

Sidewalk Talk



What if... it's your kid

By Mark Van Dusen

There were a couple of drug busts along the Castor recently and although they didn't exactly amount to French Connection III, they did confirm what most people already know — drugs are coming into the area.

If you didn't know that, hang on before you go locking your kid up. Chances are if that kid is in high school, he has already been introduced to drugs to some extent. That could mean anything from having heard other kids talking about drugs, to having tried them.

On the other hand, it would be just as extreme to ignore the availability of drugs to kids. To say "what does it matter?", that drugs are a fact of life, that your kids are going to use them one way or another will likely ensure that they will.

Most parents take the rational approach of educating their kids about drugs — alcohol included — about abuse and addiction, based on the latest documented information. But what if, what if you find your kid is using drugs despite your best intentions; worse, abusing drugs? What if you, a kid, don't know where to turn?

"What If?" is the subject of a panel discussion at the Morrisburg civic centre, 7:30 p.m., May 12. It will be the latest event in the relatively short but remarkable life of DATA — Drug and Alcohol Teen Awareness.

The panel will feature a representative of the Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services, a lawyer, an OPP officer, a high school principal, a psychologist, a guidance counsellor and a physician. The cross-section of speakers is evidence of the wide popularity DATA has earned since it first grouped a stunning 400 Morrisburg area parents and kids last fall.

What got them together was the desperate realization that an inordinate number of kids in communities along the Seaway were hooked on drugs. And hooked to the point where several finally agreed to go away for rehabilitation.

What made it all credible was the fact the kids had come to the parents asking for help. They got it and since then DATA has sent speakers or has helped establish anti-drug groups in Iroquois, Winchester, Alexandria, Napanee and Chesterville in the three United Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry. It has also responded to requests for information from Belleville, Carleton Place, Smiths Falls and Brantford.

A day of activities is being planned for kids aged nine to 16 "to show them they can have a good time without artificial stimulants," said Janet Herriman, DATA organizer.

"Kids that age are a big part of the problem. We've had one nine-year-old addict and two young girls were recently picked up by the OPP and we had to place one in rehabilitation she had such a bad problem."

The May 12 panel is planned as an opportunity to begin generating interest — and funds — for a local rehabilitation centre.

"The meeting is wide open, everyone is welcome. We need all the help and all the moral support we can get and we'll give at least as much in return," she said.

She urged concerned Castor parents and kids to attend, in particular those who crave an answer to What If?

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Plant a tree — Sunday

Paul Boardman — the Castor tree-totaller — is at it again.

Still riding the success of last year's first tree-plant, the Russell area designer and contractor has ordered a second big shipment of seedlings for distribution to local residents.

The big day — Sunday, May 10. There's a change in location though. Paul will be handing out the baby trees from his place instead of from the Doctor Frank Kinnaird community centre. The map on this page will show you how to get there. You can pick yours up starting at 10 a.m.

The seedlings are red pine, suitable for dry ground, and tamarack which do best on wetter land. There will be 7,600 in all but get there early — they go fast!

Paul is also hoping for an additional 10,000 cedar seedlings but couldn't be sure of delivery until the day of the plant.

Planting the seedlings is simple. Make a slash in the ground with a spade, tuck in the tree and pat flat. A little bone meal or peat moss helps.

The popularity of last year's event is visible in the scores of previously barren sections of land now sprouting trees. More than 20,000 were planted and, if the cedar comes through May 10, a total of close to 40,000 will have been rooted in Castor soil.

