

Comment & Opinions

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Send your letters
to the editor
to the address below

EDITORIAL

All youths aren't bad

When teenagers and young adults are in the news these days, it's all too often in connection with high school brawls or property vandalism. There's a dearth of good news stories about young people, it seems.

Yet in Uxbridge earlier this week, four teenage girls stopped a runaway van which had two very young children inside. One jumped into the moving van, applied the brake and turned off the engine. Two others assisted in stopping the vehicle, while the fourth alerted the parents.

In Markham, a youth group connected to a Baptist church boasts about 50 youths eager to help out in their community, by volunteering at food banks, through church programs and donating their labour to aid seniors or local causes.

Another group of even-younger Markham children are decorating and painting wooden toys this Sunday to give to kids living in a York Region shelter for women and children.

Students in many area high schools participated in the 30-hour famine earlier this week to raise awareness and funds for those around the world who go without food.

And at Stouffville District Secondary School, one Grade 9 student recently earned the school's top award for making both the school and community a better place. This one girl is active on her student council and with the school band, tutors other students in homework and at exam time and is involved in her church as well.

These are just a few local examples during this one week alone of how young people are making a difference in their communities. They're living proof young people aren't all bad.



High tech product is enough to give you gas

Sometimes I worry about the readers of this column. Take Alex Murdoch of Fredericton, New Brunswick.

Last week, Alex mailed me a brochure. I guess we'll have to call it. With the brochure, Alex included the following covering letter:

Dear Arthur:
I was reading through my wife's Chatelaine magazine this month when I came across this lovely product. I called the 1-800 number asking for more information and lo-and-behold, got this brochure in the mail yesterday!

I couldn't help thinking it was just the sort of thing you might be interested in. Let me know what you think!

Sincerely,
Alex

The brochure Alex sent me came from Ultra Tech Products Incorporated, of Houston, Texas. What Ultra Tech is flogging is... I mean what Ultra

Tech is putting on the market is a f... This is very difficult.

It involves one of the last taboos of free speech. I could write a column about axe murderers or about Bingo in the Vatican.

I could write about cheating, swearing, stealing, or coveting one's neighbours burro and it wouldn't raise a single eyebrow.

But let me mention one word about 'gas' and ka-boom! Strong editors lunge for their blue pencils and little old ladies from the Queen Charlotte Islands to Joe Batt's Arm recoil as if hit by an Eric Lindros cross check.

Gas. That's what the brochure Alex Murdoch sent me is all about. Hydrogen sulphide. Human... produced... hydrogen sulphide. Intestinal gas. Flatulence. Actually, the brochure is touting the praises of something called The Flatulence Filter Seat Cushion, (formerly known as the TooT Trap-



Basic Black

Arthur Black

per) which the copy assures me "uses Space Shuttle Technology to clean and recycle stale and potentially deadly air."

Is all this firepower necessary to combat a relatively minor social problem? According to the folks at Ultra Tech it is. Their brochure includes news stories concerning

- a woman in North Dakota who divorced her husband.
- a 900-pound man in England who died in his sleep
- a woman in California who shot her husband

What do these stories have in com-

mon? The Ultra Tech brochure pulls no punches. They are all what the brochure calls:

THE TERRIBLE RESULTS OF SMELLY FLATULENCE.

And, say the folks at Ultra Tech, the Flatulence Filter is the solution to the problem.

What it is, is a fairly simple-looking foam seat-cushion that uses 'space age technology' to filter out and render odorless that which we all wish we didn't produce.

Does it work? The folks at Ultra Tech claim they've sold thousands of Flatulence Filters to grateful emitters (usually male) all over the globe.

Besides, says Ultra Tech — we men owe it to our Loved Ones.

Well, maybe. But I resent the implication that its just men who need the Flatulence Filter.

I'm reminded of the story about the spinster who went to her doctor and said: "I don't know what the problem is but I have gas just about all the time."

It's not a problem socially because I don't make any noise and there's no odour, but just can't seem to stop. In fact, just since I've been in your office I believe I've passed gas at least 20 times."

The doctor nods and hands her some pills, telling her to take them three times a day and to come back in two weeks.

Two weeks later the spinster is back in the doctor's office. And she is ticked off.

"What kind of medicine is this?" she demands. "I'm still passing gas as much as I was before. They still don't make any noise, but now they stink terribly!"

The doctor nods again. "Okay, now that we have your sinuses cleared up. We'll get you fitted for a hearing aid."

Please, look out for your neighbours

Dear Editor,

When I arrived home Tuesday after a physiotherapy appointment at the hospital, I immediately noticed my furnace was running but the house was cold. I went to the kitchen, and saw the door open, the window smashed.

I cannot put into words the sudden terror that I felt as I realized that someone had broken into my home.

I ran through the house looking in every room, before I called 911. In that minute or so, I could have been injured or killed if the robbers were still here.

Although I live on a quiet country road, I have recorded over a dozen times during the day when neighbours looked in as they drove by, and saw nothing. I WILL find someone who

have been turned into a recluse.

Please, look out for your neighbours, approach your home with caution, and try to be emotionally available when you hear from someone who has just been violated.

I am fortunate the majority of my friends are being supportive, but a few just tell me about another robbery, something that I really don't want to hear about right now. My nerves are raw and I don't know how long it will be before I feel better, maybe never.

The world that we live in tries to turn us into victims in so many ways. During this season, let us all wish for a world of peace that we so justly deserve. Merry Christmas to all.

Name Withheld

LETTER

saw something. The insurance company is arranging to replace the stolen electronics, the heirloom jewellery will probably be replaced in monetary value, but my huge sense of violation remains.

They were in my bedroom, touching my personal items. They were in every other room of my home, looking at my things, looking at my life. I'm still dazed, a victim in shock, fielding phone calls from friends and neighbours.

I am afraid to leave my home. I am trapped. Three weeks until Christmas, the happiest season of my year, and I

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