

Lenten project keeps growing

Call it a mustache or a moustache, it really doesn't matter. Both spellings, according to Mr. Webster, are correct. Ignoring the choice, I've decided to grow one - with mixed reviews. Some like it. Some don't.

The decision all came about when my age-old electric razor suddenly died. As with any relic, repair parts are hard to find. I've shopped everywhere. The only alternative is a replacement.

In the meantime, I've switched to a slick new Schick, a stylish safety model that does a satisfactory job - except for a permanent shadow above my upper lip. Try as I might, the wee black patch remained. So I said to myself, "leave it be". And for the past three weeks, I have, with gratifying effect. A full-grown moustache has begun to appear.

I'm beginning to like it.

Every night before bedtime, I soak the ornamentation with warm water to stimulate growth. In the morning, I brush it, then groom it after applying a dab of Grecian Formula to eradicate the grey.

Mirrors don't lie. The face I see looking back reflects an innovative persona. I'm a brand new man.

The moustache, as everyone knows, isn't by any means a pioneer approach to inflating the male ego. The process has been around for years.

Remember movie stars Clarke Gable, Charlie Chaplain and Tom Selleck; comedian Groucho Marx; intellectual Albert Einstein; dictator Adolf Hitler; wrestler



Roaming Around

with Jim Thomas

Hulk Hogan and hockey star Lanny McDonald? They sported everything from smudges to handlebars. Public appearances gained them world-wide prominence.

However, for lip-top perfection, one need look no further than Spirit hockey broadcaster Rick Callaghan, owner/operator of Stouffville's 410 Auto.

Rick 48, made the moustache move while still a student attending Mohawk College in Hamilton. Although colour and style changes have occurred during the past 19 years, Rick keeps it completely natural.

While earlier the subject of ridicule, in Stouffville it's now so acceptable, he has gained The Stache as a complimentary moniker.

"It's my normal look," he says.

So what does wife Stacey say?

"She loves it," he claims, "she'd want me no other way."

So why do I bother?

The same as most, I sup-

pose. The moustache re-directs attention from a slowly receding hairline. Folks tend to focus on my lip-top instead of my head-top. This helps restore self-confidence. But there's a penalty to pay.

"I liked you better the way you were," said one critic.

"With the few years you have left, you should have left your face the way it was," said another.

Fortunately, most are less serious. They just look and laugh.

"Is it drip-dry?" joked one. "A saving on Kleenex," teased another.

However, when it comes to basic honesty, kids take the cake. At Stouffville's Millard Street/Glad Park Avenue crosswalk where I serve as a student guard, my moustache is a favourite conversation piece.

"When I'm older, will I have one, too?" asked a boy of five.

"When you kiss someone, does she say it tickles?" inquired a girl of six.

"My dad has one but it doesn't look like yours - his is handsomer," said another girl of six.

I'll be honest, too. I'm going through a stage, one that undoubtedly won't last. It's merely a personal Lenten project with an extension period longer than initially anticipated.

Rest assured, when the moustache becomes ratty, it'll be time to remove the nest.

Jim Thomas is a Stouffville resident who has written for area newspapers for more than 60 years.

Coach touched thousands of lives

It's so ironic, the timing of this lengthy debate about teachers working or volunteering - pick your poison - after regular school hours in Ontario.

All while we mourn the death of a teacher who lived to coach many of our kids.

Rick Maloney was the poster boy for everything that is right about sports in our schools.

The former Stouffville resident died last week doing one of the things he enjoyed best, playing basketball.

He taught, coached and counselled students at St. Brother Andre in Markham, the home school for Catholic kids from Stouffville, for all of its 29 years.

That wasn't enough. At the same time, he coached teams in the Markham Cardinals youth basketball club and in the Whitchurch-Stouffville Minor Hockey Association.

Our youngest daughter, Jenny, was lucky enough to play on the Cardinals under Rick when he founded the club out of St. Brigid Catholic School, just around the corner from his family's home on Greenwood Street.

That was eight years ago.

From that one team of Grade 6 girls, many of whom had barely handled a ball before the first practice, he kick-started careers.

They didn't win many games or even score many baskets during that first season. But just a couple of years later, those same Cardinals were wearing silver medals and smiles at the provincial championships in St. Thomas.

Many of those girls would star in high school ball at area schools. Some would play AAA summer ball or at university. Some would stay in the game as coaches.

As parents, we were often amazed by Coach Rick's schedule, going from the St. Brother Andre football field, to the Stouffville Arena and over to an elementary school for games and practices, sometimes all in the same evening.



Off The Top

with Jim Mason

The former University of Western Ontario football player absolutely loved it all.

I heard all about it and saw it in his eyes in a Kelsey's in Cambridge one night as the team and parents waited for a table after a particularly rewarding day in a tournament. He was born to develop and lead. To coach.

And that was just a snapshot.

One team in a lengthy list of squads.

Given his longevity at St. B.A. and the thousands of lives he touched as a coach and guidance counsellor, it's no wonder there were long lineups for his weekend visitation and an overflow crowd at Monday's funeral.

We've seen his impact at The Sun-Tribune, too. Stories on Mr. Maloney's death and funeral have had record readership on our website, yorkregion.com

It was a similar scenario when another legendary York Region high school football and basketball coach from Stouffville, Wayne Nugent, died last summer.

Students never forget those teachers who made a difference in their lives.

Jim Mason is editor of The Sun-Tribune

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