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Comment & Opinions

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EDITORIAL

Dont' be a statistic

THEY just don't get it. Not you. YOU wouldn't take the wheel of a vehicle after a drink or two ... or three. But somebody out there is. Too many somebodies. The police RIDE programs are in full swing throughout the Greater Toronto Area, and they are netting the usual menaces who insist on driving after drinking. But police forces are worried about two things. The first is that the number of drinking women drivers has increased dramatically over last year. Secondly, it's the drivers they are not catching that is the biggest source of concern. In Metro, by mid-December, 19 people had been killed due to drunk driving, up from last year's grim total of 17. Since the RIDE program began at the end of November, Metro police have reported 41 alcohol-related collisions, already six more than in last year's anti-drinking and driving program. The Ontario Provincial Police report similarly worrisome statistics. So far this year they've investigated 72,016 collisions, with 3,704 classified as alcohol-related. This is up from 3,158 accidents involving alcohol in 1996. Between Dec. 5 and 10, Aurora's OPP unit charged seven people with impaired driving and the Whitby detachment charged one man. So the message isn't getting through to everyone. Please make sure you're not a police statistic — not on their drunken driving offences list or worse still, on the fatality sheet. Have a happy — and safe — holiday.



Here are some ways I'd rather NOT go

I'm not afraid to die, I just don't wanna be there when it happens.

Woody Allen I know just what old Woody was talking about. Call it middle age or call it mid-winter blues, but I've been thinking about dying and the many ways I don't want to do it.

I don't want to go the way David Grundman went for instance. Grundman, a gun nut, was getting his jollies one day back in 1982 by shooting at a giant saguaro cactus in the desert outside Phoenix, Arizona.

Unluckily for Grundman, the blasts from his shotgun dislodged a 23-foot section of the cactus which fell on his head and killed him.

I don't think I want to end it all the way Simon Longhurst did either.

Longhurst, a British teenager, was

performing a New Wave dance called "The Head Shake" at a disco in Wigan, England. The idea is to shake your head violently as the pace of the music gets faster.

Simon retired from the dance floor with a headache which turned into a blood clot which caused him to die of acute swelling of the brain.

Then there's the case of Robert Williams of Flat Rock, Michigan. Back in 1979, he became the first person to suffer an end right out of science fiction. He was killed by a robot.

Williams worked at the Ford Motor Company plant in Flat Rock alongside a one-ton robot used to fetch automotive parts from a storage rack.

One day Williams was rummaging around in the rack when the robot suddenly sprang to life, wheeled



Basic Black

Arthur Black

around and clubbed Williams with its arm, killing him instantly.

Some folks just have the cards stacked against them.

Consider the case of Vittorio Luise. The 45-year old Italian was driving along a road near Naples when a freak gust of wind caught his car and hurled it into a river.

Under water, Luise managed to break a car window, free himself from the car, swim to the surface and finally haul himself ashore. Where a tree blew over and killed him.

Sometimes when the guy with the scythe comes knocking it doesn't matter how safe you think you are. Jerome Moody thought he was pretty safe when he went to a pool party in New Orleans back in 1985.

He was a certified lifeguard after all. Half the 200 people at the party were lifeguards. Plus there were four life-guards on duty at the pool.

Guess what Jerome's body was found at the bottom of after the party was over.

With other mortalities, it's hard to think that the victims didn't have it coming.

Take the case of the wrestler Yousouf Ishmaelo. He was a turn-of-the-century Turkish wrestler who came to North America in 1897 to make his fortune. And he did. He whopped every North American grappler he met — and he always took his pay in gold coins, which he kept in a

money belt that he wore around his waist, night and day.

In 1898 he was sailing back to Europe when his ship collided with another vessel and sank. No problem for Ishmaelo, who was an excellent swimmer ... when he wasn't wearing a money belt full of gold.

The stubborn Turk refused to discard the belt and drowned.

Another man who let dollar signs get in the way of common sense was the New Yorker who got hit by a car a couple of years back. He got up uninjured, but lay back down after a bystander advised him to fake injury in order to collect insurance money. No faking necessary. The car rolled forward and he was crushed to death.

And then there are the folks who appear to be just too dumb too live. Like Norik Hakispan, a resident of Chelsea, England. Norik was a believer in home remedies.

Accordingly he decided to treat his rather severe case of hemorrhoids himself.

The Hakispan had a family hemorrhoid treatment involving the application of paraffin. Norik couldn't get his hands on any paraffin, so he decided to use ... gasoline.

The fumes from the open can of gasoline he was using were ignited by a nearby hotplate and the results were ... explosive. And fatal.

Cured the hemorrhoids, though?

These are just a few of the ways I'd rather not exit this vale of tears, if it's all right with everyone else. But however I go, I have one last requ— oh, hell. I gave the first words to Woody Allen, I might as well let him have the last word too: "One last request. Don't use embalming fluid on me. I want to be stuffed with crab meat"

Our two-faith family welcomed Stapley column

Dear Editor,

I want to thank Bruce Stapley for his article on Saturday, Dec. 20 about Adam Sandler's Hanukkah Song on MIX 99.9

My husband and I heard the song on the radio and being from a "two-faith household" as well as Bruce put it, we both got quite a chuckle from it.

Like Bruce's wife, Susan, I am another one of the handful of Jews in Uxbridge.

My husband Paul, however, is not, and our five-year-old son, Matthew, is able to experience the "best of both worlds" at this time

LETTERS

of year.

Bruce, your light-hearted look at this sometimes confusing time of year was much welcomed in our home.

When we light the Menorah beside the Christmas tree on Tuesday night, and put the Happy Hanukkah sign above it, I will think of you and Adam Sandler with a smile on my face.

Evylynn Coleby
Uxbridge

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