It's all part of Paul's plan to

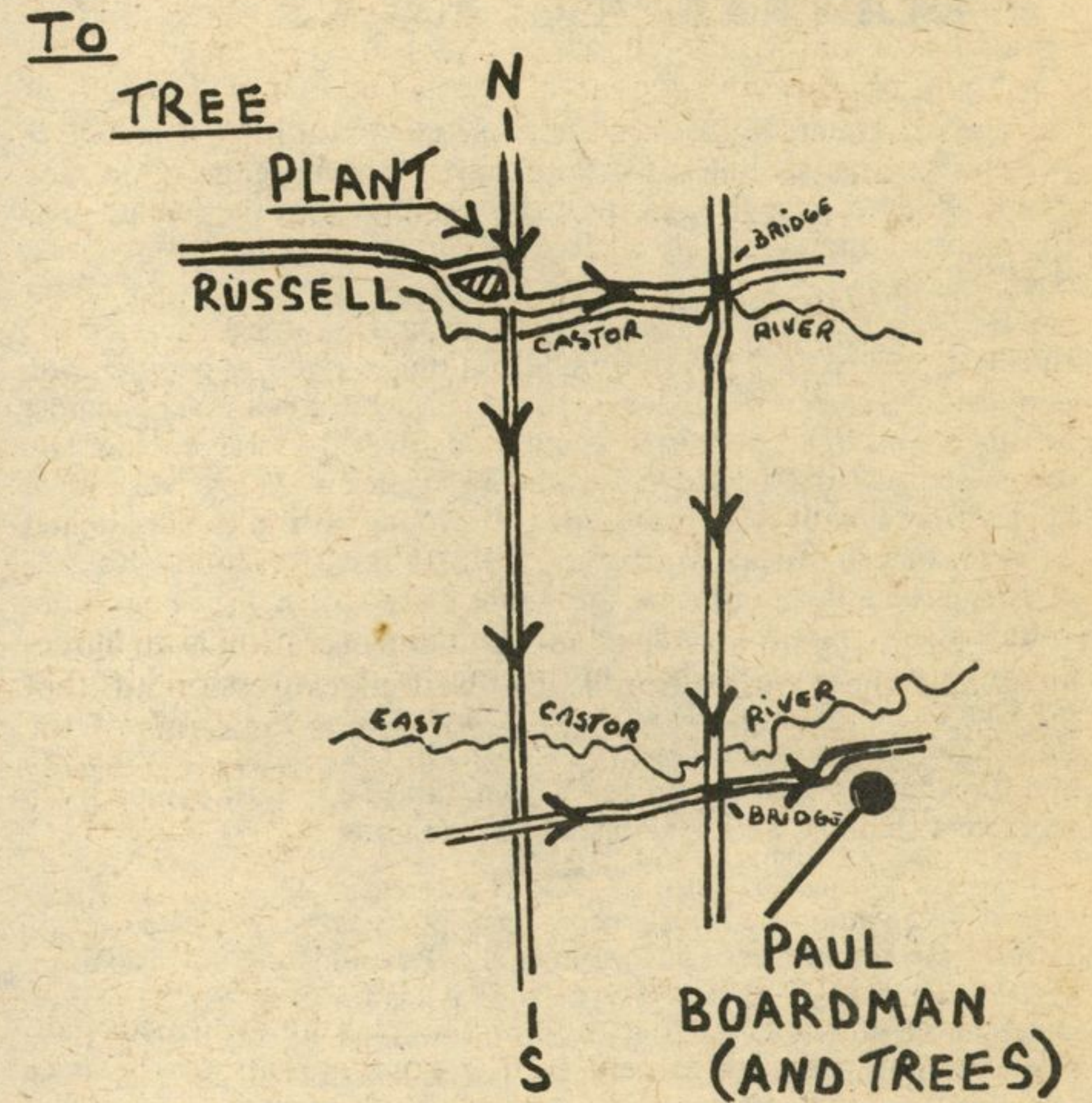
return the area to its former green magnificence.

"If we keep it up, it will be great for the area and it won't take too long before the results of our efforts really start showing up," he said.

The seedlings are supplied by

Ontario Natural Resources at two-and-a-half cents each and Paul says the generosity of Reeve Gaston Patenaude and Russell Township council will again cover the cost.

That means you pick them up for nothing.



Energy — Wise is way

Virtually at a standstill during the past two years, Castor area real estate sales will pick up in the wake of the Ottawa boom, local observers say.

Ottawa property transactions have taken off following reports that western businessmen are putting their real estate dollars into the Capital, says Garry Patterson of Chantal Development.

Potential buyers have also decided that mortgage interest rates aren't about to tumble and are making their move now, Mr. Patterson notes.

Climbing city prices will soon force buyers to look for rural real estate bargains with savings that offset the cost of commuting.

Chantal is not content to wait for consumers to come to it. Rather, the company has designed and is building in Russell Village an energy-wise home featuring technology developed in Western Canada.

To be sold for about \$72,000, the three-bedroom, three-bathroom home will include

\$5,000 worth of equipment which will cut the annual heating bill by as much as two-thirds.

The most conspicuous plus is foot-thick wall insulation and 20 inches of fiberglass in the ceiling. This provides a rating of R-40 in the walls and R-60 in the ceilings instead of the standard R-12 and R-28. The basement will be upped to R-20 from the standard R-8.

Construction of the special home is being closely monitored by the National Research Council and will soon be tested by Ontario Hydro for air leaks, Mr. Patterson said.

But a 6-mill continuous vapor barrier will lock the living area in a plastic cocoon and should make it airtight.

The same features and amount of space would cost at least \$15,000 more in a city subdivision, Mr. Patterson stressed.

Other savers to be installed in the model home include: heat-distributing solar windows, a heat trap on the water heater, water-saving shower heads, insulated steel exit doors, and return air grills at ceiling level.

Mr. Patterson anticipates a good sales season for Chantal with four homes already sold this spring. So far, there is no confirmed buyer for the energy-wise home.

Asked to comment on the inventory of some 30 private houses for sale in and around Russell Village, the developer contended older homes are not as popular these days because of the heating crunch.

In addition, Ottawa residents are worried about the high cost of gasoline. However, he pointed out, that cost is more than offset by lower taxes and lower housing prices in the country.

Another phenomenon affecting rural sales is the return to the city core where people are refurbishing older buildings and paying dearly to do so.

"You know, I can't understand some people," Mr. Patterson said. "They worry about the distance and the travelling time and lots of them are covering almost as many miles to get from one end of the city to another."

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