

Electrical storms cause of blackouts, little we can do

So you opened your refrigerator Friday night and the butter spilled to the floor. Your ice cubes were little puddles of water, and your milk was spoiled.

Then you checked your freezer, and bags of frozen raspberries were floating in six inches of water, and that red stuff that seeped from the brown bag was the first indication that several pounds of meat were ruined.

You had just suffered through a six-hour power failure.

The water in your swimming pool was turning a muddy color because the filter was off . . . and the temperature had dropped six degrees because the electric heater wasn't working.

You weren't happy about it and you wondered who would pay the damages. You also wondered if such a power failure would ever happen again.

Well, you may as well grin and bear it, because you'll pay the damage, and yes, it will likely happen again.

Because as long as there's

lightning in the skies, there'll be major electric transformers on the ground waiting to get hit.

Such a transformer was nailed in Buttonville Friday, plunging Richmond Hill into darkness for varying periods of time. North of our community power was off for several hours.

The power failure came on the heels of a massive outage in New York last week, and was followed by a 25-hour shutdown in North York on the weekend.

Electricity was the number one topic of discussion everywhere you went.

Hydro officials tell us there's little they can do to prevent lightning from striking a transformer. Even lightning rods won't completely draw the electricity from sensitive areas.

And with this heat, we can expect more electrical storms, and the lights will probably go out again.

The message is simple . . . get some candles, then grin and bear it.



No...I'm not calling to complain about the noise this time



Lawyer problem—could it possibly happen in Ontario?

Not too long ago in Victoria, B.C., a veteran city lawyer complained there were too many "drunken, inexperienced and dishonest" lawyers in the province, and urged the Law Society to do something about it.

His biggest grievance revolved around the increased premium he had to pay into the society fund to reimburse the public for negligence.

Is the same thing happening here? Scene — Lawyer's office. Lawyer has just put bottle into bottom drawer of desk and is stuffing handful of mints into his mouth when client comes in. Lawyer (L) — Ah, sit down, Mr. Brass. Client (C) — The name is Lumb. L — Well, I knew it rhymed with something. Now, let me see, you're here on that impaired driving charge, aren't you?

C — No, I shot my wife.

L — Ah, yes. How is she.

C — Fine, I missed.

L — Of course, it was last year you were up for impaired driving, wasn't it?

C — No, it's next month. Remember, you had it put over so you'd have more time to deal with my present charge.

L — Ah, yes, now I remember . . . What was it again?

C — There were two charges: threatening and dangerous use of a firearm.

L — Yes, that's it. What do you think of the new gun legislation? Should keep a lot of nuts like you from running around wild with shotguns.

C — Please, I'm here to get your help for that very thing. I took a shot at my wife, remember? I could go to jail.

L — Well, I guess you should, too, if that's what you did. That was a terrible thing to do.

C — I'm quite aware of that; that's why I'm here. I need your help.

L — How come you're not in custody? A madman like you running around . . .

C — Lookit, I hired you to defend me, not to try me. You said you could get me off; that I could plead self defense, because she was trying to run me down at the time.

L — Was she?

C — Sure she was. Course, she was only riding a bike . . .

L — A man's or a woman's?

C — A man's.

L — Aha — now we're getting somewhere. Has she always ridden men's bikes?

C — Well, I . . .

L — Probably means she wants to be a man — wanted to be you. Yes, that's it, she wanted to be you.

C — Wanted to be me?

L — Yes, and in wanting to be you, she wanted to be dead. So that's why she took a run at you and let you shoot her. And because you missed, she's probably getting ready right now to sue you.

C — Sue me? You must be crazy — or drunk, or both.

L — I resent you calling me crazy.

C — This whole thing is ridiculous; I'm leaving.

L — I hope you're not driving.

C — Why not?

L — Because of your impaired driving charge.

C — I haven't been convicted yet.

L — Well, there's a good chance you will. How often do the courts get a case where someone's riding a bicycle while they're drinking and waving a shotgun at the same time. Could have killed someone.

C — I'll send you a cheque for your services.

L — Good idea. Getting more expensive to be a lawyer all the time. Just the other day, the Law Society raised our premiums.

C — Why, are you all getting uniforms?

L — No — although that might be an idea — seems a lot of drunken — er — irresponsible lawyers are being charged with negligence by the public.

C — Really. How do they go about doing that?

L — Well, they have to file a complaint. Just a matter of filling out some forms.

C — M-m-m-m. Do you have any?

L — Why, ah, yes. (Takes one out of drawer.)

C — Thank you. Now, how do you say you spell your last name?



By SHARON BRAIN

The morning of the storm, Thornhill was sizzling.

At eight o'clock, the neighbour's kids were already in the pool. You could barely hear their splashes over the hum of fans and air conditioners.

So when my company arrived, we got into the car and headed for the farm in Headford. I figured the kids could race about and give each other heat prostration while we relaxed beneath a tree and fanned each other with magazines.

It would have worked too, if we just had a few more kids.

As any teacher will tell you, 25 kids are no trouble at all, but two are plenty. If the pupil-teacher ratio ever gets that low, teachers will have as many nervous breakdowns as mothers.

By two o'clock, the kids had ridden the pony, explored the barn, hunted for eggs and played in the orchard.

Now they wanted to go fishing, like Ms. Brain had promised.

Ms. Brain had made that promise to their father in a mellow moment at the end of a businessman's lunch downtown.

She had certainly not expected that he would run home and blab to his kids.

But he had.

So we went and got their fishing poles.

They were lovely things, complete with casting reels. The kids assured me they also had a great big box full of wonderful lures.

Of course, the box was in Daddy the Squealer's car.

The fishing hooks were there, too.

