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LOOKIN'
GOOD!

Listen

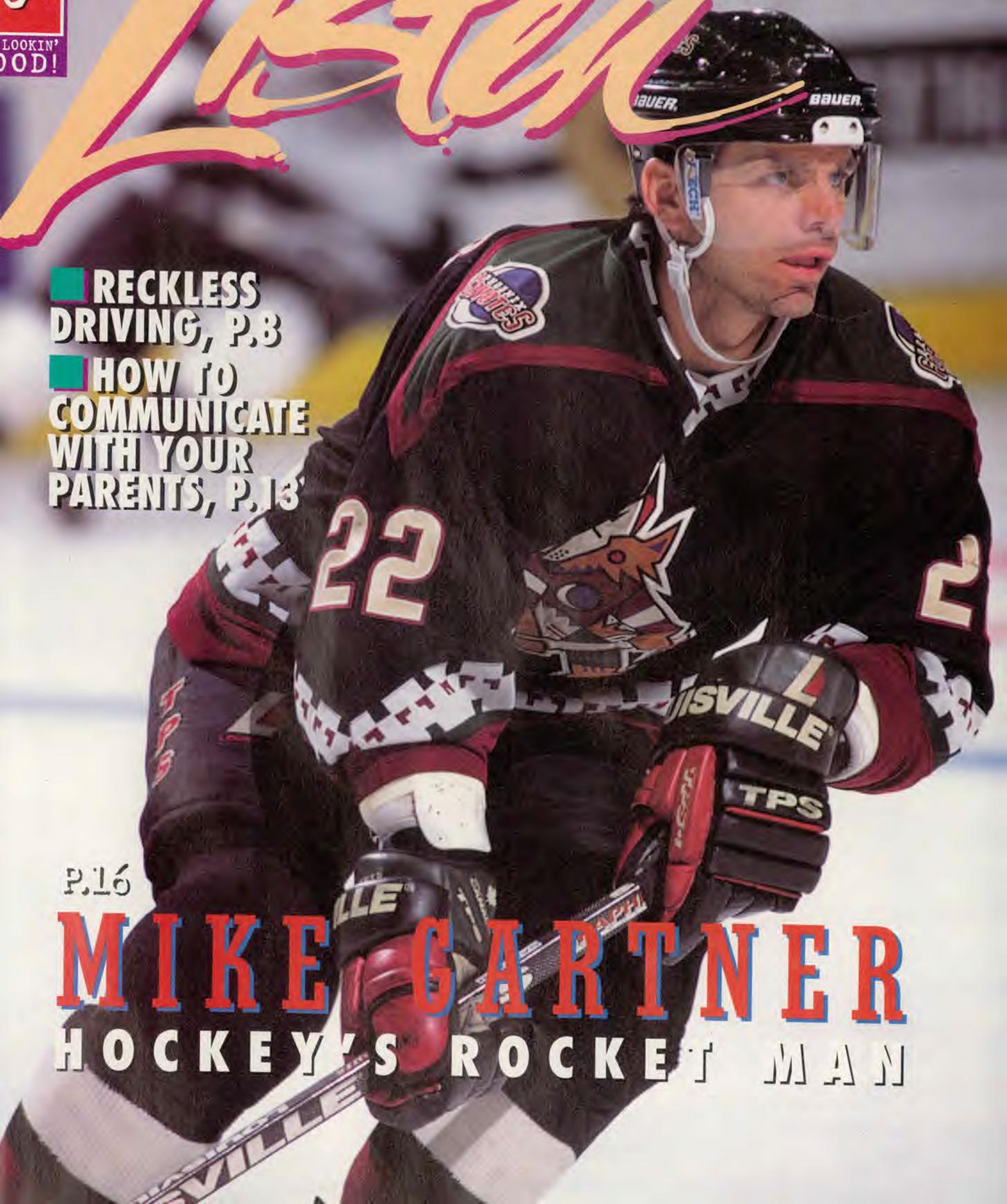
■ RECKLESS
DRIVING, P.8

■ HOW TO
COMMUNICATE
WITH YOUR
PARENTS, P.13

P.16

MIKE GARTNER

HOCKEY'S ROCKET MAN





Whatever
happened
to that

SHY GIRL?



Negative thoughts cause nudges of self-doubt that set us up for failure.



Lisa, would you look at that!" Terry hissed. "Is that who I think it is?"

They saw classmate Charlene Woods looking dreamily into Pete Grayson's eyes. She was laughing heartily, as though he was the funniest person she'd ever heard.

Do you know someone like Charlene? The sort of girl who's so shy she always keeps her eyes on the floor, looks so nerdy you'd never notice her unless you decided to razz her, and never says anything—or if she does, her voice comes out in a mousy squeak? You know the kind. Every school has one. Maybe you've even had moments when you felt like Charlene yourself.

But suddenly everything had changed about Charlene! Gone was the long stringy hair. Now she sported a short stylish "do." Her eyes were bright, her hands animatedly expressive. Why, she was almost a fox.

Lisa followed Terry's gaze toward Charlene. Surprise and a hint of envy crept into her voice. "Where did she get the guts even to talk to him like that? What can Pete see in her that's so interesting?" Lisa and Terry were both amazed at how much

Charlene had changed.

If you could, what changes would you make in yourself? Would you lose old annoying habits; maybe become thinner, a better student, athlete, or musician, or get along better with your parents, siblings, or peers?

Want to make it happen? Then you must talk to yourself like Charlene did.

"That's crazy," you say. Not so. You already talk to yourself more than you realize. Neuroscientists report that lightning-fast words, thoughts, impressions, and feelings, like the butterflies of fear or the rush of joy, dart into your mind at the rate of 45,000 words a day. Traveling in grooves in your brain called neural pathways, these words come from your subconscious mind to guide how you believe, feel, and behave. The same thoughts go round and round. Like a walking computer, you follow orders that have been programmed into your subconscious mind from birth.

Psychologists say that even as infants we begin to test how our behaviors cause others to react to us. Behaviors that work are stored and refined. We discard the rest. But that doesn't mean that the ones

we keep are the *best* behaviors—they're just the most comfortable. Parents, teachers, friends, and siblings add to our program, sometimes passing on negative things they were taught.

Do these comments sound familiar? "You're no good at that." "Can't you do anything right?" "You're just like your father." "You hang

She discovered that attitude is everything. Each day got easier. She liked the new Charlene.

around with the wrong crowd." "You're lazy." "Your room is a mess." "You never study." "Your grades are atrocious." Hear too many like these, and you may just start to adopt them as your own.

Shad Helmstetter, a leading behavioral psychologist, reports that about 75 percent of our thoughts are negative because

ARTICLE BY EVA L. FRIESEN

of this early training and experience. And negative thoughts cause nudges of self-doubt that set us up for failure.

Even those around us who have been fortunate enough to have been programmed with many positive words have learned the no's, you can'ts, and you shouldn'ts.

Charlene knew what the guys thought of her, but what really hurt was how the girls treated her. She decided it was time to change her self-talk. At the suggestion of Dr. Joyce Brothers, a well-known psychologist, Charlene began to "act as if . . ." She rehearsed her new role. First she imagined how she wanted to appear to others, and practiced in front of a mirror, smiling and saying, "I am friendly and outgoing. I care about you and am interested in what you have to say. I look directly into your eyes. I smile a lot. I am happy."

Then she practiced on classmates. She ignored the butterflies, acting as if she were confident. The feedback she got from them was like a pat on the back. She stopped thinking *I don't know what to say* and instead focused her thoughts on others. She found that a smile made them feel better, and she felt better too. She turned "acting as if . . ." into the real thing and then was able to feel good about that! She discovered that attitude is everything. Each day it got easier. She liked the new Charlene.

So listen to *your* inner voice. Do you hear: "Nothing ever goes right for me, I'm just a loser." "Stupid, look what you just did!" "I can't; I'm not even going to try." "Nobody likes me; sometimes I hate myself." These words cause pain and defeat you before you try. When you tell yourself that you can't do something often enough, you really can't. Remember that

Sinking a basket, acing a math test, or having an important conversation all work better with mental rehearsal.

what you think and feel controls your behavior.

So screen your thoughts. Every time you put yourself down, just stop and push yourself up. Remember to be kind to yourself. Make sure you pat yourself on the back when you do something well. Be willing to accept less than perfection when you know you have done your best, but work toward doing better when you know you can. Be aware that beating on yourself to be perfect is a negative thing. Repeat any compliments you have received. When others criticize, decide how you can turn the words around to make them positive. Keep reassuring yourself that you have the power to change. All of these strategies will surely begin to build your confidence and self-esteem.

The subconscious mind does not reason—it accepts what you tell it, whether it is true or not. The longer you have a certain thought, the truer it becomes to the subconscious, but it *can* still be changed. Erase and replace should be your plan.

Replace the old thought with a new one—word for word. Give

the subconscious mind specific positive new words, directions, and commands. Tell it often and be firm.

Helmstetter suggests you use the present tense. This tells the subconscious mind that the new event is happening *now*. For example, if you wish to lose weight, use such words as: "I am thinner; I choose to eat right; I am happy with smaller portions; I never give in and I am reaching the weight I want; I never need to finish the food in front of me; I eat only what I should; I do not allow anyone else to tell me what to eat; I am strong and I am reaching my goal."

Repeat the new words to yourself silently or out loud. Details are important. Write the words you plan to use onto 3 x 5 cards so that they are easy to repeat exactly and frequently. Or use a tape recorder and make a self-talk tape. Talk sessions morning and evening work best.

Create pictures in your mind of how you want things to be and act as if they are so. Sinking a basket, acing a math test, or having an important conversation with your mother all work better with a mental rehearsal. This will make new neural grooves for your subconscious (computer) to run on. You will practice smarter, study better, and (hopefully) stop yourself before you say mean words to your family or friends.

The right self-talk, practiced faithfully, takes little time and effort. The results are amazing. It works because it comes from inside yourself. Self-talk changes the program in your internal computer, which creates belief, which develops the attitude, which creates the feelings that control the behavior—thus the results. All this for talking to yourself with the right words. Can't you just feel your power? **■**



YO! JENNY

Listen up, teens. Say Hi to Jennifer Acklam, a Miss Texas Coed and America's Homecoming Queen. Jenny wants to hear from you. Send your letters to us at **LISTEN** magazine, P.O. Box 859, Hagerstown, MD 21741, and we'll pass them on to her for the column.

