

Editorial Page

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Restoration of ozone layer will take centuries

The environment is one issue that is cropping up in the news with increasing frequency.

The big news last week was the discovery by a number of international scientists of a hole in the ozone layer above the Arctic. Scientists have known about the ozone layer hole above the South Pole for years now and the testing in the Arctic confirmed their suspicions.

Ozone is a gas that forms naturally in the upper atmosphere and absorbs ultraviolet rays from incoming sunlight.

Ultraviolet light causes severe sunburns, and skin cancer in humans. But animals and crops are affected more as they cannot be protected from the radiation. Scientists also believe the warming of the earth's atmosphere is caused by the increasing amount of ultraviolet radiation.

The warming of the earth's atmosphere may not seem hazardous. It may even be welcomed by people in colder climates. But with the warming comes increased flooding and significant changes to the growing season of farmers.

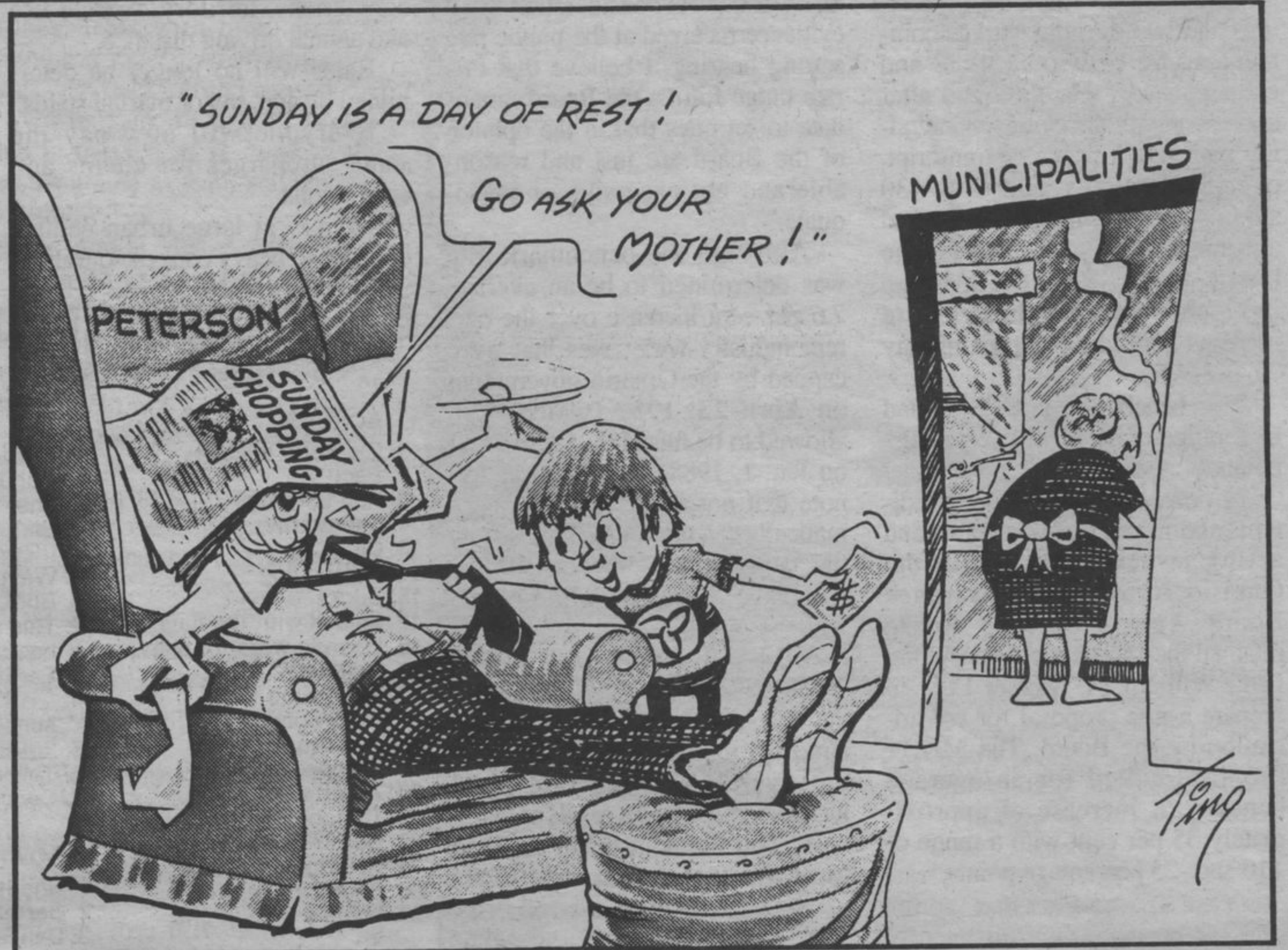
Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), a man-made chemical, is believed by scientists to be the main cause of such holes in the ozone layer. A chemical widely used in fire extinguishers, Halon, is another source of the problem.