PIN HOOKS

But mothers are women of many resources and theirs could see how disappointed I was at the thought of not being able to take her two sons down the hill and across the field and around to the pond.

So she helped me hunt for safety pins which we bent into hooks. She helped me dig worms. She found some wieners.

And quicker than you could say "But it's too hot to go fishing", we were off.

As we walked, we had a wonderful conversation about fish that sucked your blood, fish that they knew were lurking in the very pond we were heading for.

We discussed the proper way to thread a worm on the hook, head or tail first.

We debated about how to tell the head of a worm from the tail.

There was no discussion about who was putting the worms on and taking the fish off. Their father had assured them that it was the one thing I really liked to do.

When we got to the pond, the dragon flies were flashing across the water and the banks

were littered with frogs taking in the sun.

The kids allowed me to help them put the worms on and take off the one sunfish that actually managed to get its mouth open wide enough to swallow a safety pin.

When the worms ran out, we chased frogs. For city kids, they were pretty quick with the bucket. We were getting good results, when the oldest looked north at the sky.

THEN IT HITS

It was pitch black. After worms and fish and frogs, I knew there was nothing to fear from a little summer shower.

I suggested we wait it out in the skating hut, but the oldest looked nervous.

He suggested we high-tail it for the house. We made it in the door just as the hail hit.

Considering the thunder and lightning and wind and rain, those two kids could have been stuck in a shack for hours with a quivering heap of cowardice on their hands.

I don't think I could have ever threaded enough worms to re-establish my image as an adult.

The next day we drove north through Sharon and Queensville. We stared at the debris and felled trees.

Threading worms may be brave.

But waiting out summer storms in skating huts is something else again.

Letters

Noise in field unbearable, he says

Dear editor:

It is with a great deal of concern that I write this letter. As a third generation resident of Langstaff, which under regional government is now included in the southern portion of the Town of Richmond Hill, I am troubled over the recent events that have taken place on the property known as Omega Farm which borders the residences of this area.

One of the major advantages in living in an area such as ours in the past was the fact that it was a peaceful country retreat where one could get away from the nerve wrenching bustle of the city environment after a hard day's work.

However in the past two years that situation has been radically altered for the worst.

I am referring especially to the constant din of motorcycles that emanates from the southeast portion of the Omega Farm, especially when the weather is good and the wind is blowing in a certain direction, as it was on Thursday, June 30, 1977 to cite just one occasion.

The long time residents of this area who knew the former owners were fortunate in being allowed free access to that property to pursue their peaceful and lawful activities as jogging, hiking and walking our dogs.

In return for this privilege many of us pitched in and helped on the farm at harvest time. Many of us feel a sense of frustration and anger over what is happening to that land.

It is not only the motorcycles that are



BARRY ROLLINSON

"letting off steam" and that it "keeps them off the street".

However the first place that these individuals go after an uncontrolled drinking bout, where the only restriction on their intake is the amount brought with them, is onto a public road.

How many innocent victims will be claimed on the region's roads as a result of this state of affairs?

We in our own house have called the police on several occasions in the past two years with regard to incidents that have occurred as a result of the lack of any control in the area known as Omega Farm.

We ourselves had our own property broken onto in April from the back which borders on Omega Farm. I have also seen evidence of several gardens having been robbed to provide nourishment to the persons using this property for their own selfish devices.

I understand that several others bordering this land have also phoned the police on several occasions with regard to activities on this land.

People who I have talked to exhibit an impatient sense of frustration in not being able to correct this intolerable state of affairs.

I strongly feel that the "developer" (a misused term if there ever was one) has a moral if not a legal obligation to maintain some kind of order on that property until he decides to build upon it.

To give you an indication of the severity of the problem and to

demonstrate that I am not exaggerating allow me to cite the following evidence.

Last summer in the period from the third week in June until the third week of September while walking or jogging in that area I found more than 1,000 unbroken beer bottles.

This is to say nothing of the glass from the broken beer bottles as well as the liquor and wine bottles (smashed and otherwise) pop bottles, tin cans as well as other assorted litter which has

been taken to the recycling centre.

In addition in the past two years at least eight and possibly as many as ten cars have been wrecked on that property — some in areas designated for the green belt which the taxpayers of the Province no doubt will have to pay to have removed.

It used to be that one saw much evidence of peaceful activities taking place on this land — such as horseback riding, jogging and hiking. Lately one sees little

evidence of such peaceful pursuits.

As a university student I find it terribly annoying to say the least when, as happened last autumn, I could not even have my window open on a hot Sunday afternoon while reading for some of my courses for the noise of trail bikes.

I hope this letter will be the starting point in bringing some peace and quiet to the residents of this area.

BARRY ROLLINSON
181 Garden Ave.
Thornhill.

Comments out of context, she says

Dear editor:

It was with interest that I read your June 22 edition, in particular your reporting of the Jr. Kindergarten issue of Monday, June 20 special Board of Education meeting.

My husband and I own several dogs and have managed to train them to stay in our yard.

I realize that there are many irresponsible dog owners who allow their dogs to roam.

However, there are as many, if not more, cats on the loose.

I sat on my porch one evening and watched a neighbour's cat leave his yard, strut over to the house next door, dig up

their flower garden, do his daily business and then walk away.

My own garden has also been disturbed in the same way.

What about the germs that have been deposited there?

I fail to see why cats must not be restricted to their own properties in the same manner as dogs.

Then, or if, this problem is ever resolved I may have more sympathy for those who think dogs are a hazard.

MR. AND MRS. R. TRIANCE-HALDANE
158 Lennox Avenue
Richmond Hill

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10101 Yonge Street, P.O. Box 390, L4C 4Y6, Ontario
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