I am 16 years old, and I have been going out with this guy for about a year. Our relationship is going downhill fast. I don't really care that much about him anymore, and at times he treats me terribly. I know I should break up with him, but I don't know how to go about it. Can you give me some ideas?

If you realize that you are not in a positive and meaningful relationship, then you are very smart to decide it's time to break it off. Breaking up is never easy or pleasant. However, the best way to

approach any breakup is by pure honesty. Explain your true feelings and why you want to end your relationship. If you choose to be friends after the breakup, that would be great; however, be very careful not to send him mixed signals (i.e., flirting or becoming too friendly). This can cause major problems if you're not cautious.

I have a big problem. Eric is my boyfriend. This is the first boyfriend I have ever had. We are both 14. We have kissed at a couple parties. Now Eric is trying to do other things. I

don't really feel right about letting him do more than kiss me. What do you think? No one should ever put pressure on you to do something you don't feel is right. If Eric really likes you, then he should *respect* you as well. Your feelings and "limits" on your relationship should be important to him. If he continues to pressure and prod you to do things that you don't want to do, it would be a good idea to say adios to Eric. There are plenty of guys out there who will respect a girl and would not even think about trying to coax a girl into something better reserved for serious relationships—marriage, in fact. Eric needs to know that you have your standards and values, and they are more important to you than any relationship with a boy.

I have been best friends with Tracey since second grade, and we've always done everything together. Tracey's family and my family are good friends. Everything has been really cool until recently. This year we're both in ninth grade. Tracey has started to smoke. At first I thought she was just going to try it a couple times and then quit, but now she is smoking more and more. How can I help her?

By setting a good example and not following Tracey's habits and patterns, you are being a positive influence. The first step is to confront Tracey about your concerns. If this doesn't appear to make her want to change, then you might consider a talk with your parents about the situation. With any bad habit it usually takes a "team effort" to make someone want to change their ways. Fortunately, the pressure of several people will often bring about change.

My name is Ellen and I have an older sister named Maria. She is in high school. The problem is that ever since Maria started to date Ben (her boyfriend), she has been drinking on the weekends. Usually when she comes home, my parents are already

in bed. They have no idea that she is drinking. I'm scared for her—that she will get in a car accident, or get in trouble with the police, or just do something stupid that she will regret later. What can I do to help her?

The high school years are great years *without* using alcohol. It's just too bad that more teens don't realize that before their lives are marred forever by some senseless drinking episode. Your sister needs to know that you love her and that you look up to her. Express to her how scared you are that something tragic will happen to her if she drinks. She needs to know that if she won't stop drinking, you *will* let your parents know very soon. Living life on the edge spells *trouble!* Your sister needs to be helped *immediately*.

I love my mom and dad. We do lots of fun things together as a family. I don't have any brothers or sisters, but I have lots of friends in my neighborhood and at school. I'm in eighth grade now. The problem is that lately my mom and dad have been fighting a lot. They never used to do this. I'm afraid that they are going to get a divorce, and then our family will be all split up. Would you be worried if you were me? None of us likes to see or hear our parents arguing. We love both of them very much, and we don't want to see either of them hurt or angry. The other side of the picture is that it's not all that rare to experience family unrest at some period of time. Arguing is often the result when life gets too stressful for parents as well as kids. I can understand how troubling this is for you. On the other hand, don't worry yourself too much. This will probably pass in time. You might want to talk to both of your parents at the same time and tell them that you love them both and wish they could settle their differences in a more loving way. I'm sure that when they realize this is disturbing you, they will make an attempt to work out their problems in a more peaceful way. ■

AND SO FORTH

Michael
Warren

MILITARY MANNERS

While on a military campaign in winter, Napoleon got tired of seeing his troops wipe their noses on their sleeves. His solution: he had them sew brass

buttons on their sleeves. To this day military uniforms have buttons on their sleeves, but now it's mostly for show.

WEB SURFING THE OLD-FASHIONED WAY

A radio advertisement in England invited listeners to visit the BBC Thames Valley website. So a couple from Portsmouth packed up their car and drove almost 100 miles to search for the site. (They thought it was a building.)

EL NIÑO'S COUSIN AL

Alfonso Niño is listed in his local phone book as Al Niño. Because his name is so close to the destructive weather pattern called El Niño, confused people sometimes call him to ask what's going on. "It's always something like, 'Why are you doing this?' And I say, 'I thought maybe it would be kind of fun!'"

STAIR-RACING THE EMPIRE

If you're looking for a new sport that's guaranteed to push you to the limit, you might consider stair racing. Competitors race to the top of skyscrapers such as the 86-story Empire State Building. (Top racers can do it in about 10 minutes.) Only a few races are held each year. Says one athlete:

"If I'm still standing at the end of a race, I know I haven't pushed myself hard enough."

FLYING HYUNDAIS!

In South Korea traffic jams can get so bad that military helicopters are used to remove disabled cars from the highways.

LIKE A MOTH TO THE FLAME

If you've ever attracted a bunch of moths to an outdoor light at night, here's the reason: moths believe your porch light is the moon. That's right, they use the moon for navigating straight lines at night. Unfortunately, since your porch light is so much closer, they end up circling in and crash-landing.

INTERNET IMMORTALITY

A new organization called Afterlife promises to maintain your personal website after you die. For a fee, of course.

BOND, FELIX BOND . . .

A few years ago the United States Central Intelligence Agency attempted to turn a cat into an undercover agent. The feline spy, equipped with microphones and an antenna, was designed to eavesdrop on conversations. The plan failed when the cat was run over by a taxi.

KIDS' PARLIAMENT

The government of Lucerne, Switzerland, now includes a children's parliament. Kids as young as 9 years old are allowed to run for election. So far the parliament has urged the major to improve a playground and create a new skateboarding park.



DINKING AND DRIVING

CHOICES

by
Kay D. Rizzo



Packing more kids into a car than there are seat belts and then having a passenger grab the steering wheel and swerve the car can be lethal. Dinking and driving kills just as surely as does drinking and driving. It's no joke.

Let's take the scenic route," Ken* called as he swung his dad's overloaded Chevy station wagon onto the gravel incline. The car careened sideways and Ken's buddies braced

themselves, while the girls squealed excitedly. Ken slammed on the brakes and grasped the steering wheel, fighting to regain control. The sound of screeching tires, breaking glass, and crumbling metal filled the peaceful

night air for an instant, then nothing.

Ken and his passengers suddenly found themselves standing on a grassy slope—all the passengers, that is, except one, Ken's date, 16-year-old Celia Ponds. Pieces of

ILLUSTRATION: RANDY JAMISON

gravel and jagged shards of glass filled their hair and clothing.

"Celia, where's Celia?" Ken asked frantically. He turned toward the overturned vehicle and noticed Celia's long blond hair, matted with blood and protruding out from under the roof of the car. His girlfriend had been thrown from the car, which rolled over her and crushed her to death.

Packing more kids into a car than there are seat belts, having a passenger grab the wheel of a moving vehicle, and swerving the car for kicks can be lethal. Dinking and driving kills just as surely as does drinking and driving. It's natural for teens to horse around, but to do so behind the wheel spells tragedy.

Ben Cole and his friends had gone ice skating on a neighbor's pond. In the course of the evening the driver of one of the cars that had brought them to the pond had to leave early. No one else wanted to leave the party that early. Joe, the driver of the second car, assured the first driver that he'd see everyone get back to Ben's house at the end of the night.

When it was time to head back, they stuffed as many skaters as possible inside the vehicle, but try as they might there was no room for the last two—Carol and Ben.

"Hop on the hood," generous Joe volunteered. "I'll drive slowly."

They'd gone less than a mile along the back country road when Ben's grip began to slip. Inside the car the kids were laughing and listening to the blaring radio. Joe was smooching with his girlfriend, Judy, and not noticing the terror on Ben's face as the frightened boy screamed for Joe to stop. Fearful of rolling under the wheels of the car, Ben pushed himself to one side and slid off the hood of the moving vehicle. He landed in a snowbank, breaking his neck. On the way to the hospital he slipped into a coma, never to regain

Increasing numbers of teens are killed in unnecessary car accidents, accidents caused not just by drinking and driving, but by a lethal cocktail of inexperience and immaturity.

consciousness.

Celia Ponds and Ben Cole are just two more victims of the ever-increasing number of teens killed in unnecessary car accidents, accidents caused not just by drinking and driving, but by a lethal cocktail of inexperience and immaturity.

In 1997 car accidents killed more than 6,300 teens—more than AIDS, drugs, homicide, or suicide.

Recently *Reader's Digest* conducted a survey of 400 kids ages 15-19 about their experience with teen drivers. Take a similar quiz and find out if you are driving in the danger zone.

HAVE YOU OR ANY OF YOUR TEEN DRIVER FRIENDS EVER:

1. Loaded the car so full that there weren't enough seat belts for everyone?
2. Driven fast—that is, 20 miles per hour or more over the speed limit?
3. Gone dinking—you know, the sort of foolery that includes

jerking the steering wheel to make the car swerve back and forth?

4. Been with a passenger who grabbed the wheel while the car was moving?

5. Tailgated, cut off, or tried to bump another car?

6. Let one of your passengers go car-surfing—the kind of craziness in which someone rides on the outside of the moving car?

7. Been involved in at least one of these types of activities in the previous six months?

Of the 400 kids surveyed for the



Reader's Digest article, the percentages of their "yes" answers were:

1. 57 percent
2. 53 percent
3. 35 percent
4. 21 percent
5. 14 percent
6. 12 percent
7. 82 percent

Maybe our quiz, coupled with the reality of teen deaths, will help you and your friends steer clear of "dinking and driving." ■

• The people in this article are real, but we've changed their names to protect the grieving from even more pain.



Matt hunched over his geometry homework. The steady ak, ak, ak of Mr. Crandall's chalk on the board almost covered up the snickering from the back row: almost, but not quite. Matt rubbed his neck, feeling a sort of creepy nakedness, as if people were staring at him.

He turned around.

Gazes careened away.

Puzzled, he faced forward again.

His best friend, Joel, slid into his seat across the aisle. Late. Catching Matt's eye, Joel clutched his chest and whimpered.

Meaning?

Shoulders hunched, Matt glanced around the room again.

Karolina Kodsko shook her puppytails at him—or whatever it was you'd call those things she wadded her hair up in.

He snuck a glance at Carly Ames, the only other girl in Honors Geom. Carly's celestial face was dimmed with worry this morning. But what could Carly have to worry about? She always knew all the answers. She *was* all the answers.

He forced himself to turn away. Just to look too long at a girl like Carly would probably make a guy like him go blind.

