

**Terrace Bay
Schreiber**

News

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Give it time

The layoff of 355 employees at the Kimberly-Clark pulp mill in Terrace Bay has overshadowed the environmental problems the mill is also faced with. It is to the company's credit that they decided to hold a press conference earlier this week to address that situation. (Details of that meeting will appear in next week's issue of the News.)

The bottom line at that session seemed to be this: K-C has spent millions of dollars trying to reach the objectives in the control order issued by the Ministry of the Environment, and for all intents and purposes, all of the control order requirements have been met.

There is, of course, one exception to this. The company has been unable to meet the federal toxicity requirements, and it is obvious it won't be able to do so for some time yet, even though the present control order expires next month. It should be noted that some action has been taken on this requirement already — toxicity levels are down 70 per cent since the control order was implemented in 1982. There is still a bit more to go to reach the necessary federal levels, and to do that K-C will need time *and* money. Right now it doesn't have much of either, but at the very least the Ministry should extend the control order to give the company more time. This way, K-C will be able to concentrate on the problem itself, and not worry about how quickly the problem has to be solved.



Close To The Edge

By Conrad Felber

I've got two beefs this week. The first one is short and sweet (just like me). It's Ontario Hydro, or rather, Hydro's constant power interruptions in the area. A five-minute loss of electricity may not seem like much of a thing to complain about, but when one works with sensitive computer hardware (as I do), even a five-second loss is a major concern. So, Hydro, wise up (See, I can yap at them all I want because they've already cancelled their subscription!)

My second, and far lengthier beef, is one I've raised in this space before, weeks ago. No, it's not booze or the Censor Board or anything like that. This week I'm gonna whine about "a custom loathsome to the eye, hateful

to the nose, harmful to the brain, dangerous to the lungs" (James I, 1604)...*smoking*.

I have always been an ardent, almost violent anti-smoker, but something which happened at the last Terrace Bay Council pushed me over the edge (or, remaining true to the title of this column, *close to the edge*).

Smoking has always been allowed in the Council Chambers, so it is no wonder that Councillors and visiting members of the public alike often light up during the course of a meeting. Until last week, I've always tolerated it. But no more!

What happened is this: I was sitting at the press table, minding my own business, when two women who often attend the open Council meetings decided to sit at the table with me instead of at the back of the room, because at that time most of

their traditional chairs were filled by others. So far, so good. But *then* one of these ladies pulled out a cigarette and smoked it, and then another, and then *another*, and then.... (I think you get the idea).

One needs a certain amount of patience when it comes to things like this, as inconsideration is one of the side effects of nicotine, but then I could no longer hold myself back.

I very politely asked this woman to move to another seat in the room if she was going to continue smoking. A stunned look came over her face. She quickly recovered, plopped herself in the chair next to me, and huffed "I'm a taxpayer, and you're *not*" at me, followed by the lighting of another one of her cancer sticks.

Well, what could I do? I sat there and fumed for the rest of the meeting. I suppose I could've caused a scene,

right then and there, but I thought better of it, and decided to respond later on in this column, where my ranting might actually have some effect.

Please understand that I'm not against smokers just to be mean. No, my problem is very simple...cigarette smoke quite literally makes me *sick*. I don't like being sick. I don't enjoy being force-fed second-hand smoke (which some studies have shown to be *seven* times as deadly to the body as the stuff smokers actually inhale). I don't care for the stench or for what the smoke does to my eyes, my clothes...my *being*.

Like George Bernard Shaw, I look forward to the day when the world will look back with amazement and disgust to a practice so unnatural and offensive as smoking. But cigarettes (and cigars, and pipes) still exist, much to the detriment of today's



society. As I've said before, if you really *want* to kill yourself, that's fine. Just don't do it around *me*.

To that end, I am forced to make an all-too-serious request. The time has come for a No Smoking policy at *all* public meetings, including our area Township Council sessions. This may not be a very popular idea with some local politicians, but I for one have just about *had* it. Something must be done. Today.

Okay, that's all...for now. See you next week (if I haven't died from lung cancer before then, that is).

