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Comment & Opinions

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to the editor
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EDITORIAL

Get involved to aid innocent children

Crime in our communities is hard to bear at the best of times, but it's even harder to tolerate when it's aimed at our children.

Recently there have been laced with crime stories about Dickie Dee vendors being robbed, bicycles being stolen from children, and last week a gang of six older youths swarmed two younger kids and stole freezies from them.

What is this world coming to? Where are any adult bystanders? Did they — or could they have — come to the aid of our innocent children?

There's always a fine line between getting involved and aiding someone in danger and protecting yourself in a potentially dangerous situation.

Regional and provincial police departments sometimes send a confusing double message. Police give or sponsor awards for civilians who do get involved aiding strangers affected by crime; yet consistently urge residents to be careful and not get injured or become the target of criminals themselves.

But when it comes to young people, surely any adult bystander should come to their aid, or at least phone police on their behalf.

Please keep a watch on our residential streets, in parks and around community centres for the rest of this summer. If you see a child or youth surrounded by a threatening group of kids — especially who are bigger — don't hesitate, get involved.

You don't have to approach the thugs yourself, unless you're with one or two other adults. Phone the police from the safety of your home, or go to the nearest phone booth and make the call.

Do your bit to help protect our children.



What would your favorite word be?

I never write 'metropolis' for seven cents because I can get the same price for 'city'. I never write 'police-man' because I can get the same money for 'cop'.

Mark Twain

The author of The Adventures of Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn was a very funny man, but he was no chucklehead — especially when it came to the business of writing.

He knew that words were the currency and coinage of his craft. He also knew that bigger didn't necessarily mean better.

But mostly what Mark Twain did was carry on a life-long love affair with words.

You pretty well have to, if you want to be a writer. It comes with the territory.

Not that you have to be a

writer to love words.

I know a plumber who does the cryptic crossword in the New York Times every day. And I know a farmer who reads Homer in the original Greek.

Lots of people love words.

In fact, a chap by the name of Vick Knight, Jr., has just published a book called My Word which is devoted to the favorite words of famous people.

Ronald Reagan claimed his favorite word was 'home'. For Billy Graham, it's 'decision'.

Lucille Ball voted the word 'beauty' as the most well, beautiful word in the language. For writer Erma Bombeck it was 'yes'.

Some of the people Knight queried followed



Basic Black

Arthur Black

the lead of Mark Twain (see above). Which is to say that they reacted with a certain stinginess.

Playwright Ira Levin sent a telegram that read "Sorry, I'm in the middle of a play and need every word I've got."

Science fiction writer Isaac Asimov wrote a reply in longhand.

It read: "I thought about your request and I really don't have a favorite word and even if I make one up, it will mean getting a picture to you, and making up some sappy paragraph or

other, and — well, I just don't want to."

It's a tougher question than it appears on the surface. What would you pick as your favorite word?

The English language is festooned (there's one of my favorites) with hundreds of potential delegates.

Someone once asked William Espy for a list of his favorite words. The famous wordsmith replied with:

meandering
mellifluous
wisteria
Shenandoah
murmuring
...and gonorrhoea

Again, words don't have to be lengthy to be splendid. 'Hush' is a wonderful word. So is 'mist'. And 'dawn'.

Many good words have alas, been lost.

Back in the 16th Century, a pretty young woman was called a bellibone or a poplolly. And someone who was down in the dumps was said to be suffering a bad case of mumblefuffles.

I'd be hard-pressed to say what my favorite word is.

Ugly words are plentiful enough: Victual is an ugly word. So is saxophone. And phlegmatic. Ugly is easy — but most beautiful?

Maybe I'll go with Dorothy Parker.

Someone once asked the New York wit what she thought the most beautiful phrase in the English language was.

Ms. Parker smiled and murmured: "Cheque enclosed".

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General lost battle of words

Dear Editor,

This is apropos of Mr. Black's column on reporters or newspaper misprints.

In battle worn England in 1942, a county newspaper reported of a well-known general as the following, and I quote: instead of a "battle scarred veter-

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an," the first misprint appeared as a "battle scarred veteran".

Imagine his apoplectic demand for a correction, reprint and apology! The apology appeared in the next week's issue, but

appeared with the correction as a "bottle scarred veteran".

On which note, the general wisely withdrew — possibly his first defeat.

Tom Greenbough

Stop 407 at McCowan

Dear Editor,

This is a copy of a letter sent to Al Palladini:

If it's not too late, here is an idea for the second phase of the 407: Stop it at McCowan Road!

The third phase for 2002 (or whenever), can then go beyond Hwy. 48 into Durham Region.

Right now, there is no need to take such a super

highway east of Hwy. 48.

Spending money, creating jobs, and spurring development is only appropriate when it is a sound decision, and heading into Durham's farm and natural lands with Phase II makes no sense to me.

I hope to see this logical revised plan in the news!

David McGrew

Letters Policy

The Tribune welcomes your letters to the editor. Please keep letters to no more than 300 words. Note that letters may be edited for space, libel, spelling, grammar. While we endeavor to print as many letters as possible, we regret that not all letters may be printed.