In lit class he found the copy of *The Scoop* somebody had left in his seat.

His brain teaser was on page 2. But why had the editor signed it *No-name Brain*? And why had he left off Matt's e-mail address? If

Meet "No-name Brain,"
she said.

I. Sosceles

nobody could respond, then what was the point?

Muttering, Matt flipped the page. Somebody had drawn a fat red heart around the student advice column in what looked like . . . lipstick?

Dear Ms. Glanders,

I have a geometry problem. I suffer acute pangs for the brain two seats in front of me, whom I will call I. Sosceles. I. Sosceles gives no sign of knowing I am passionately solving for X only two seats back.

Matt shook his head. Pathetic. Somebody stuck on Carly. Could it be Poppniki? He sat two seats behind Carly and hadn't had a date since seventh grade.

I need to find the right angle. The winter formal looms. Respond to matt@tuppink.com.

The world stopped turning for the time it took Matt to reread that last line. "Respond to matt@tuppink.com."

As he sprawled back in his seat clutching his brains, Ms. Illes glared at him over her reading glasses.

No wonder everybody acted as though he'd gone subnormal.

No wonder the refugee shook her puppytails at him.

She thought he'd asked her out!

As his groans subsided, Ms. Illes cleared her throat, adjusted her glasses, and returned to her rhythmic reading of "The Raven."

After school in the *Scoop* office, Matt twisted the cap off and on his pen. "See, Ms. Carlson," he said, "one of the editors messed up. *No-name Brain* got stuck on the end of my brain teaser, and my e-mail address got put on that stupid letter to Glanders." He tried to breathe deeply. "And you've got to print a correction."

"Of course, Matt. Next week."

"Next week?" Matt's voice broke. "That's too late." He tried to keep his voice calm. "Look. Let me draw you a picture." He ripped a ragged piece of paper out of his comp notebook. "I sit here. The person two seats directly in front of me is Karolina Kodsko."

Pause.

"And I don't want to take her to the winter formal," he said, shaking his head.

A few minutes later, dragging down the empty hallway, Matt sighed. He'd have to solve the problem himself.

He had it!

Flyers.

He'd make flyers to hand out at school tomorrow.

At home he first checked his e-mail.

Gripping the edges of his keyboard, he stared at the screen.

Too late.

Matt Tuppink, yes. I feel honored to be your date for winter formal.

Thank you.

I. Sosceles

Matt leaned his sweaty forehead against the monitor. And to think he'd nurtured a secret hope of going with Carly Ames, who paid him no more attention than an oat.

On Tuesday he told Ms. Carlson to forget about printing a correction. He'd worked it out himself.

On Wednesday he got fitted for a rental tux at his uncle Ben's store.

Joe, who'd been sworn to secrecy about everything, shook his head. "It'll be like going out with an archaeological site. All those layers of sweaters."

When he picked up the corsage of purple asters at Cushman's, Joel said, "You're giving her flowers, and you never even aster? Ha! Ha!"

"But she *thinks* I did, man," Matt said, clenching his jaw. "That's the point."

"All those wads of hair . . ." Joel said, looking grim.

At 7:30 Mr. Kodsko, a tall man who spoke stiff English, opened the door. He pumped Matt's hand, then gestured toward Karolina as in *Behold . . . my prize*.

And Karolina didn't look too bad. All her tufts of puppytails had been swept back smoothly, showing a naturally pretty face. And the lumpy sweaters had been replaced by a sleek black dress.

She reminded Matt of those before and after pictures in ads for home exercise equipment.

After.

"Please come to meet my mama and Lumber," Karolina said,

What kind of
bozo, he
wondered,
would leave a
girl like Carly
standing alone
by the water
fountain?

motioning Matt into the den.

Lumber must be a Newfoundland.

Mrs. Kodsko, a chemist at the university, stood up and shook hands with Matt.

Matt glanced around for the Newfoundland.

Standing by a silver-framed photograph on a bookshelf, Karolina smiled.

"Lumber," she said. "My promised one. Back home. Mama and Papa said I must tell you, though I will still like to go with you very much." She smiled in a way that made Matt believe her. "Very much."

Matt sighed as Karolina tucked his boutonniere in the lapel of his tux. Why couldn't Lumber have been a dog?

Later, waiting on the edge of the dance floor while Karolina danced with Mr. Crandall, Matt felt that crawly sensation on the back of his neck again. He turned around.

Carly Ames, standing by the water fountain, quickly glanced away. She stared up at the darkened scoreboard.

What kind of bozo, he wondered, would leave a girl like Carly standing alone by the water fountain?

"So, what's the score?" Matt asked, suddenly feeling thirsty and bold.

When she smiled into his eyes, Matt gripped the water cooler.

"Do you like Karolina, I. Sosceles?" she asked.

Carly had a small constellation of freckles across her cheekbones.

I. Sosceles?

She smelled like spring rain.

I. Sosceles?

And she fogged the air with something that made Matt's knees shake.

"I. Sosceles?" he croaked hoarsely, water dripping off his chin.

Carly held out her hand as if they were being introduced. "I. Sosceles, meet No-name Brain."

Matt could feel all his molecules crashing into each other as their hands touched.

"See, I just wanted to get a date with you . . ."

In the current, Matt felt all the hair on his body stand up.

". . . then I was so embarrassed . . . heard you were taking Karolina . . ."

He wondered if he glowed.

". . . hoped you were just being nice . . . didn't want to humiliate her . . . which made me like you even more."

Carly peered deeply into his eyes, looking for brain waves.

"So if you really want to go out with Karolina, I understand. I just wanted you to know the truth."

Matt's lips twitched.

He had to say something. Carly had an IQ of about 180. She wouldn't stand around watching his face drip forever.

"Karolina's really great," he said, mopping his chin on the shoulder of his tux. "But she belongs to Lumber."

"Lumber?"

Matt nodded. "Her guy back home."

"Oh," Carly said. "So you're still available?"

"Yeah," Matt answered. ▀

by Kimberly Cheney

5 TIPS TO COMMUNICATION WITH YOUR PARENTS

"My dumb mom just won't listen to me," Julie says as she and Karen walk down the hall to their lockers.

"Julie, your mom's not . . ."

"Karen, all she cares about is her shopping and her friends."

"Your mom is just . . ."

"I try to talk to her, but she won't listen. Then she gets mad and

• One fourth of ninth graders spend less than five minutes a day talking or playing with their fathers. Is it any wonder the generations feel they don't understand each other?

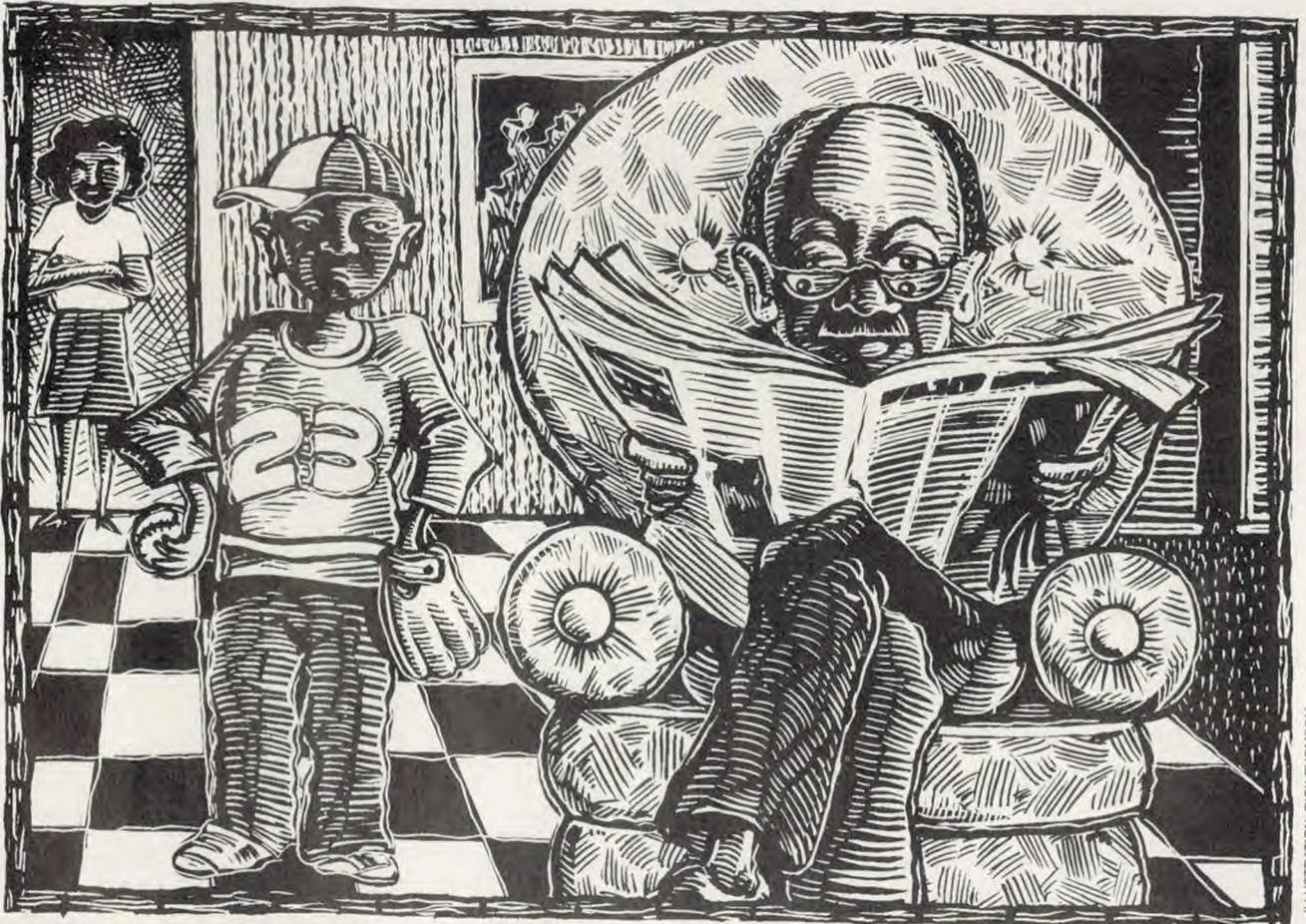


ILLUSTRATION: RICK THOMSON

leaves the room."

"Maybe she can't . . ."

Julie throws two books into her locker and slams the door. "I'm home after school and so is she, but she just won't listen to me."

"Will you be quiet!"

