

Eliminate the wait

By Franki Buffi

Lake Region Union High School, Grade 12

Waiting rooms are one of the worst places to be. First of all, if you are in one it is never for anything good. A waiting room is full of sick people a good majority of the time because there is a good chance that, if you are in one, it is for a doctor's appointment or in a hospital.

In a waiting room there is always too much waiting. It would be one thing if you got to go right into your appointment but you always end up waiting in this room for at least an extra twenty minutes. This makes people agitated and there really is nothing to do, besides read out-of-date magazines. The really good waiting rooms actually have a television, although even these TVs are boring because the show has to be neutral for everyone to watch. As we all know, that turns out to be the news which, of course, is always depressing. If I was in charge of a waiting room, I would put something exciting on TV because one has to know the people watching are already on edge.

Waiting rooms are also very awkward. In most cases you have to sit right up next to someone you don't know. If it is crowded, which is usually the case, some people don't have room to sit. There are always some awkward and shy smiles in a waiting room, which makes everyone feel like they are in the same boat.

Overall waiting rooms should be eliminated -- or at least dramatically improved.

Emergency room

By Evelyn Schaedel

Edmunds Middle School, Grade 8

The pain-washed faces
Waiting, praying, hoping
Staring blankly into emptiness.
A cancer-surviving mom,
Sitting with her kids, bald,
Waiting to be hydrated.
Row upon row of wooden, framed chairs
Lining each expressionless hallway
White plastic floors mirror everyone
Who passes over them.
A burly man's red wounds
Stories hide inside
his bandages.
Sea of blue scrubs
Fake smiles and sentences
Tension in the pit of your stomach.
The air is filled with the aroma
Of anti-bacterial hand sanitizer
While the fluorescent lighting
Blinds the sadness that fills the room.
A frightened mother cries salty tears
Clinging to her son's small weak body.
Holding him when he shakes
Every time he draws a breath.
A noise bites the silence
And nods are exchanged as you're called in.

The eyes

By Hailey Ward

Brown's River Middle School, Grade 6

I hate the feeling of waiting rooms
The sensation of anxiety
That flows through the veins, like milk
through a straw
And if it's crowded,
Random people stare at you and judge you by
your looks
Their eyes scan your whole body, and you
feel like crawling into a hole
At least I do
And then the person calls your name
You stand up, and everyone looks at you
And you walk toward the nurse, or whoever
calls your name
And you go into the back room and leave the
dreaded
Waiting room

Wait . . .

By Ruby McCafferty

Edmunds Middle School, Grade 7

I sit, I read, I wait. I wait for news I will hear but do not want. I wait for news I want but will not hear. All around me people are my mirror, doing the same meaningless things, acting the same emotionless way, breathing the same stale air that is full of words not yet spoken. A woman sits in the corner with rosary beads, muttering soft words of hope and prayer. A man sits next to me with his computer on his lap, the picture of efficiency and love for work, but he is a statue, not moving, barely breathing. Tears have formed in his eyes, but they are held back by an invisible force.

There is tension in the air, but not the kind that causes you to grip the edge of your seat in terror, or the kind that causes you to hide your face and breathe in sharp, ragged breaths. This tension is gentle, keeping the occupants of the waiting room firmly planted in their seats, softly pushing them back if they make a move to leave. We are kept in silence by the tension. A TV muffled by the air plays in the background. It is set on a news channel, where a stony-faced woman reports on the war while videos of car bombings and children crying fill the screen. It seems like an odd channel to be playing in a room full of people who are already sad and worried. Of course, no one is really listening or watching. It is just there as white noise, something to fill the empty void between the occupants of the waiting room and the reality that surrounds them.

A nurse turns the corner with a blank look on her face. Everyone takes a collective breath, and we are brought forth from our daze into the real world. The nurse, in her pale green scrubs, looks over to me and motions quickly with her hand for me to come with her. The others release their breath and go on doing nothing. I keep that breath inside, knowing that it may be the last thing I have from the time before tragedy. I clear my mind and brush tension away. I try

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to fill my mind with positive thoughts, but tension comes back and fills my senses, pushing everything else aside. The nurse leads me to a small conference room. She beckons for me to sit, and I obey. She closes the door, leaving behind the stale air and tension that is the waiting room. I look over my shoulder and watch the room disappear, saying goodbye to the lady with the rosary beads and the man with the computer. I hope silently that the person they are waiting for is well and on the road to recovery, unlike the person I am now about to hear the fate of. The nurse brings me out of my prayer." Excuse me, miss?" she says gently. "I have some difficult news to tell you..."

The waiting room

By Ming Fen Congdon

Charlotte Central School, Grade 7

I hate the waiting room — the smell, the toys and most of all the books! They're so grimy and boring. The toys are for little kids and so are the books. The magazines are weird and not fun at all to look at! I wish I never had to wait for anything. I am going to tell you a story that is going to make you never want to wait in a room again.

It all started on a bright, sunny morning, Monday, March 24, 2003. I was waiting in the dentist's office for my teeth to be cleaned and I was a little early. I had to wait for 30 minutes. Those 30 minutes were the most painful of my life. It seemed like I waited for an hour. A boy next to me kept on repeating the same thing over and over. Every time I looked at him he would say, "Hi, what are you doing here?"

After 30 minutes went by, the lady at the counter said, "Ming, you have to wait for another 45 minutes."

I was a little early, and I had thought that if I was early I would not have to wait as long,

but no! I was so wrong! They wanted to keep me waiting as long as they could to make me go insane! "Heaven help me," I said. "What does the Lord have against me?"

The next thing I saw was so gross it made me want to run for the hills. It was the little boy again, and now he was digging for some gold.

He said, "I got some!" He pulled out this gross green blob, and he did something that you could not imagine: he put the slimy goo on his seat.

I had had it! I had to get some fresh air to clear my mind of the horrible waiting room. After standing outside for 10 minutes, I was fine to go back in the waiting room. I was outside for so long that when I went back in the little boy was gone, and I had also forgotten about the gooey blob on his seat. I sat down on something wet and sticky (I had shorts on). I screamed so loudly that half of Asia probably could have heard me. "NO! HOW COULD THIS HAVE HAPPENED TO ME?"

Then suddenly I jerked up from a painful sleep. Ah, it was only a dream, a horrible dream. I lay back down; sweat streaming down the sides of my face. Then Mom came and said that I had to get dressed because I was going to the dentist for teeth cleaning.

NOOOOOOOOO!

Waiting rooms

By Chester Barber

Renaissance School, Grade 5

I am waiting
For something.
I am debating
my mom about what it is.
I hear a phone ringing.
I am very annoyed.
I smell toothpaste.
I see a dentist brushing
A kid's teeth.
I hear him yell.
They must have pulled out a tooth.
I sit at a booth
And wonder if I will lose a tooth.
Finally it's my turn next.

Why does it rain?

By Ally Atkins

(with a little help from *Jack and the Beanstalk*)
Ferrisburgh Central School, Grade 3

Once there was a giant named Gigantic who was 98 feet tall. He loved to harvest eggs. He was all excited that his chicken was laying golden eggs to cook for breakfast.

One day a young, curious boy climbed up the rough branches of a leafy beanstalk and stole his chicken. When Gigantic called for his chicken the chicken didn't call back. Gigantic got all scared and nervous. He knew that someone had stolen her.

When Gigantic went to bed that night he thought about his chicken and cried all night long. From then on, every time the giant thought about his chicken, he cried. That's why it rains.