CFCs are widely used in aerosol spray cans, refrigeration, air-conditioning and freezing systems, and in the manufacturing of foam products.

People must begin to realize that by continuing to use these products, they are destroying our planet. It may not seem like much to use a styrofoam cup here and some hair spray there, but when added up, they're destroying the planet.

Scientists believe the drastic increase in the number of cases of skin cancer is directly related to the damage taking place to the ozone layer.

The damage to the ozone layer has only taken a few decades to occur, but scientists estimate it will take two or three hundred years for the damage to be repaired - and that is only if immediate action is taken.



An international agreement signed only last year by most industrial nations in Montreal, pledged to cut in half the 1986 level of production of chemicals considered to be the cause of the ozone trouble by 1999.

During a meeting of 20 heads of state in The Hague next month, Prime Minister Brian Mulroney will call for faster action to save the earth's protective ozone layer. The meeting was called to raise the level of world wide concern over the dangers of atmospheric pollution.

A number of companies now realize the extent of the problem and are now taking the appropriate action.

McDonald's Restaurant, for example, is no longer packaging their food in styrofoam containers which deplete the ozone layer.

We can all take steps to stop the depletion of the ozone layer. Don't use styrofoam cups and don't use spray containers if they use CFC. Use spray containers which use CO₂ (carbon dioxide) instead.

The world is too important to waste for the sake of convenience.

Letters to the Editor are always welcome. Please address your letters to:

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Terrace Bay/Schreiber News
Box 579
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In order that we may verify authorship, please include your name and phone number.

Feel free to use this forum to express comments, appreciation, inform or advise people on anything of public interest.

Confessions of an onion addict

This column is an abject apology to all the fans who were with me -- briefly-- down at the local arena last Tuesday evening.

I understand why you abandoned me, left me to occupy the entire east wall of bleachers by myself while all of you huddled and crowded yourselves into the stands on the opposite side of the ice.

I'm not upset with your decision to shun me. I don't blame you a bit. No hard feelings.

It was the onions, wasn't it.

I knew it -- knew it even when I was scarfing them down at dinner before the hockey game. But I couldn't stop myself.

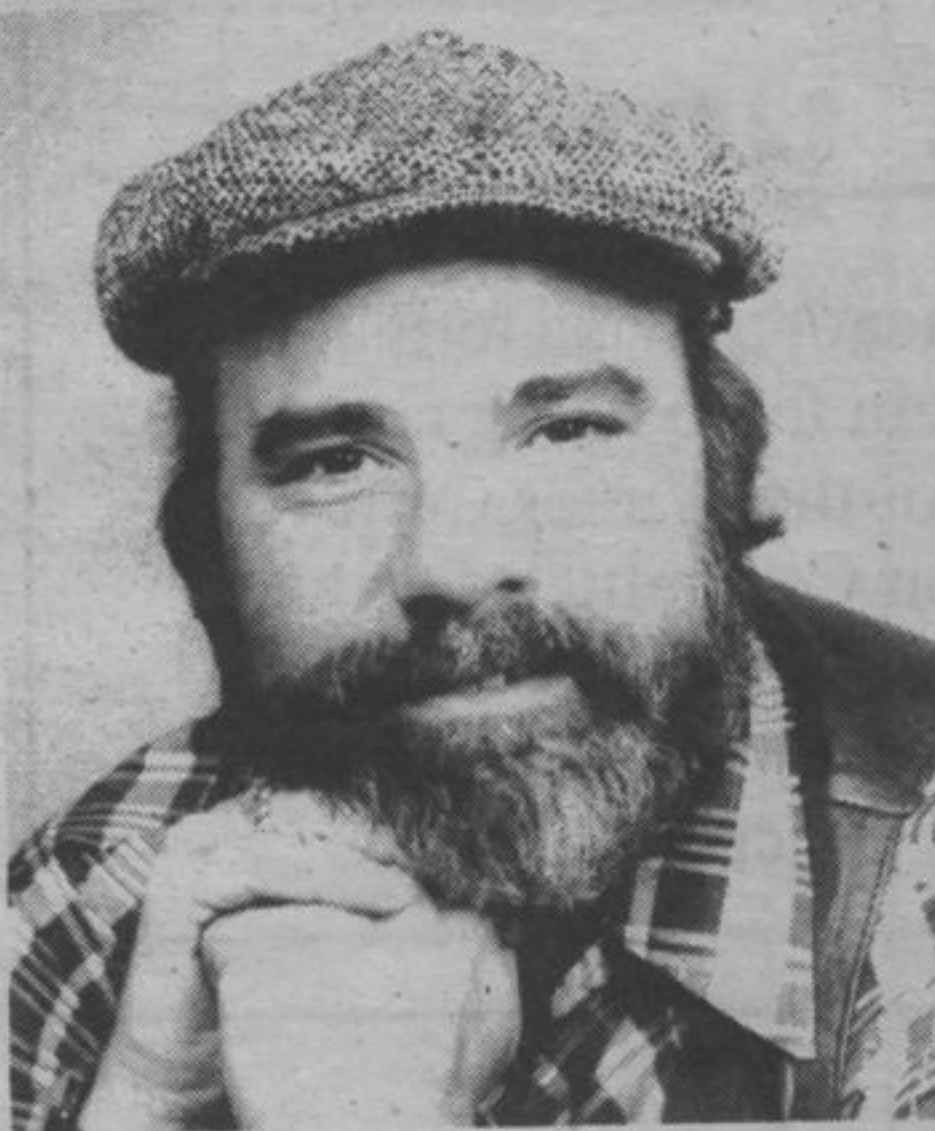
Usually, I am a man of reasonable self-control.. You could walk me through a boxcar of cocaine and I wouldn't be tempted to sniff. I don't do heroin or hashish; absinthe or anabolic steroids. As for the number of times I've woken up in opium dens surrounded by