Julie closes her mouth and looks at Karen wide-eyed. "What did you say?"

"Do you realize you haven't been listening to anything I've said during the past five minutes?"

"Yes, I have."

"No, you've been too busy talking."

"I'm just upset."

"I know," Karen says, patting Julie's shoulder. "Do you think that maybe your mom won't talk to you because you won't listen to what she has to say?"

"I listen."

Karen crosses her arms and looks Julie in the eye, waiting for a better answer.

"I sometimes listen?"

"I'll bet if you listened to her talk about her friends and her shopping, and even asked her questions about it, she would want to give you the same courtesy."

Have you ever been in this type of situation? It can be frustrating for you and the person you are trying to communicate with. Maybe sometimes what the other person has to say isn't very interesting, or they are mad and close off to what you have to say. But if we don't listen to them, they may not want to listen to us the next time we need to say something important.

This is only one factor contributing to poor communication between teens and their families. Recent studies show that 50 percent of today's adolescents spend less than 30 minutes a day talking with their dads. One fourth of ninth graders spend less than five minutes a day



Don't be accusatory; the other person gets defensive. Say instead, "I feel this way because . . ."

talking or playing with their fathers. Is it any wonder the generations feel they don't understand each other?

Sometimes we don't realize it, but there are several communication tips that can be used when talking with parents to get feelings across and learn a lot about how they feel in return. These tips can also be used with friends.

The tips add up to **RESPECT.**

REVEAL YOUR FEELINGS.

This one is the toughest. But if you don't, the other person will have no idea how deeply you have been affected by their actions or the reason for your reaction. Try not to phrase things like "You did this" or "You did that," otherwise the person may be on the defensive. Say instead "I feel this way because . . ."

EYE CONTACT.

If you're talking and the other person is looking away or fiddling with something, they aren't giving you their total attention and may not remember what you've said. Plus it is really annoying when you have something important to say and they are busy with

something else. For example, if you are going out the door and you need to tell your parents you'll be home at 11:00 p.m. instead of 10:30, make sure they are looking at you. You don't want them coming back later saying "You never told me that."

STAY CALM AND SPEAK SOFTLY.

First, remain calm. Someone might say something that pushes your buttons, and before you know it, you react by attacking the person verbally, then they attack back, and an argument breaks out. Some people count to 10 slowly to give themselves time to relax. Have you ever noticed that when you speak softly others need to strain to listen? Try using this method: speak softer than normal, but not a whisper. You'll find you have more of a person's attention as they concentrate on what you are saying.

PUT YOURSELF IN THE OTHER PERSON'S SHOES.

Think about how you would react in the same situation. Would you feel differently? Would you have behaved the exact same way? If yes, tell them. If no, tell them that too. This lets the other person know exactly how you feel.

EXERCISE YOUR EARS—REALLY LISTEN.

Listen to the tone they are using when they speak to you. Are they angry? uncaring? trying not to cry? Tone of voice is a very real clue to their emotions. Be aware of subtext, the implied meaning behind the words. What are they really saying?

CHOOSE YOUR WORDS CAREFULLY.

You don't want to say the wrong thing, give the wrong impression, or put someone on

the defensive. Take a minute to think before you let the words escape your mouth.

TREAT THE OTHER PERSON AS YOU WANT TO BE TREATED.

Everyone deserves to be heard, to be able to express how they feel. To know that they matter and that what they have to say is important. This is the true meaning of respect.

A FEW MORE TIPS TO KEEP IN MIND:

Timing. Be aware that there is a right and a wrong time to approach someone. Usually dads want an hour or so to settle down when they come home from work. Maybe they have been dealing with a difficult boss all day, or the traffic was bad on the way home. At this time of night people are hungry and their blood sugar is low. This can cause them to be irritated and cranky. Unless what you have to say can't wait, waiting until after dinner when everyone has eaten may be a better time to bring up a problem.

No name-calling. This will drive respect right out the window. You are too mature to sink to this level.

Next time a family argument begins, maybe you can bring it to a halt with just three words:
I love you.

Leave them a note. Sometimes when something you have to say is too emotional or hard for you to say right then, put it on paper. This gives everyone a chance to digest what was said privately and deliberately form a reply.

Watch their body language. Often crossing the arms indicates a person is subconsciously trying to protect themselves, or they may feel on the defensive. When someone is looking away and fiddling, they may be bored. When they are looking away but are totally still, they are concentrating. When they lean

toward you, they are interested in what you are saying.

Step outside yourself. It may sound strange, but it works. Try phrasing sentences in the third person. "Your son is really trying to keep his cool right now because he was really hurt yesterday by what you said." It may feel silly at first, but it is a good tool to use to get emotions across.

Be aware of displaced anger. (Some examples were mentioned above in Timing.) This is good to keep in mind when someone is mad at you for no apparent reason. They could be mad at a prior situation and expressing their feelings at that moment. Let's say your dad had his boss yell at him just before he left work. He is in a bad mood, so he yells at you. While this is hurtful, remember, he's not necessarily mad at you; he's mad at a prior situation.

Most important, when all is said and done, remember you love each other. Even parents who fail to tell their kids they love them do. Some people just have a hard time saying it. But you can say it to advantage. Next time a family argument begins, maybe you can bring it to a halt with just three words: I love you. ▀

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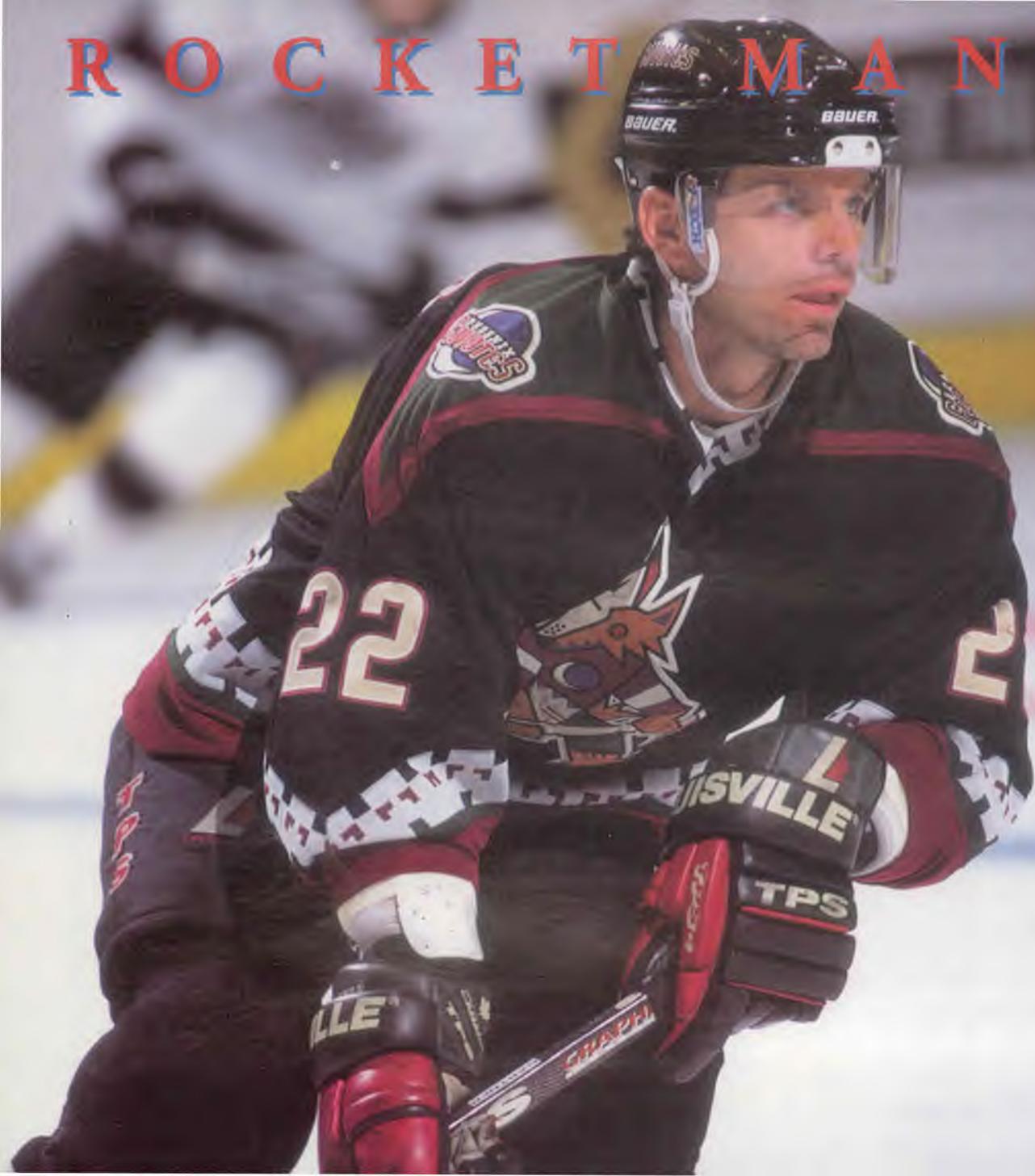
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ROCKET MAN



Mike Gartner is the fastest skater in the world's fastest game.



ARTICLE BY ED GUTHERO

The scene: America West Hockey Arena, Phoenix, Arizona, April 1998.

The defending Stanley Cup Champion Detroit Red Wings are locked in a tight quarter-final playoff game with the feisty hometown Coyotes. The atmosphere is electric—16,000 energized fans, clad in white as a symbol of support for their team, have been swirling white pom-poms and sitting on the edge of their seats.