Black N' White

Arthur Black baffled by postal codes

By Arthur Black

Now don't misunderstand me -- I am not a wimp. I'm not the kind of guy that caves in just because some new concept is a little hard to grasp. I'm willing to give any innovation a decent trail run, but this has been with us for more than a decade now and I'm just as buffaloed as I was the first day the Post Office dropped it on us. I give up. I know when I'm whipped.

Is there anybody out there who truly understands Postal Codes?

We all have one -- a meaningless agglomeration of letters and numbers that is supposed to speed delivery of our mail. Does your mail come more swiftly than it did ten years ago? Mine doesn't. Back in P.P.C. (that's Pre-Postal Code) days, you could drop a card in a mailbox addressed "Joe Blow, Pundydoodles Corners" and it would find him. Today if you don't know the magic six-figure mumbo jumbo, Joe will never even know you're alive.

NOB 1S0 -- that's my personal postal code. What the hell, you well may ask, is a NOB 1S0? It's a question I've asked myself more than once. There is no answer. A NOB 1S0

just ... is ... like athlete's foot or the budget deficit.

Actually, NOB 1S0 isn't all that bad, as Postal Codes go. I used to be saddled with P7A 4C6 until I moved. Before that I was known as POT 2E0.

You try holding your head up in society when you're lumbered with a Postal Code like POT 2E0.

Naw, NOB 1S0 is...almost memorable, really -- although sometimes if I'm rushed I'll blurt out and scrawl NABISCO OR NOVELLA OR NOXEMA.

The people in charge of Public Relations at the Canada Post suggest that I invent my very own mnemonic rhyme to help me remember my postal code -- you know, like -- oh, let's see...NOB 1S0 might become Nerdy Old Bureaucrats I'll Snuff Out. I could do that, I suppose, except that I don't really have time to go around coining rhymes and assigning them to the postal codes of everyone I know and all the business addresses I have to write to. If I invented rhymes then I'd have to remember them and I have enough things to remember already.

Such as my anniversary, where I parked the car and the rest of my address.

Ever given any thought to just how absurd our Postal Code system is? At least the Americans had sense enough to stick to straight numbers. Not us. We've got letters *and* numbers. Didn't anyone at the Post Office twig to the fact that 1's would look like I's? Or that 6's would get confused with G's and B's mistaken for 8's?

The worst of it is, you now get penalized if you don't use the Postal Code. Recently I sent a package to a friend who lives in a rural community in northwestern Ontario. I spelled his name perfectly. I had the correct province printed in capital letters. I even had his street and his rural route number, plus the name of the community -- which is Kaministiquia.

Wanna guess how many communities there are called Kaministiquia in the Dominion of Canada?

The package took six weeks to arrive. When my friend finally got it there was a big black stamp across the front, bearing a snotty, stenciled message that read: "For quick efficient service, be sure to use the Postal

Code."