geisha girls -- I can count them on the fingers of one mitten.

I am not a frequenter of booze cans, gambling dens, or the drawing rooms of houses of ill repute, but by cracky, show me a chive or a shallot and my lower lip begins to tremble. Wave a leek in my face and I whimper like a baby. Show me a Rubenesque Spanish seductively shucking its onion skins in slow motion and EEE-YAW! -- I turn into a ravening beast.

Yes, I'm an onion luster. A harmless enough mania, as addictions go -- aside from the friendship fallout. People just don't take kindly to the thought of *tete-a-tete*-ing with someone whose breath can set fire to eyelashes and melt mascara. that's why my fellow hockey fans so enthusiastically vacated the entire east side of the arena last week. Considering the provocation (I'd eaten a fistful of garlic toast) I thought they handled themselves with poise

and discretion, although I found the catcalls of "Beat it, flamethrower!" and "Hit the highway, laserbreath!" a tad overwrought. but I have to admit, if the tables were turned,



Arthur Black

I'm not sure I'd want to get very chummy with a man who can sing cotton clothing and ignite paper articles by the simple act of exhalation.

Mind you, with a couple of

Certs and a dollop of mouthwash, I think I could mount a fairly spirited defense of the practice of onion eating. And I'd have plenty of evidence to back me up. Common sense, for starters. For centuries, folk medicine practitioners around the world -- from Confucius to my mother -- have sworn by the efficacy of onions in warding off sniffles and sneezes. (Cynics don't dispute the cold-combating properties of onions; they say it's because no self-respecting virus could withstand the reek.)

And more good news -- a study published in the Journal of the National Cancer Institute last month indicates that my favourite veggie can keep more than a bad case of sniffles at bay. The study, which was conducted by a joint team of U.S. and Chinese scientists concluded that regular consumption of onions (and/or its elder cousin, garlic) significantly reduces the risk of stomach cancer. Previous studies have shown that onion-

eating lowers the risk of heart disease, but the cancer link is something new.

How does the lowly onion accomplish all this? No one knows for sure, but scientists think it may be the presence of allyl sulphide. that's a chemical found in all allium vegetables -- which is to say garlic, chives, leeks, shallots, scallions and garden variety onions. In laboratory experiments, allyl sulphide has been very effective in inhibiting the growth of cancer cells.

But I don't eat onions because I'm a health nut.

To tell you the truth, I think I'd eat 'em if they were as hazardous to your health as smoking cigarettes or sitting through a Michael Wilson speech.

I eat onions for two reasons: first, they taste great. Secondly, they keep vampires away.

Okay... three reasons.

They always get me the best seat at hockey games.