

'Toxic' details in magazine

2008 CHATELAINE ARTICLE SES ON CHEMICAL VALLEY

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Garry McDonald,
the Sarnia-Lamb-
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paigning against the industry
and the potential health prob-
lems its caused.

Dean Edwardson, gen-
eral manager of the indus-
try-funded Sarnia-Lambton
Environmental Association,
accuses the article of focus-
ing too much on the Valley's
past while overlooking current
developments.

"We recognize that we're
not perfect," he said. "But we
seem to be targeted, maybe it's
because we have petrochemical
complexes (and not a different
industry).

**"I get disappointed
(when) we get hit
over the head like
this."**

Garry McDonald

McDonald said the portrayal
of the city as a toxic mess hin-
ders Sarnia's attempts to attract
investors and visitors.

"Somebody has put this big
article together and said this
is not a good place to be. How
do you think that would affect
business?" he asked.

Yet there's no clear solu-
tion what to do about it. Judy
McLellan, chairperson of Tour-
ism Sarnia-Lambton, said she
thinks the city should offset
pollution-focused articles with
positive advertisement.

"There are beaches and lots
of tourist attractions. At least
we should be knowledgeable
about the pluses of the area,"
she said.

futile.

"You won't make a difference
by spending a lot of money
to brand your city when the
major problems are not fixed,"
he said.

Bradley, who is quoted
throughout the Chatelaine
piece, said Sarnia should
instead focus on improving
the industries' track records,
and the good publicity will fol-
low.

"People can bemoan the bad
publicity, or they can do some-
thing about it," he said, citing
a massive solar farm proposed
for Sarnia and a possible new,
cleaner Shell refinery as steps
in the right direction.

"These stories cannot be
ignored," Bradley said, adding
that the city recently celebrated
the lives of those lost because
of pollution during the April 28
Day of Mourning.

"It's a painful, but very
important part of our history."

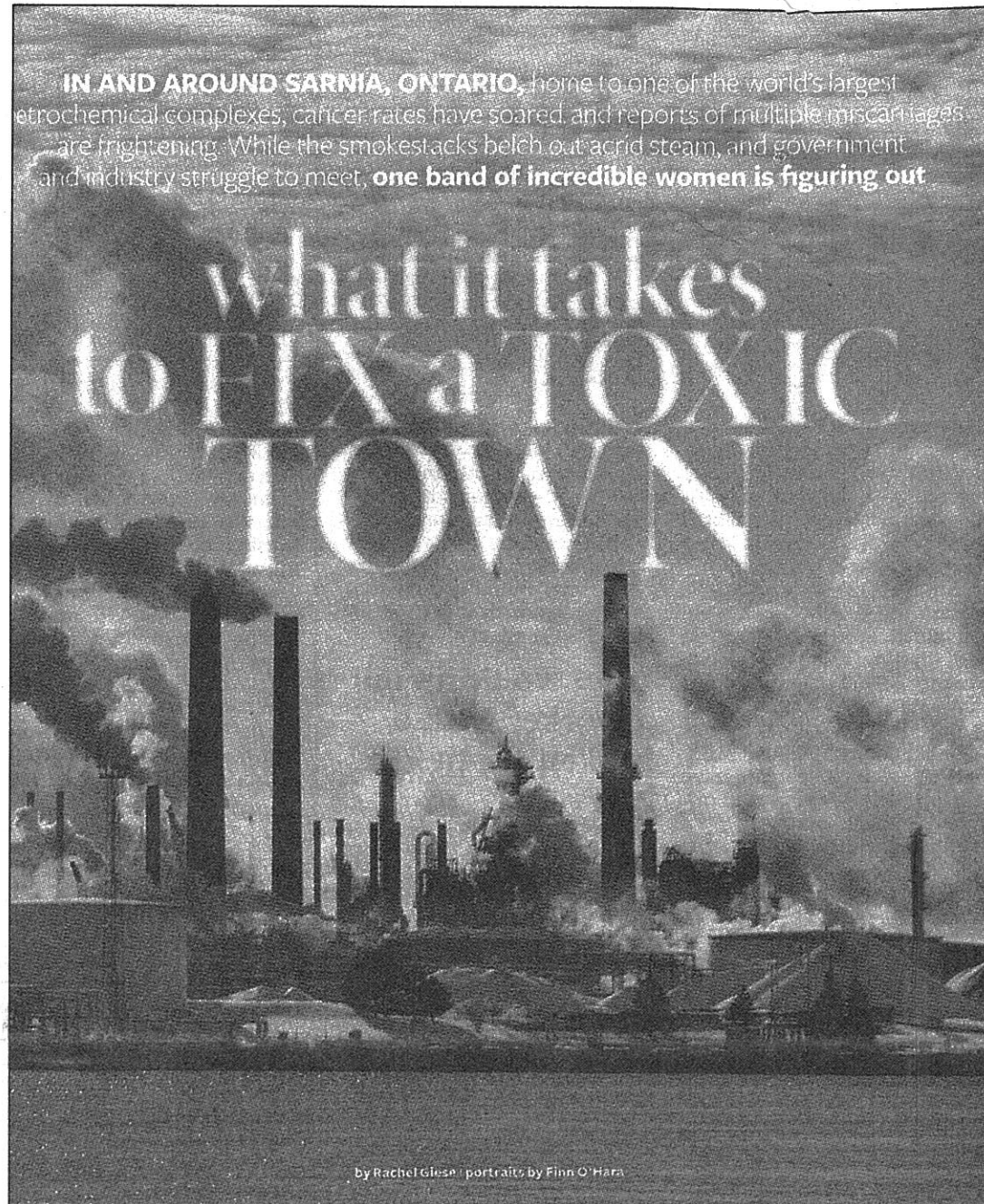
Jim Brophy of the Occu-
pational Health clinics for
Ontario Workers agrees. He
said the article illuminates
how industry has affected
"every blue-collar family in
Sarnia."

Rather than denounce the
magazine, Brophy said the com-
munity should commend the
article for raising awareness of
the health problems chemical
complexes are causing across
Ontario.

"Sarnia's kind of the canary
in the mine. It's telling every-
one . . . that something's got to
change," he said.

McLellan, of Tourism Sar-
nia-Lambton, said the com-
munity has a rich history
that's being overshadowed by
the debate.

"There's probably a lot of
communities with dark histo-
ries," she said. ". . . But I think



by Rachel Giese | portraits by Finn O'Hara