PHOTOS: BARRY GOSSAGE STUDIOS

Deep in the Phoenix zone the teams line up for a face-off to the left of goalie Nickolai Khabibulin. Right wing Mike Gartner is coiled near the edge of the circle, his intense blue eyes flashing. Against the expanse of white ice and the royal red uniforms of the Detroit players around him, the stylized "Picasso-like" Coyote logo on Gartner's white jersey also seems poised for action. The referee drops the frozen black puck. With

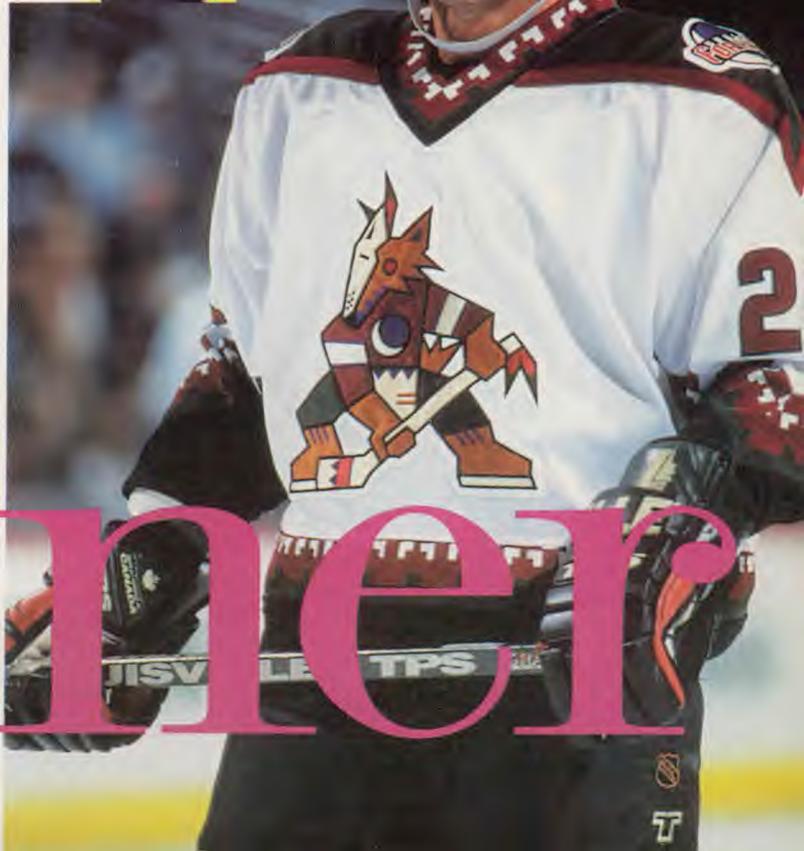
snakelike timing the Phoenix center's stick flashes, directing the puck immediately back to his defenseman.

In an explosion of power Gartner is off like a rocket, ice chips flying as his sharp skates dig into the ice surface. The defenseman whirls and fires a hard pass off the far right arena boards. The puck ricochets into open ice.

Suddenly there's Gartner, swooping in like a sonar missile,

(continued on page 28)

Mike Gartner





Domestic violence threatens adults and children . . .

THE MOTHER OF ALL VIOLENCE

BY RANDALL WOLBURG

For 16-year-old Jeffrey the situation was becoming unbearable. However much he loved his father, however much he wanted to believe his tearful words of sorrow, repentance, and pleas for forgiveness, Jeffrey couldn't take any more. Each time it would get worse, each time he swore he would call the police to stop it, and yet each time he backed down. After all, *call the police on your own father?* Why would anyone do that? The simple answer: to save your mother's life.

As much as Jeff hated the cursing, the insults, the threats, the put-downs, the mocking, the raised fists, the smashing of bottles on the floor—he could, however painfully, deal with that. What he couldn't deal with was the violence against his mother.

He was only a child the first time he realized something was

wrong: that morning his mother appeared at breakfast with a battered face. She told the small child that she fell. By the time Jeffrey was 8, the excuses (falling down or slipping on ice or running the car into a curb and hitting the steering wheel) didn't fly. Jeffrey knew it was because his dad would lose his temper and beat her.

Over the years things got steadily worse, and there was that one time he felt he had to lie when his mom went to the hospital with a cracked spine. Though neighbors had called the police because they heard the fighting, Jeffrey corroborated his mother and father's testimony: the story they told was that she slipped on a glass left on the stairs.

But this last time when he came home and found her on the kitchen floor, sobbing and bleeding, enough was enough. He

decided he was going to call the police. His mother begged him not to, so very reluctantly he agreed.

Sadly, what Jeffrey has been enduring is not uncommon in America. Domestic violence—be it the husband beating his wife and children, or the boyfriend beating his girlfriend, or whatever—is one of the greatest problems facing American families. Indeed, it is now considered the number one public health issue for women and children today in America—and that's because women and children, the most helpless members of our society, are the major victims of domestic violence.

The numbers are frightening. Every 15 seconds in the United States a woman is beaten, usually by a member of her own family or a "domestic partner." Actually,

Jeffrey knows that when drunk, his father is more likely to get violent. What he couldn't deal with was the violence.

domestic violence is the leading cause of injury to women between the ages of 15 and 44—more than car accidents, muggings, and rapes combined. Incredibly, 63 percent of young men between the ages of 11 and 22 in jail are there for having killed their mother's abuser. Battered women, often severely injured by husband or boyfriend—make up 22-35 percent of women who are admitted to emergency rooms.

The figures go on and on, and what they say is that the problem of spouse abuse is one with terrible repercussions. And what makes it so bad is that it arises in the home, from people these women know, often even love, rather than from strangers on the street who pop out of an alleyway and attack them. More often than not, the attackers are people the women have lived with for years.

The organization Violence Against Women reports that "women were attacked about six times more often by offenders with whom they had an intimate relationship than were male violence victims." The report went on to say that "during 1992 approximately 28 percent of female homicide victims (1,414 women) were known to have been killed by their husbands, former husbands, or boyfriends."

What causes this horrible blot on American society? Of course, every situation is different, but researchers have come up with a few common factors that are often involved in this tragedy—and always near the top of the list are alcohol and drug use. In fact, alcohol is implicated in half of all the murders in the United States each year. A large percentage of cases involving domestic violence are linked to alcohol, usually by the one perpetrating the violence. Jeffrey knows that when drunk, his father is more likely than ever to get violent.

However bad spousal abuse is,

Domestic violence is the leading cause of injury to women between the ages of 15 and 44.

domestic violence doesn't always end there. Children are victims as well. In fact, in homes in which the wife faces abuse, chances are 15 times as great for children to be facing violence too. One survey of 6,000 homes showed that 50 percent of the men who frequently assaulted their wives also abused their children. Indeed, more than 3 million children in America are at risk of exposure to parental violence.

Studies show too that even when the children survive (and sometimes they don't), the impact upon them can be devastating, causing lifelong emotional and behavioral disturbances. It can even carry the cycle to another generation: boys who have witnessed parental domestic violence are three times more likely to abuse their wives and children than are those who grew up in homes in which the problem didn't exist. The sons in homes in which the violence is particularly bad are an incredible *1,000 times* more likely to beat their wives.

Someone in this situation should talk to people they can trust and seek help. Most states have laws designed to help victims. There are shelters, social services, counsel, and legal advice.

There is progress in the fact that the problem, which was often hidden, has become more known. People are talking about it more, all in an attempt to alleviate a situation that in many cases has proved fatal.

Jane Randel, director of the Liz Claiborne, Inc.'s Women's Work Domestic Violence Program, says, "Americans are aware that domestic violence is a serious problem facing our country. But that is only half the battle. We believe that everyone must take action to help prevent domestic violence in our society, including friends, family members, and employees."

What can be done? The answer isn't easy, because every situation is different, but there's no doubt that no one should be forced to live in a situation in which they are threatened physically by someone in their own home. If someone is in this situation, they should talk to people they can trust and seek any kind of help they can get. Most states have laws designed to help victims of domestic violence. There are shelters that people can flee to for temporary refuge. Many cities have special social services offering counsel and legal advice.

Jeffrey knew all this, but shame and fear and an understandable yet somewhat misguided sense of loyalty to his dad moved him to keep quiet, to say nothing, and just to endure the tragedy that was going on in his home.

Then one evening his father started drinking heavily. He'd been having financial problems because of cutbacks at his job. The pattern began again: the cursing, the accusations, the verbal abuse. Jeffrey went to his room, although he could hear the screaming. Later things quieted down, and he thought it was over.

It was.

The next morning he woke up and found his mother dead on the sofa. ▀



LISTENING

FEEDBACK FROM READERS



An Ode to January

(in the manner of Emily Dickinson)

Dear January,
 The skies are gray;
 The trees are bare;
 Snowy landscapes go on forever.
 The winter's air you bring,
 As the new year's anticipation sings
 lovely odes in my chilled ears
 sending tingling sensations to my
 frosted toes.

I never want you to leave,
 And I love to watch you come;
 But until then I'll dream of
 velvety clouds whispering to lavender
 heavens above.

Christina Cosenza, 16
New City, New York

THE BASKETBALL GAME

Spectating, oh, spectating on
 the basketball game.
 Watching the players show their fame,
 And often wishing that you could do the same.
 All the dunking and shooting make you smile—
 Then you know it is all worthwhile.

Jenn Kindt, 16
Syracuse, New York



Wrestling

Shouting of the refs;
 Cheering of the teams and crowd;
 Screaming of the coaches.
 The determination of the wrestlers—
 I await my turn on the mat.

Benjamin Tyler, 14
Midland, Michigan

RIVER

Twisting, turning, like a long black snake,
 The way it branches off, it looks like a rake.
 Over the hills and down the falls,
 Carving a path through the red rock walls.
 Watching the river flow,
 Especially now because of the snow.
 Watching the salmon jump upstream,
 Only to wake up and find it all a dream.

Cameron B. Moore, 17
Atlanta, Georgia

White Is Like the Snow

White is like the snow,
 Drifting down from the sky.
 It lands softly upon the ground,
 And then piles up very high.
 White makes the mountains look elegant—
 Even the smallest nook.
 The snow covers everywhere
 Like a perfect picture in a book.

Courtnie Gregory, 17
Peachtree City, Georgia

ILLUSTRATION: DARRYL TANK (TOP), MIKE CRESSY

Tears slowly trickle from Amy's eyes as she talks about her sister Mandy.

"I knew Mandy was hanging around some people with a reputation for doing drugs, but when I talked to her about it, she denied using drugs. And I believed her," Amy recalls. "I guess I wanted to believe her, so I didn't say anything to our parents. Now I wish I had."

Amy, 16, is sitting on her sister's bed, piled high with the stuffed animals Mandy loved collecting. The room's walls are lined with posters of rock music stars. A framed photograph of a smiling Mandy sits nearby on a small table filled with makeup and perfume bottles. Amy glances at the picture as she reaches for a tissue stuffed in her pocket and wipes away her tears.

"It's been almost a year since we got the phone call telling us to come to the hospital. When Mom, Dad, and I got there a chaplain was waiting. He took us to this little room and told us Mandy was dead, that she had overdosed on heroin," Amy says quietly. "Mom started screaming. I will never forget her screams."

Amy pauses and looks around the room.

"Everything here, in Mandy's room, is the same. Mom says she can't bear to change anything. She keeps everything just like Mandy left it," she explains. "Mandy was 18 years old. She'd just graduated from high school and had her whole life ahead of her. We know Mandy is never coming home, but it's still hard to believe."

