

Bee Editorial

Enhanced licenses make crossing the border easier

For those of us who do not intend on flying overseas, to far-off lands in Europe, Asia, Australia or Africa, but do enjoy an occasional trip to Canada, then investing in an enhanced license might be the best option.

The microchip license, which fits conveniently in your wallet, makes trips to the Fallsview casino, Clifton Hill and Long Beach a no-hassle journey over the border. The technology identifies the license holder as a U.S. citizen; unlike the regular New York State identification cards that just states you are entitled to drive a vehicle. Enhanced non-driver's licenses are also available.

Let's face it, carrying a passport can be inconvenient because it doesn't always fit comfortably in a pants pocket or small purse. Leaving it in the glove compartment of your vehicle while enjoying your minivacation leaves you vulnerable to thefts and possibly

even identity fraud if the document falls into the wrong hands.

The enhanced licenses are also less expensive than a passport and more easily obtained. There is a lengthy process involved in the issuance of a passport, including a special trip to the often busy post office. We realize the lines at the Department of Motor Vehicles offices aren't necessarily shorter, but the process is less extensive.

If it isn't time to renew your license, it's still possible to obtain an enhanced license, which costs approximately \$30. If it is time to renew, however, the total cost is about \$80, because of the charge for the renewal. Passports cost about \$100, and passport cards are comparable to the enhanced licenses.

Passports are necessary for overseas travel, but if those types of trips are not in your immediate plans, then the enhanced license is

your best bet for safe and easy international travel to Canada and Mexico. These identification tools are designed to make frequent trips to our neighboring countries more feasible and allow a shorter wait at the borders.

Until June 2009, the use of a driver's license and original birth certificate are still acceptable means of identification for crossing the border by land or sea, but after that, a passport, passport card or enhanced license will be necessary.

The enhanced licenses may not be a responsible purchase for residents of New York City or other areas of the state not close to the Canadian border, but for Town of Amherst residents, it's a must-have, considering Niagara Falls, Canada is not far away.

For more information, call Erie County Clerk Kathleen Hochul at 858-7450 or visit www.erie.gov/clerk.

Spindle items



JESSICA FINCH

Associate Editor

• **LOVE/HATE RELATIONSHIP** — Lately, I can say that I hate cars. It's a very expensive and demanding item but, unfortunately, a necessary item.

In order to pass New York State inspection, I had to get my check engine light off, a task I knew carried

a \$60 price tag just to diagnose it. But "lucky" for me, I have a very complicated Nissan Sentra, and hundreds of dollars and hours later, the technicians finally were able to fix the problem. After keeping my car for three days, one of the mechanics called with an update, telling

me that he, too, hated my car. I will admit, I defended my car and my mechanics when others suggested I look into a new car or a new shop. I told them, no, this was a "weird" thing and my car has been great since buying it four years ago. Had I been a resident in Kentucky, along with much of my family, I wouldn't even have to worry about the pesky check engine light or inspections.

But I am nearing the end of my defense. Monday morning my car started what resembled a slow death. With surging power and flashing battery and brake lights, I decided to stop at my mom's office on Union Road, not attempting the three additional miles to my Main Street office.

As many women seem to do before marriage, I called my dad. No, he's not a mechanic but as fathers do, he offered to help. If my boyfriend lived in town he, too, would have received a tearful call. What can I say, it's just something a lot of girls do when dealing with their car.

As I await another diagnosis for my "sick" car, I feel a bit sick myself, having not been granted the opportunity to save up since dropping hundreds of dollars on the last problem.

Plus, you know you have spent too much time at your car dealership when they ask you, "Are you the same Jessica Finch who writes the Bee?" I always thought the piles of Amherst Bees in the waiting room were in a sense mocking me, saying "sit and wait, enjoy the paper you just put together." But I really can't complain — that paper pays my car bills.

• **ROOM?** — International high school exchange students are coming to study in the Amherst area during the 2008-09 school year. These students will integrate themselves into an Amherst area family with the goal of experiencing American culture as an American high school student does. In turn they will provide insight into their own culture.

STS Foundation, a non-profit student exchange organization, is proud to help facilitate these relationships. They have been doing so for the past 20 years and look forward to finding new host families in Amherst and connecting them with exchange students.

