

All The World's A Circus

Dogs shouldn't drive

I am compelled by an ardent sense of driver safety and by a powerful predilection to obey the rules of the road, to address a pressing problem I have witnessed across this great country of ours - namely, dogs driving cars. It began innocently enough and almost unnoticed when rural folk used to go to town in the tractor trailer and let a couple of mangy mutts ride in the back.

Slowly, stealthily, the dogs began to take over motorized vehicles. At first it was just a few French poodles prancing around the back seat of a Plymouth. Then a couple of official-looking German shepherds were seen riding shotgun in a Ford pick-up truck.

A cocker spaniel looked kind of cute in the back window of the family sedan, an Irish setter added a touch of hominess to the wood-paneled station wagon.

Pretty soon the sight of a dog with his head sticking out the window of moving vehicles was as common in this country as a frazeled father with gum in his ear, swinging blindly behind him trying to make contact with any one of three unruly kids on the family vacation.

Before too long, a lone driver was often outnumbered by his canine crew and they'd growl menacingly if he drove by a pet food store without stopping.

Pretty soon Humane Societies passed Dog Labor Legislation detailing how far the window should be down and how long dogs were obligated to wait in the car in the hotel parking lots, while the owner of the vehicle, drank beer inside.

Eventually small dog robots installed in back window, with their heads flopping side to side, controlled the back brake lights and signalling devices of many motor vehicles.

Until finally, it was all out of control.

Last Tuesday, a golden retriever, wearing a medical alert collar and driving a 1987 Buick LeSabre, cut me off and took my parking spot at Lighthouse Cleaners in Port Colborne. I am not

making this up.

The scary part was he actually signalled his turn and made a pretty nifty maneuver to shut me out while nearly creasing an idling B.M.W. with "Baby on Board".

Oh sure, it could be argued, even by the guy who offered to resuscitate me at the scene, that the short squat woman in the front seat was actually operating the foot

pedals but I know what I saw. And what I saw was an arrogant-looking dog with his head stuck out the driver's window, tongue-out, eyes watering and with one paw on the wheel, he drove into that parking lot.

Now call me crazy, but shouldn't this be some sort of violation of the Motorized Vehicle Act like Section 1, Item 2A: "Driver's must pass a written examination

demonstrating their knowledge of vehicle performance and highway hazard awareness"?

Now I now that as breeds go, golden retrievers are pretty smart dogs but I also remember that Ronald Stickley, my college roommate, failed that same test twice in a row - so I don't think there's a precedent to be set here.

I'm sorry, but when it comes to dogs driving cars, I'm dead against it.

I understand that dogs are now in charge of drug interdiction at all international North American airports and I'm fine with that.

I'm not even bothered by the fact that dogs have replaced night watchmen at all major junk yards in this country, although I'd be interested in asking that doberman at the tire dump in Hagersville exactly where he was and what he was doing at precisely 12:35 a.m., last February 12th.

But if I open the front door some evening and have to tuck \$20 into the collar of a black lab who's drooling all over my pizza box with Domino's wagon idling in my driveway - that's it - I'll call a cop.

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William J. Thomas

Life, According To "Baba"

New year resolutions

The jokers among us claim that New Year's Resolutions are made to be broken. Well, in my books, that's a loser's way of looking at things. If you don't intend to keep them, or even make an effort to do so, then forget it. You're not kidding anybody but yourself.

So much for personal resolutions. Now, how's about a lot of collective resolutions which could make life better, easier and a whole lot more enjoyable for ALL of us in one way or another, and from which we will ALL benefit. Such as the following:

Let us resolve to pay more attention to our children, to take an interest in what they are doing, where they are going and what they are up to. Let us teach them some manners and politenesses, and respect for parents, grandparents, relations, friends, strangers (if warranted, i.e), and most especially for private and public property.

Let us resolve to rid our society of all the pornographic sexual and violent excesses both on the big and little screens of our movie houses and television sets. If we truly love our children and wish only the BEST for them, then let us get rid of the WORST. Let us monitor television viewing in private, and lobby hard in public.

Let us get back to some yardstick of morals by which to adjudge both our actions and those of our children and not let 'everything hang out'. The pendulum of so-called 'freedom of expression' has swung too much to the unhealthy, unclean, degenerate side of things. Do we really have to have all the evils of the world flaunted in our faces in the pretext of 'education'? What one doesn't know, one does not indulge in or experiment with. Basic knowledge is acceptable, but explicit, graphic examples are not.