She adds, "We found out later that Mandy had been smoking heroin. She wasn't injecting it. A lot of kids seem to think heroin isn't bad unless you use a needle, but they need to know that smoking it is just as bad. It killed Mandy."

Amy starts to sob again.

"I'm sorry," she apologizes, as

She's gone, and
we know she's
never coming
home . . .

**M
A
N
D
Y**

People need to know
smoking heroin is
just as bad as
using a needle.
It killed Mandy.

she reaches for another tissue. "It's just hard to accept that I don't have my sister anymore."

Unfortunately, Mandy's story is becoming all too common. Health officials say more people are using heroin today, and more of them are teenagers. For example, a recent study at the University of New South Wales' National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre in Australia found the average age of first-time heroin users has dropped from age 21 in the 1970s to age

AUDREY T. HINGLEY

16 today. And today's heroin is stronger and deadlier than ever: while the average bag of street heroin was 4 percent pure in 1980, today's street heroin can be anywhere from 40 percent to 70 percent pure, experts say.

Heroin comes from the dried "milk" of the opium poppy. Recent bumper crops of opium poppies translate to less expensive, more plentiful heroin, which in turn translates to danger and death. Heroin-related emergency room visits jumped from 63,200 in 1993 to 76,000 in 1995. And while experts say that 10 years ago 550,000 Americans were addicted to heroin, officials estimate there are 700,000 heroin addicts today, with some drug abuse specialists saying as many as 2 to 3 million people use the potent drug "recreationally."

Like Mandy, more people are also smoking or sniffing heroin to avoid "mainlining" (injecting heroin into a vein with a needle), because of their fear of AIDS. Such users don't realize they're still playing a deadly game.

Heroin, one of several highly addictive drugs derived from the opium poppy plant, goes by many slang names, such as horse, H, smack, or junk. But unlike opium-related drugs such as morphine, which are legally prescribed as powerful painkillers, heroin's not used for any medicinal purposes. It's manufactured illegally and smuggled into this country. By the time it reaches the street for sale, it's likely been "cut" (diluted) with a variety of powders. Glucose is the main diluent, but flour, caffeine, and even talcum powder are used to "cut" heroin. And because there are no quality controls when it comes to heroin, it can be contaminated with all sorts of microorganisms. Buyers can never be sure exactly how much pure heroin they are getting—or what substances have been added to the heroin they're

putting into their bodies.

Besides being injected into a vein or muscle, heroin is smoked, inhaled as smoke via a straw (called "chasing the dragon"), or inhaled through the nose. The "downer" drug affects the brain's pain/pleasure systems. The "high" can be followed by nausea, sleepiness, or vomiting. It's fast-acting: heroin reaches the brain in as little as seven seconds when smoked, or in as little as 15-30 seconds when injected.

Once heroin use begins, tolerance develops quickly. Addiction can develop within a month of use, and cravings for heroin are intense. "Nodding off," a stupor-like condition, is experienced with higher doses. Other effects include slow, slurred speech; impaired night vision; dry skin and skin infections; impairment of the immune system, repressing the body's ability to withstand infection; reduced appetite; and irregular heartbeat.

Heroin is full of lethal risks. It remains the drug most linked with HIV/AIDS, because most people still inject the drug and often share contaminated needles. People can, and sadly often do, overdose on heroin. Overdoses reduce the messages sent by the brain to the chest muscles, and breathing slows until it stops, often preceded by clammy skin, convulsions, or coma. Heroin use during pregnancy can result in low birth weights or death of the baby, and all babies born to addicted mothers enter life addicted themselves. Their first challenge in life is withdrawal from a powerful drug, and they experience severe withdrawal symptoms.

Kicking heroin addiction is extremely difficult, since the addiction is physical and psychological. Withdrawal symptoms include nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, cramps, severe tremors, and inability to sleep.

Heroin is full of lethal risks. It remains the drug most linked with HIV/AIDS because most users still inject the drug and often share contaminated needles.



Recovery can take months or even years.

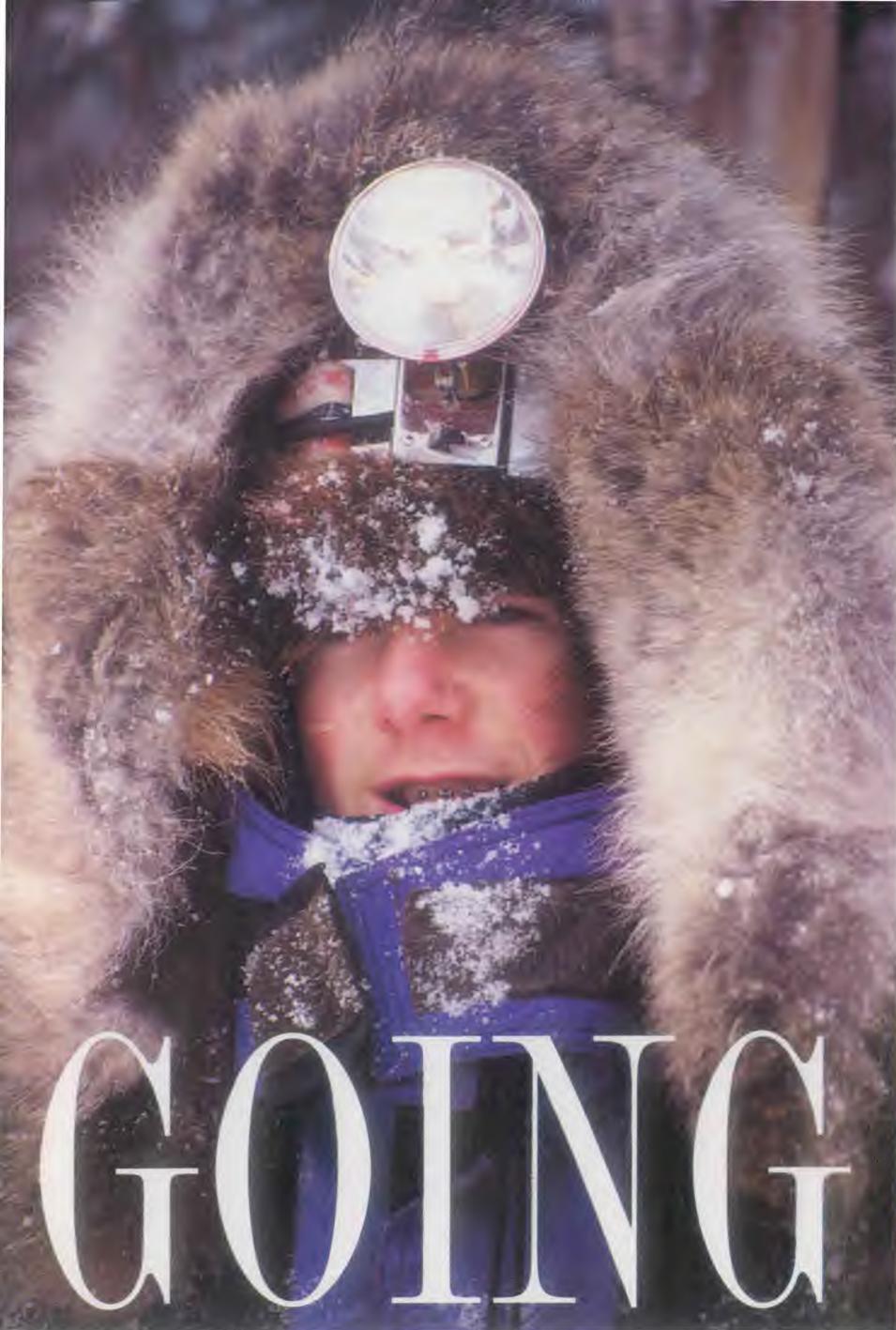
One addict who beat his addiction more than 20 years ago in a "cold turkey" program (simply quitting the drug and enduring withdrawal pain) recalls his withdrawal experience this way: "Cold chills turned to hot ones. I tossed, turned, moaned, and doubled up in pain. Minutes seemed like hours. If my bloodstream could have talked, it would have said 'Do something for me!' I kept going to the bathroom to throw up. I couldn't sleep for three days."

Once someone is hooked, overcoming the addiction to heroin can be nearly impossible. Experts say only a small proportion of heroin addicts who begin drug-free treatment complete their programs, with an even smaller number able to abstain totally from the drug. Today more than 115,000 people receive methadone, a drug used as a "replacement" for heroin. Methadone, a synthetic opiate first made by the Germans during World War II and marketed to Adolf Hitler as a painkiller for

severe pain, also produces dependency in those who use it regularly. Critics say addicts on methadone merely exchange one addiction for another. Controlled as a drug considered to have a therapeutic medical use, methadone is legal to take when prescribed by a doctor. Although methadone can stabilize addicts in the sense that they no longer have to resort to criminal activity (buying illegal who-knows-what's-in-it heroin and committing crimes to get money to buy the heroin), it's not a drug-free "cure" for heroin addiction.

"Knowing Mandy, I know she probably kept telling herself she wasn't really an addict, that she could stop anytime she wanted," Amy explains. "Only she didn't live long enough to see if she could stop. When she OD'd, her so-called friends just left her at the hospital and drove off.

"The worst thing is how it's affected my parents. It's almost like they died too. Mom goes to the cemetery nearly every day, and Dad won't even say Mandy's name. I just wish Mandy were here . . . we miss her so much." ■



temperatures often plunge to -20 degrees or below. That's Fahrenheit, without a windchill factor.

Sound like fun? Apparently so. At least for the male and female mushers between the ages of 14 and 17 who have trained for months, sometimes even years, for the two-day race.

Of course, the Junior Iditarod is much more than just a race. The event honors the famed 1925 serum run from Nenana to Nome when mushers rallied with sled dog teams to transport the lifesaving medicine. At risk were countless Inuit children in Nome who had been threatened by the infectious disease diphtheria.

Today mushers and their highly trained teams gather on ice-packed Lake Lucille in Wasilla, Alaska, the official start

TO

THE JUNIOR IDITAROD TRAIL

*Text and Photos by
Sherry Shahan*

*O*n your mark, get set . . . *mush!*"
Huh?
The race this next February will mark the twenty-first anniversary of the Junior Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race in Alaska. Approximately 150 miles (240 kilometers), the Junior Iditarod route travels over a sled-splintering trail where



of the Junior Iditarod. Padded harnesses are slipped over each dog's head and snapped to the "gangline," the main line that runs through the team and attaches to the sled. Socklike booties are pulled over the dogs' feet to protect them against snow and sharp ice.

but considered just as essential are Walkman and cassettes, plus a supply of high-energy candy bars.

