's March Break, motorists are reminded to keep an eye open for youngsters who are out of school and are on holidays.

# North Simcoe Newsbriefs

## Missions of mercy number 10,324, says M of H

Last year, Ministry of Health's air ambulance program transported 10,324 patients using three different types of aircraft: Bell 212 helicopters, a Sikorsky 76 helicopter, a Cessna Citation I jet and a Beechcraft King Air 200.

## Building permits tell the real story

Five building permits were issued in Midland last month for construction valued at \$43,100.

In February of '84, 10 were issued for a value of \$239,400.

To date this year, a total of 13 have been issued for a total value of \$121,700.

During the same period in '84, 16 permits had been issued for a total value of \$267,200.

## Great Lakes ice still hanging on

For the first time in years, thin ice has left the main shipping channel in Georgian Bay unfrozen. Large ships generally pass through Lucas

Channel from Lake Huron just south of Fitzwilliam Island. A heavy layer of insulating snow early this winter is blamed for ice only half the normal thickness.

The official Toronto Coast Guard office ice report, received late last week, also details the eastern halves of Lake Huron and Georgian Bay covered with shore fast ice.

While Lake Michigan is open, Superior remains covered with semi-solid ice floes.

Both ends of Lake Erie are still choked with solid ice, and the prevailing westerly winds have plugged Lake Ontario, from the Bay of Quinte east, with heavy ice.

The heaviest ice in our region is over Notawasaga Bay, where two tenths of the solidly frozen expanse is between 30 and 70 centimetres thick.

## A suntan is closer than you'd guess

Several brave souls were observed over the weekend far out on the ice over Severn Sound.

Two young men, obviously exhilarated by their cross country ski trip to an island about two miles offshore, exclaimed how the reflective power of the snow and ice made it hot enough to comfortably remove their shirts.

Both had sun tans as if they had just returned from two weeks in Florida and not just several hours on the Georgian Bay ice.

## Continuing education reaps a special merit award

Ontario Real Estate Association has presented a Special Merit Award to the Georgian College Continuing Education Division.

This award is in recognition of the Division's efforts in organizing and delivering courses for the Association.

Dr. Ted Dunlop, chairman of Georgian's Continuing Education Division was given a commemorative plaque by Bruce Lupton, administrator of licensing education for the association at the College's Board of Governors meeting March 1.

Georgian is the only Ontario college to ever receive such recognition by the Ontario Real Estate Association.