

Dear Editor,

It's about time somebody organized something like the Panther Action Weekend. Our sports teams can certainly use a little more support from the students. However, I can't help but wonder why, in a weekend where an effort was made to get more students out to the games, were two basketball games scheduled at the same time as the hockey game on Saturday night. Isn't this sort of defeating the purpose?

Mark O'Hanley

Dear Editor,

I would like to commend you on your editorial on October 24th 1991. Smoking is a big issue in North America and it is about time people are educated on the effects of passive smoking. According to pamphlets distributed by the Canadian Cancer Society; smoking is related to 90% of all lung cancer cases and is estimated to be responsible for 30% of all cancer deaths. Second-hand smoking is not only a nuisance it is now known to cause disease and even premature deaths in non-smokers. It is estimated that second-hand smoke is to blame for up to 500 deaths among non-smoking Canadians every year. Sidestream smoke which is inhaled by non-smokers contains twice the amount of tar and nicotine as mainstream smoke and almost five times more carbon monoxide than that inhaled by the smoker. Carbon monoxide works by robbing the body of oxygen that it needs. Red blood cells normally carry oxygen from the lungs to all of the body's tissues. However, the red cells prefer carbon monoxide. If there is any carbon monoxide in your lungs, the red blood cells will ignore the oxygen and pick it up instead. As the carbon monoxide content increases, more and more of your body begins to starve for oxygen, including your heart and brain tissues. When this happens, you may become more fumbling and uncertain. Your ability to carry out visual detail may also suffer. Carbon monoxide is a cumulative poison, meaning it builds up in your system as you take it in faster than you can get rid of it. The sidestream smoke you inhale from a smoker will stay in your body for hours. Each successive cigarette he/she smokes in your presence adds to its buildup. Sidestream smoke causes significant damage to the lungs of non-smokers who are exposed to it. The cigarette smoke in which you inhale perma-

nently scars some of the small airways in your lungs. This scarring reduces your lung capacity, it makes it necessary for you to put more effort in breathing in order to get the amount of oxygen your body needs.

One smouldering cigarette pollutes the air for twelve full minutes. Second-hand smoke can cause burning of the eyes and nasal passages, headaches, nausea and discomfort in healthy non-smokers, not to mention unwanted odours and tints of tobacco smoke in your hair and clothes. And this happens because of other peoples' cigarettes. It is often speculated "if the entire country stopped smoking would it cause an economic hardship?" Well, since the number of people who smoke is gradually decreasing, any economic efforts are slowly being absorbed when people stop smoking completely, the country will save money. For example, in 1985, Canadians spent nearly \$6.1 billion on tobacco products, including the government taxes. The 'hidden' costs of smoking, however, are far higher than income from tobacco. More than \$7 billion was spent in 1982 for foregone income due to a smoker's death, disability, direct hospital costs, and fire damage. While the economic costs are great, the real costs in terms of health or quality of life cannot be measured in dollars. Most of this information was obtained from the Canadian Cancer Society's Toward a Smoke-Free Workplace.

Fighting for cleaner air