One at a time each team scrambles into the chute amid the cheers of news media and other well-wishers. Then the final announcement, and they're off. The sound of sled runners

• *Photos (clockwise from left):*

1. A frosted Dalton Fiedler, a recipient of the 1996 Junior Iditarod Sportsmanship Award.

2. Equipping a sled dog with protective "booties."

3. A fully outfitted team on the trail in the snowlands of Alaska.

4. Man's best friend and master at the dog yard kennel.



THE DOGS

The sound of huskies howling in excitement is nearly deafening as teams anticipate their turn in the starting chute. Frozen chunks of fish or meat are tossed out as a prerace snack. Mushers make last-minute checks of their sleds while race officials check off items on the mandatory gear list. Hand ax, snowshoes, headlamp, dog food cooker, eight booties per dog, etc. Items not "required"

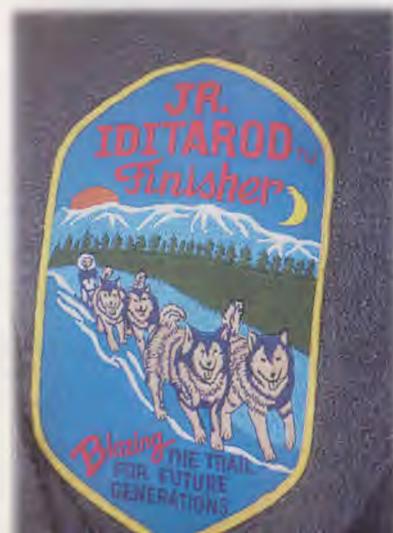




• Scenes from the Junior Iditarod Trail.
A 150-mile race where temperatures often
plunge to -20° F or below.



The first
order of
business is
taking care of
the dog team.



coasting over snow fades quickly as teams disappear into the vast white wilderness, mushing over a route marked with wooden stakes.

Out on the trail the teams face the true test of their months in training. Most mushers have trained in summer months, their teams hitched to wagons or ATVs. Still, every musher knows there's no such thing as a foolproof race plan. Strategies must be as flexible as the ever-changing weather and raw windblown trails.

To stay warm in subzero conditions, Dalton Fiedler, third time Junior Iditarod musher, now 17, sewed a large pocket in the top of his long underwear. An air-activated heat pack is easily slipped inside. His expedition-weight boots are heavily insulated, so he doesn't even wear socks unless it's 20 below or colder. Bare feet can cause another problem. Feet perspire and boot-liners get wet. Not to worry. Dalton knows he can shake frozen perspiration from his boots.

What about the dogs? Don't they get cold? *No!* Mixed-breed Alaskan huskies are bred for cold weather, tough feet, and endurance. Sled dogs actually perform better when temperatures dip below zero.

A working sled dog burns a bunch of calories—up to 10,000 calories in a day. So snack food is just as important during the race as main meals. Somewhere along the trail mushers stop to “snack” their dogs, usually every two hours or about three or four times before the halfway mark at

Yentna Station Roadhouse, which is approximately 75 miles (120 kilometers) from the start. On a “hot” day (10° to 20° F) Dalton feeds his team frozen chunks of fish. Since fish has a high water content, it also helps keep the team hydrated. Fatty foods such as raw bacon and beaver are fed for energy and endurance.

At Yentna Station mushers “park” their teams in the snowy front yard and begin a mandatory 10-hour layover. As always, the first order of business is taking care of the team: massaging shoulders, checking feet, tossing out a predinner snack. Sometimes it takes more than an hour to melt enough snow to heat water to thaw the dogs' main meal: hearty chunks of lamb, beef, or other meat.

Only after the dogs have eaten and curled into their beds of fresh straw for a snooze do the mushers think about themselves and *food!* Dalton pops a bag of his mom's homemade chili in the pot of boiling water, then eats right out of the bag. That way there are no dishes to wash. Laura Smyth sets a frozen pizza over the blue flame of her dog food cooker and discovers it takes forever to cook in the freezing night air.

To sleep, most mushers empty their sled bags and stuff a sleeping bag inside. Others just toss their sleeping bag on the straw and curl up with the team. All too soon alarms signal wake-up calls. Dog food cookers are fired up, sled bags are repacked.

Within an hour of rising, the first musher races back down the trail toward the finish line in Wasilla.

For many mushers the return journey will begin in the dark with a headlamp lighting the trail. Many will also finish in the dark. But no matter where the mushers stand at the end of the race, their goals are the same: finish with a strong, healthy team.

Every musher who completes the Junior Iditarod is presented with a trophy at the awards ceremony in Wasilla. The winner receives a round-trip airline ticket to Nome for presentation of the first-place trophy at the mushers' banquet at the end of

Mixed-breed Alaskan huskies are bred for cold weather, tough feet, and endurance, often performing better in sub-zero temperatures.

the granddaddy of all sled dog races, the famed 1,049-mile (1,699-kilometer) Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race. ■

HEY, THERE'S A BOOK ON THE WAY!

Look for Sherry Shahan's photo-essay *Dashing Through the Snow: The Story of the Jr. Iditarod* (Millbrook Press).

Mike Gartner

(continued from page 17)

to pick up the seemingly loose puck. In a flash he zooms down the right side of the ice into the Red Wing zone and in a whirlwind motion unleashes a shot at surprised Detroit goalie Chris Osgood. The masked man lunges, sprawls low to the ice, kicks out his right leg pad, and manages to deflect the speeding puck wide of the net.

It has all happened so fast—the length of the ice in seconds: a practiced Coyote face-off play designed to utilize Gartner's speed, executed beautifully. Most of the other players on the ice are barely near the Phoenix blue line at the far end of the rink.

Gartner didn't score this time. But those few split seconds demonstrate why even at age 38, sharp-shooting Mike Gartner is still the National Hockey League's merchant of speed.

Earlier during the regular season Osgood wasn't so lucky. Mike sneaked a shot past the Red Wing net-minder to notch his 700th career goal, a phenomenal total. Only hockey immortals Wayne Gretzky, Gordie Howe, Marcel Dionne, and Phil Esposito have scored more NHL goals in the hallowed history of the world's fastest game than Mike Gartner, its fastest skater. That's pretty select company. And Gartner has done it with an amazing consistency of performance. He's been so good for so long, so reliable and steady, that his remarkable scoring totals are sometimes taken for granted, overlooked in the media glare of today's sports world.

In 17 of his 19 NHL campaigns Gartner has fired home at least 30 goals a season (including a record 15 in a row). No one in the game's history, not even Gretzky, can match that consistency of goal producing. "Consistency is something I've always strived for," the hardworking Gartner says. "I want the coach to know what to expect from me every game."

MIKE ADVISES TEENS ON PEER PRESSURE:

Select your friends so your peer pressure isn't the kind you don't want to face. We're by-products of the people we associate with."

Gartner broke into pro hockey as an underage draftee from the OHA Niagara Falls Flyers, and joined the Cincinnati Stingers during the last halcyon days of the upstart World Hockey Association (1978-1979). It was the same year that fellow WHA originals Wayne Gretzky and Mark Messier first ventured into pro hockey after successful junior careers. In fact, that season Gartner finished runner-up to Gretzky for the league's Outstanding Rookie Award. The next season saw all three of those talented young players in the NHL, as the two pro leagues merged.

Mike's NHL rights were owned by the Washington Capitals, and the swift blade-runner quickly established himself as a scoring machine, firing 36 goals during his initial NHL season. He spent 10 years in a Capitals uniform, and still owns the team's career scoring record. His banner season was 1984-1985, when he blasted 50 goals past bewildered NHL goalies and assisted on 52 others for a dazzling 102-point season.

Gartner's scoring exploits in Washington were instrumental in the Capitals rising from perennial doormats to becoming a legitimate NHL contender. Not only did Mike's golden touch for goals pile

up wins for the Caps, but his community spirit won the respect of the club's fans.

During the 1987-1988 season Gartner donated money to charity for every goal he scored, piling up huge dividends for worthy causes. Though the hard-shooting right winger played the early part of his career in the shadow of other dominant players at his position, like the Edmonton Oilers' Jari Kurri, or the Montreal Canadiens' Guy LaFleur, or the New York Islanders' Mike Bossy (who both played in media-rich huge hockey markets), Gartner quietly went about his business scoring truckloads of goals. Along the way he established a reputation for consistent excellence, and after 19 bountiful seasons Gartner has emerged as the second-highest goal-scoring right wing of all time (708 goals). Only hockey legend Gordie Howe has scored more.

By 1990, after a brief stint with the Minnesota North Stars, Gartner was in a New York Rangers uniform, and his radar-like eye for the net was in high gear, recording three straight seasons of 40 or more goals. He erupted for four goals and an assist in the 1993 All-Star Game while capturing a new car as the game's Most Valuable Player.

An injury to Mark Messier had opened up an All-Star slot for Mike, and after the game a reporter asked Gartner if he felt he owed anything to Messier. Mike good-naturedly figured he owed Messier a handshake, but quipped, "I'm keeping the car." Gartner was dealt to the Toronto Maple Leafs and patrolled the right-wing position with typical productivity from 1993 through 1996. During his stint with the Leafs Mike racked up his record fifteenth consecutive 30-plus goal season. He also served as president of the NHL Players Association from 1993 through 1998.

During a phone interview from his Toronto home, Mike tells me of his personal outlook on life while relaying some sound advice for teens regarding peer pressure and

decision making.

Gartner's Christian faith is an important part of his life. "We know we have a physical and emotional side, but kids especially need to know that they have a spiritual side as well," Mike reflects. "Treat other people the way you would like to be treated," he says.

The hockey star advises teens to "select your friends so your peer pressure isn't the kind you don't want to face. If someone is finding themselves in situations where their friends are pressuring them to do things they really don't want to do, I say you're hanging out with the wrong people," Mike emphasizes.

"We're by-products of the people we associate with . . . good values will rub off on us. Surround yourself with good people and good friends," Gartner says.

Commenting on the temptations athletes or teams face, Mike feels it's a matter of character and points out the importance of the decisions we make in shaping patterns for our lives.

"Drugs, alcohol, or steroids are the easiest things you can do . . . it's easy to do the wrong thing, it's difficult to do the right thing," Mike point out.

"Train yourself to make correct decisions and it becomes easier to make those decisions," he suggests.