The host family provides a separate bed, family meals and a safe environment. Families interested in being a host family can call Lillian Clemente at 1-800-522-4678 or send an e-mail to lillian@stsfoundation.org. For information visit www.stsfoundation.org

• **HOLE IN ONE AFTER 70 YEARS** — On June 27, during league play in the Amherst Senior Men's Golf League at Oakwood Golf Course, Don McNutt scored a hole-in-one. He described his ace as a nine iron tee shot on the 135-yard ninth hole that bounced once and settled neatly in the cup. McNutt, who has played golf for more than 70 years, added, "there is hope for the older golfer."

Out of the Past

125 Years Ago July 19, 1883

Many of our citizens attended the Saengerfest at Buffalo and came back filled with musical ambition. The fair city of Buffalo was never more lavishly arrayed in holiday attire; a spirit of genial good fellowship reigns. The inauguration of the new music hall at Main and Edward streets will be remembered with pride by all who attended.

Dr. A.H. Tuttlebee, the celebrated Blue Eagle Ointment and American Horse and Cattle Feed inventor, was in Amherst last Thursday.

Our enterprising jeweler, Mr. C.L. Haupt, has just received a fine lot of gold pens and holders, which he will sell for prices that will compete with any city house, style and quality considered. He has also received some very fine ladies chains.

The average cost of every school house in New York State is \$2,584.

"There is a grocer out west who is said to be so mean that he was able to catch a fly on his counter, hold him up by the hind legs and look in the cracks of his feet, to see if he hadn't been stealing some sugar."

"An old woman from the country once went for a pound of candles, when to her great astonishment, she was told they had risen a penny per pound since her last purchase. 'What can be the cause of such a rise?' she asked. 'I can't tell,' answered the shopkeeper, 'but I believe it is principally owing to the war.' 'Do they fight by candle-light?' she asked."

100 Years Ago July 16, 1908

Rev. Father Boss, who was assistant pastor of SS. Peter and Paul's Church, has been transferred to another parish.

A total of \$1,855 has been subscribed by the village's friends for the new village hall and hose house.

Deaths include Mrs. Gregory Wick and Mrs. Barbara Beaser, both of Williamsville.

75 Years Ago July 20, 1933

Howard G. Britting was drafted as the Republican candidate for supervisor by the Amherst Republican Committee at a meeting held at the Eggertsville Fire Hall Monday evening.

Lyon "Frenchy" Beaumont, proprietor of two gas stations, Main and Los Robles and Main and Richfield, had the misfortune to fracture his left arm last Saturday afternoon when he fell from a horse when trying to free the animal from an entangling wire.

With shocking sadness came the news of the passing of Mrs. Sarah E. Wolf, widow of Jacob J. Wolf of Getzville. The end came unexpectedly at 10 o'clock Saturday evening, July 15, 1933.

For Sale: "Light gravity gasoline for cleaning clothes. L.J. Clothier Service Station, Main Street at Lehigh Valley R.R."

50 Years Ago July 17, 1958

Councilman D. Russell Conway has recommended the northwest corner of Sheridan Drive and North Forest Road, adjacent to the Westwood Country Club, as the site most suitable for a new town hall.

J. Robert Chalmers has been re-elected president of the Williamsville Central School Board for his 26th consecutive term. Mrs. Marguerite H. Lapp was re-elected vice president.

Construction has started on the new \$50,000 clubhouse of the Alfred J. Jurek Post No. 1672, American Legion. The building will be located at the north-east corner of Smith and New roads.

The Joe McCarthy Little Leaguers will meet the North Tonawanda Nationals on Saturday at the West Royal Parkway field.

25 Years Ago July 13, 1983

Williamsville firefighters were called to the R.B. Taylor residence, 4959 Sheridan Drive, yesterday afternoon to battle a house fire.

Due to the generous donation of an Apple IIe computer by the Amherst North Rotary Club, the Clearfield Branch Library will be able to offer Dow Jones information retrieval beginning July 18.

Joseph Gidzinski, Amherst building commissioner for 19 years, will retire Sept. 1.