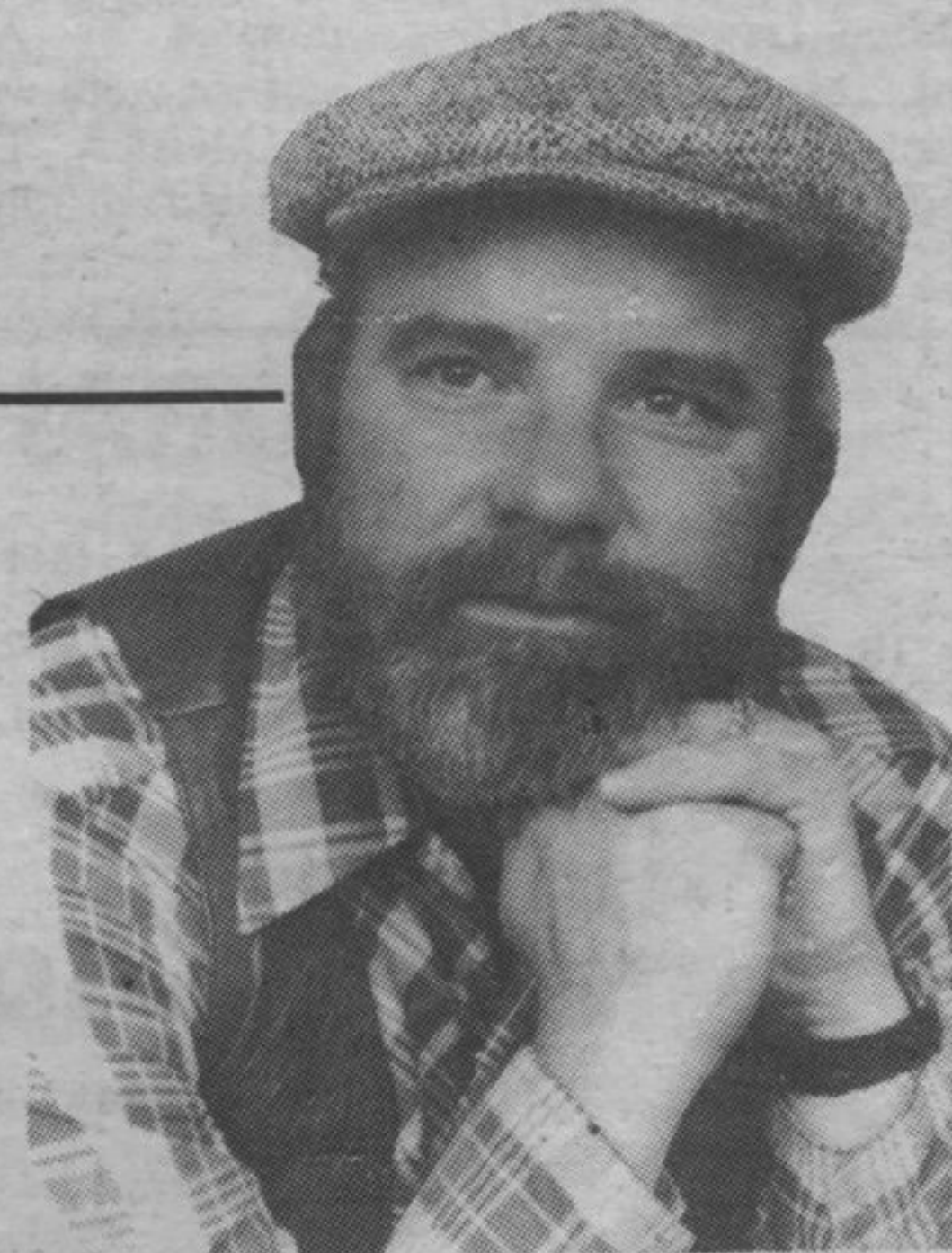
Needless to say, I hadn't.

Which brings up another fascinating aspect of the whole fiasco -- how do you find out somebody's postal code if you don't happen to know it? Well you can drop into your local branch of the Post Office -- it keeps a list of postal codes for every community in every province. So do the public libraries. What's that you say? You don't happen to live between a post office and a public library? No problem -- just call up the party you're trying to write to and ask them for their postal code.

And while you're at it, tell them what you were going to write to them about and save yourself the price of a stamp.

Welcome to Postal Paranoia -- the growing belief that Postal Codes are really a nefarious Bell Telephone plot to increase long-distance business.

A couple of months ago I decided to investigate the efficacy of Postal Codes in a logical manner. I sent off three letters to an out-of-town friend. Each letter was in a standard envelope and consisted of a single sheet of paper. One letter had the correct ad-



dress with no postal code. The third letter had a totally fictitious series of six letters and numbers that wasn't even close to the correct code.

The results were as I feared. The presence, absence or accuracy of the Postal Code made no appreciable difference.

All three letters arrived late. But hey, what would life be if everything worked at the time? My advice to people who rant and rail against our Postal Code and other perceived postal inequities: Forget it! Laugh it off. Lighten up, pal.

And for crying out loud, stop whining about the cost of mailing a letter while you're at it. Thirty-four cents ain't so much to pay for first class delivery.

Especially when you consider that at least 25 cents of that goes for postage.