In a draft-day trade prior to the 1996-1997 season the Phoenix Coyotes, in an effort to add scoring power to their lineup, obtained Gartner from the Maple Leafs. "Mr. Consistency" came through again, as hockey bloomed in the Sunbelt, firing a 32-goal contribution and leading the Coyotes with 13 power-play scores and seven game-winning tallies. For all his notoriety as a scorer, it's the skating aspect of his game in which Gartner finds special joy and that fellow players look upon with utmost respect.

"I don't think there's a faster, purer skater in the game right now," says teammate Keith Tkachuk (no slouch himself) of Gartner. "You hear about guys like Paul Coffey and Sergei Federov, but the name



Train yourself to make correct decisions and it becomes easier to make those decisions," Mike suggests.

Mike Gartner, just the mention of it, implies speed, power, and grace. He's one of the best skaters there ever was."

The fact that he's still considered the game's speed demon after 19 NHL seasons brings a smile to Gartner's face. "I don't feel any different than I did 10 years ago," Mike says. In 1990, '93, and '96 Mike won the NHL's fastest skating competition during the annual All-Star break, leaving younger players "in the dust," or rather in a cloud of ice flakes, so to speak. "I got a kick out of that . . . a lot of people did, I guess," Gartner laughs.

The speedy Coyote feels the emphasis his dad put on skating fundamentals during Mike's youth hockey days in Canada gave him a solid foundation to make it in the world's fastest team sport. His story is a lesson in hockey priorities to kids everywhere who aspire to play the game.

Mike began his youth hockey career at the ripe old age of 7.

"My dad was my biggest influence—a great supporter, challenger . . . encouraging me to be the best I could be. I have four older sisters and the family sacrificed a lot of time in traveling and support."

At 14 Gartner attended a

"power-skating" camp in London, Ontario, where skating techniques were taught and stressed. "There were no pucks on the ice. There was nothing to shoot. No nets. Just a sheet of ice and skate, skate, skate," Mike recalls. This emphasis was destined to pay huge dividends and set a pattern of career commitment.

Young Mike soon discovered that speed came in handy and that his father had the right idea. After all, if you get to the puck first in the world's fastest game, you've got a big advantage. "Good skaters," Gartner says, "will always have the advantage."

Here are some tips from hockey's Rocket Man. "Technique is very important," Mike stresses. "Most players don't bend their knees enough, which means they don't get low enough. . . . That provides the power they need when they finish their stride."

Gartner points out the importance of taking a full elongated stride and using "your arms to pump through . . . like a sprinter. Don't stop moving your legs into a turn; that's the time you want to accelerate," says this wily Coyote.

As an athlete who has excelled for nearly two NHL decades in prime shape, Gartner says the key to conditioning is "sticking to it on a regular basis."

Mike has played with and against some of the brightest stars in the game. When asked to name the toughest goalkeepers to score on that he's faced over the years, Gartner says there have been many including Ken Dryden, Bernie Parent, Pete Peters, Mike Liut, Patrick Roy, and Martin Brodeur.

He still remembers the first of his 708 NHL goals—October 1979 against goaltender Mario Lessard and the Los Angeles Kings. "It was a '2 on 1', a pass across and I redirected it," Gartner recalls.

Among opposing defensemen the swift skating winger feels that Dennis Potvin of the New York Islanders was the "most difficult on a

(continued on page 31)

JUST BETWEEN US

DRUGS AND TEEN VIOLENCE

Several times in the past few weeks we have been shocked to read and hear the details of mass killings and shootings by school students. Teachers and fellow students have been gunned down by teen and preteen renegades as payback for bad grades, bad dates, and some even more petty nonreasons. And communities all across the U.S. have been asking the big Why?

In a number of these cases, including the Springfield, Oregon, massacre, the young person involved was on various psychiatric drugs that had been prescribed to deal with behavioral abnormalities. Drugs such as Prozac and Ritalin have long been linked to violent reactions. It is probably of great significance that their use is anecdotally associated with these outbreaks of murder and violence. At the very least we should make sure that those under such prescriptions are monitored carefully, and we should require that medical and psychiatric authorities apply stringent criteria to diagnosing conditions for which they prescribe such potentially dangerous substances.

While I am absolutely certain that in many cases of teen violence as well as adult public and family violence some drug substance is involved, I do believe that there's an even more pervasive and insidious culprit at work.

While waiting for a plane recently at Dulles Airport in Virginia, close to our nation's capital, I observed for perhaps a half hour the activities of two or three teens as they expertly plied the various video arcade games. I don't remember the names, but regardless of the title, each game carried the common theme of violence—a violence that involved body parts, guts, blood, and wiping out any number of assailants. And these games have a technological realism that rivals actual video footage of real-life events.

And I've sat in a somewhat lonely motel room on business trips and clicked up and down through the 100+ channels on the cable network looking for suitable footage, only to discover that practically everything involved murder and violence.

And while some of the channels do carry news, the news itself is hardly any better, as is clearly proved by the recent live footage from Los Angeles of a freeway suicide. Millions of supposedly horror-stricken viewers saw a man blow his brains across the asphalt.

Drug use carries many real and certain physical dangers. *Listen* magazine has been consistent in warning teens of this hazard to their physical security. But equally hazardous to the mental well-being of every human being is a culture that encourages violent behavior and the associated thrill that often goes with destructive acts. We are applying a very dangerous double standard to young people when we encourage violent video-gaming, sports behavior that verges on a war mentality, and news-footage reality that depicts violence as normal. In this way we may easily communicate that violence is an acceptable high as well as an acceptable alternative to dealing with the inevitable frustrations of life.

L I N C O L N S T E E D

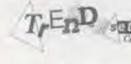
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Mike Gartner

(continued from page 29)

game to game basis" to play against.

Some of his favorite linemates have included Bobby Carpenter from Mike's Washington Capital days and teammates Mark Messier and Adam Graves from his stay with the New York Rangers.

Warming to the subject, his voice lights up . . . "probably the most memorable line was in New York with Jan Erixon and Sergei Nemchinov," Mike recalls fondly, "we really complimented each other."

Today he's a sure bet for hockey's Hall of Fame, and he can still "turn on the jets" and fire his sizzling shot past frustrated goalies. When he was honored, after a typical spirited Gartner performance, as the game's first star following the Coyote's final regular 1997-1998 season game, there were tears in Gartner's eyes and speculation that perhaps he was contemplating leaving hockey.

During the playoffs as Mike and his Phoenix teammates were battling the Red Wings in their

• *Gartner has long been one of hockey's greatest pure skaters and goal scorers. He's played in seven NHL All-Star games and on two Canada Cup championship teams. In All-Star Game skills competition, Mike holds the record for the quickest lap around the rink—a blazing 13.386 seconds. He has recorded 17 "bat tricks" (3 goals in a game) during his outstanding career.*

exciting series, Fox broadcaster John Davidson, in a pregame interview, asked Gartner to reflect on his amazing career. "I guess there's no one special memory," the right winger said, a hint of youthful enthusiasm in his words. "Just the thrill of scoring a goal, of hearing the crowd cheer you, of being part of a team."

Modest words from one of the most respected names in hockey. Someone who has always done his job with consistency and excellence. One of hockey's greatest scorers, yet a strong two-way player in the game of grace, power, and speed.

Few who have ever laced up a pair of skates have played it better than hockey's Rocket Man, Mike Gartner. ▀



• **EDITOR'S NOTE:** As this issue was being completed, prior to the start of the current hockey season, Mike announced his retirement as a player after 19 NHL campaigns. He leaves phenomenal career marks that are standards of excellence and durability, including 708 goals (5th in NHL history), 1,335 points (18th in NHL history), and 1,432 games played (5th in NHL history). He holds the NHL records for most 30 or more goal seasons (17) and most consecutive 30 or more goal seasons (15).

• Article sources include: Listen phone interview with Mike Gartner, the Complete Encyclopedia of Hockey, and the Hockey News.

PUZZLE / Medieval and Modern

by Juliana Lewis

Cervantes, creator of the famous Don Quixote character, defined proverbs as "short sentences drawn from long experience." The medieval and modern proverbs listed below, though based on activity and work, are lacking action words. Can you correctly fill each blank from the given word list and supply the missing action?

1. Without _____ you can get nowhere.
2. He that wants the kernel must _____ the nut.
3. The work _____ the workman.
4. As a thing is used, so it _____.
5. Better _____ two days too soon than one too late.
6. Do not _____ time, for time is the stuff that life is made of.
7. To have the harvest we must _____ the seed.
8. The ladder of life is full of splinters, but they always prick the hardest when we're _____ down.
9. The wheel that _____ gathers no rust.
10. A hen does not quit _____ just because the worms are scarce.
11. Early _____ is not so much help unless you keep wide awake after you get up.
12. It is no harm to dream as long as you get up and _____ when the alarm goes off.
13. Rome was not built in a day, but someone must have _____ it in a day.
14. Were everyone to _____ before his own house, every street would be cleaned.
15. Being a thoroughbred does not _____ upon your ancestors, but upon you.

Words that complete the proverbs: rising, brightens, hustle, going, started, crack, sweep, praises, depend, reap, scratching, waste, turns, sliding, sow.

ANSWERS: 1. going 2. crack 3. praises 4. brightens 5. reap 6. waste 7. sow 8. sliding 9. turns 10. scratching 11. rising 12. hustle 13. started 14. sweep 15. depend



In This Issue

LISTEN MAGAZINE · JANUARY 1999 · VOLUME 52 · NUMBER 1

That Shy Girl

by **Eva L. Friesen 2**
What ever happened to . . .

I. Sosceles

Sharelle Byars Moranville 10
"Meet No-name Brain," she said.

Tips to Communication With Your Parents

by **Kimberly Cheney 13**

Rocket Man

by **Ed Guthero 16**
Mike Gartner is the fastest skater in the world's fastest game.

The Mother of All Violence

by **Randall Wolburg 18**
Domestic violence threatens adults and children . . .

Mandy

by **Audrey T. Hingley 22**
She's gone, and we know she's never coming home . . .

Going to the Dogs

by **Sherry Shahan 24**
The Junior Iditarod Trail

YO! JENNY

He treats me terribly **5**

And So Forth

Stair-racing the Empire **6**

CHOICES Dinking and Driving **8**

LISTENING An Ode to January **21**

JUST BETWEEN US

Drugs and Teen Violence **30**

PUZZLE Medieval and Modern **31**



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Next Month

■ AFTER THE PARTY

Teens and alcohol

■ T.J. DUCKETT

Young football player on the rise

■ FASTPACKING