

Letters

Dear Editor:

It has been said that modern society is founded on trash and waste. Our very affluence depends on putting products on the market that have a short, sometimes useful, life. Wastefulness has become a way of life, not to say a virtue. Planned obsolescence the order of the day.

Industry and individuals alike, through high priced advertising, have become wasteful and compulsive producers of waste, and most of that ends up in landfills and dumps.

If one could compile a list of the items and volume of materials we throw away into the discard can, we would find an interesting and frightening statistic.

The cost of our indulgence in a throwaway society is not confined to the pricetags of the products themselves; collecting and disposing of solid waste costs our nation millions. In addition to our cost accounting we must look at the damages we incur on the environment at every step in this wasteful lifestyle, by landscapes scarred, water resources abused, the air we breathe and the water we drink defiled by pollutants. All these mean losses in money and quality of life, and in turn require further outlays of money and human energy to restore what we can, where we can.

Tiny Township, a rural farm and summer vacation community in North Simcoe, has had a sad experience in recent history. A privately owned, centrally located landfill site which served six municipalities was abused by disposal of toxic waste material. Leachate from this landfill of toxic substances resulted in residents' water supply being contaminated, within the vicinity of this landfill site.

The provincial Government investigated, after residents complained and threatened legal action. It was found necessary to supply the affected Residents with piped in fresh water. The private landfill site was ordered closed by October, 1987. And the North Simcoe Waste Management Association was charged to find an alternate method of waste disposal.

It is time that all of us started thinking seriously about our wasteful habits. How many times a day do we drop something into a trash can? What individuals throw away is only the tip of the waste iceberg.

Consider the manufacturing process which

More "Mt. Trashmores"?

provides our consumer goods. As we have learned from the Pauze site, many of the wastes have proved hazardous - yet it all must go somewhere, since there is no magic in the back of a trash truck which causes our household refuse to disappear, nor any secret process which makes industrial waste evaporate. If not properly handled these hazardous wastes are dangerous.

Improper waste handling practices of the past have begun to haunt us. Now the N.S.W.M.A. has decided to establish a new landfill site, not in any other of the six member municipalities but Tiny Township. Their choice of sites is in the south part of the township. All the drinking water for the residents in this area is supplied from ground water sources. Without proper location, design and operation, ANY municipal waste facility could (and has) contaminate an aquifer or groundwater source. There exists great concern among Residents here, that the mishap of contamination that had occurred at the Pauze site would promptly be repeated here, should there be a new landfill perpetrated upon this area. Another very interesting aspect is the choice of the location of the landfill sites. In this case the N.S.W.M.A. seems to be determined that (in their point of view) only Tiny Township is the one suitable community to accommodate a new site, and that it must be in the middle of the best producing agricultural land. Strange as it may seem, no prudent effort has been made by the N.S.W.M.A. to find a suitable site of less value within the boundaries of the participating municipalities.

Waste is a human concept. Yet the best waste is no waste. In nature, nothing is wasted for everything is part of a continuous cycle. Even the death of a creature provides nutrients that will eventually be reincorporated in the chain of life. The throwaway mentality leads to the perception of byproducts of human activity as useless. Yet one's personal waste is another's reusable raw material. Japanese are aggressive purchasers of scrapped American automobiles, leading to the joke that this year's Buick is next year's Datsun.

One tonne of recycled newspaper or cardboard would save 17 trees in our forests, and so it would go for glass, tin, plastic and other materials. Organic waste could be fed to pigs, the rest converted into compost and sold for agricultural purposes.

In a society with chronic unemployment and

inefficient bureaucracies, such labour intensive, income-producing approaches make more sense than the haphazard dumping of materials on farmland as favored by the N.S.W.M.A.

Industries based on use of recycled materials should be given a more favorable tax treatment than the mining and extractive industries who base is the use of virgin materials.

Governments should encourage in their procurement specifications the acquisition of recycled materials.

Man has introduced disorder into the balanced ecological system, and chemical pollutants (lead, mercury, cadmium, etc.) and thousands of pesticides and toxic chemicals are cropping up in the tissues and vital organs of men and animals in the most remote parts of our world. This trend is being questioned by an emerging counterculture - futurists, ecological farmers and just plain citizens.

If we love this planet—and we must since it's the only planet we have—we'll have to reverse our throw-away mentality, and initiate a good recycling program. No city or township is too large or too small. Buy returnable glass bottles - use cotton diapers instead of 'disposables'. Let's eliminate the "Mt. Trashmores" that dot our country. Let's embark on a pilot project for recycling in North Simcoe which produces as an end product, compost or humus to enhance and sustain our foodland rather than bury it.

Remember, as it is, we are losing 26 acres of agricultural land in Canada every hour.

-Harald Boker
RR 3 Elmvale

Accurate coverage

Dear Editor:

The recent announcement of agreement between the Friends of Wye Marsh and the Ministry of the Environment provides the opportunity to express sincere thanks to your newspaper for solid accurate coverage of the Wye Marsh story.

Friends of Wye Marsh have been in contact with both Murray Moore and Rudy Fleischman, and have felt their sincere interest has played a significant role in keeping our community informed about the Wye Marsh Wildlife Centre.

For your concern and interest in reporting on the Wye Marsh we thank you. Yours truly,

Mike Hines President Friends of Wye Marsh

Huronian Calendar

April 13

St. Paul's United Church, Midland, UCW rummage sale, in the church hall, doors open at 10 a.m.

April 26

Simcoe County Historical Association will join the Collingwood Historical Society. Betty Farquharson will talk about Sir Sanford Fleming. Collingwood town hall, 8 p.m.

April 27

St. Theresa's Ladies Auxiliary garage sale at St. Theresa's High School, Dominion Avenue, Midland, between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.

May 11

Royal Canadian Legion Branch 80, Midland, is presenting a Scottish variety show and dance at the Legion hall from 8 p.m. until 1 a.m. Headlining the show will be the famous Billy Meeke from TV's Pig and Whistle. Irene King and Peter Glen will thrill you with their singing while the Highland Dancers will entertain you with one of the world's most beautiful styles of dancing. The Nicol Brown trio will back up these performers and also supply the music for the dance which follows the show.

Tickets available at the Legion for \$12.50 per person.

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Due to the nature of this sale, April flyer items not available in Barrie location.