Let us return to some clear conception of good and evil, and not accept every perversion under the sun as somebody's expression of self in this over-abused

libertarian argument of today. And no longer accept, in our legal system, the feeble excuse that poverty is the root of all evil. Every criminal act whether in school, in the home, or on the streets, is a CONSCIOUS decision, and that conscious decision to go against the laws of society, should be duly and forcibly punished and not 'bleeding-hearted' away, to the safety and detriment of us all.

Let us resolve to stop envying others whose life styles appear to be so much wealthier than our own, and be thankful we live in a country where one's life style need not be on the level of the truly poverty-stricken in the world. Let us stop paying out tax dollars to the lazy, ignorant and arrogant.

Let us resolve to be more kind, thoughtful and understanding to those of

differing religious and ethnic backgrounds. But, by the same token, let them not try to impose their particular customs and traditions into the public sphere which affects us all. There is room in PRIVATE for everybody.

Let us resolve to return to basic values of life which make us truly human and not sub-human, wild-human or uncaring-human. Values which make us proud of ourselves, our families, our country, our society. It's time for some good old-fashioned principles which will guide both ourselves and our children - the 'hope of the future' - into a better, more moralistic future of which we need not be ashamed or fearful.

Let us resolve to truly abide by the true spirit of the Christ-child who was born in poverty, lived in poverty and died in misery, a spirit which rises above the irritating, frustrating banalities of life, and TRIES, 365 days of the year, to emulate to the best of its ability, the very essence of the adage, "DO ONLY unto others what you would like done unto you!"

Tries. That's the operative word. Not breaks, not gives up, not even attempts, but tries. That's what I would call REAL New Year's Resolution.



Olga Landiak

Wish list for Northern Ontario

Santa Claus
North Pole
Canada
HOHOHO

Dear Mr. Claus:

Re: Northern Ontario's 1990 Christmas wish list.

Your public relations assistants in Canada Post have done a really good job drumming up letters for you. I understand there's thousands of assistants hard at work every night and every weekend at post offices across Canada, answering the letters you get every day. I thought of sending mine by fax, but you have not publicized your fax number. So I'm trusting your helpers in Canada Post to pass this wish list to you, just like I'm sure they're passing along all the other lists they receive on your behalf.

First, you deserve a word of explanation about this list. I'm not expecting any of these to show up under our family's tree Christmas morning. I'm not even sure you can deliver on wishes like these. But since it's Christmas, I didn't think there was any harm in asking. Besides, you are a man of

influence, with lots of connections in the right places. You are alleged to be able to enter the hearths and hearts of not only the wealthy and powerful, but also the poor and downtrodden. So, as you make your rounds, please keep these wishes in mind, and put in a word or two in the right places for your humble servant.

Here's my wish list:

1. All those considering a run (or re-run) at municipal or school board office in November 1991 must have only selfless, community motives when they seek our votes. These individuals should also be willing to seek what is best for all of the region around their communities, not just the parochial interest of their home town.

2. The most expensive environmental assessment hearing ever held in Ontario, on timber management, must end before you make your rounds next year by producing a new rule book for forestry, based on the principles of sustainable development of our ecosystem. If this

happens, we might have a shot at having a forest industry for our grandchildren.

3. Dr. Bob Rosehart, recently appointed as Ontario's chief negotiator with the Nishnawbe Aski Nation on aboriginal self-government, should find, perhaps with your help, a way of allowing non-native people to have a say in developing the

NORTHERN INSIGHTS

by Larry Sanders



racist resistance from short-sighted non-native northerners.

4. Native leaders should work with the new provincial government to make sure they keep their promise of settling all outstanding Ontario land claims, and conclude self-government agreements, during the NDP's first term of office.

5. Everyone in northern Ontario interested in a viable, environmentally friendly transportation system, should come together in workshops and conferences sometime during 1991 and write a plan for a rational, integrated

transportation system that won't further deplete our governments' treasuries. This system must include rail and water passenger transportation methods - instead of building only on what we have left: a deteriorating road network, and a system of air transport that is fast becoming unaffordable by everyone except those travelling for business, or government.

6. Lois Wilson, the former moderator of the United Church of Canada now sitting on the federal environmental assessment review panel studying the concept of burying high-level radio-active waste in the Canadian shield, must be allowed to apply her moral and feminist perspectives to the decision-making systems about an issue that is unfortunately still dominated by male technocrats.

7. CBC Television use its post-cut, revised mandate of doing only national and regional programming to become an agent of change, rather than a reflection of the status quo. CBC Radio, largely untouched by the cuts, discovered that much more creative mandate a long time ago. Maybe

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