

## NEWSLETTER 4. 2008

### 'The shape of things to come'

Smokers denied IVF treatment; tobacco to be sold from under the counter; smokers given an allowance to encourage them to quit ...

**REPORT FROM MIDLANDS** The 31st of May saw the first full meeting of f2c Midlands in Leicester. The meeting received press coverage beforehand, in the local papers, and during the meeting. There was an encouraging turnout from local licensees and general public which proves that F2C are starting to be noticed by more than just ASH etc! Two MEPs attended and after their talks, gave us some very sound advice as to the way forward – we are indebted to them. We also increased memberships and have, without doubt, 'opened a new door' for F2C (I will update for the next newsletter). It is obvious to me that regional groups need to get their local paper inside in the future as it has been amazing just how many people actually said they had read the article prior to the meeting.

It is also abundantly clear that licensees are now realising that their Pubcos are not assisting them at all and they are therefore looking at alternatives to save their businesses. In Leicestershire they now know that F2C is there for them. As pubs, clubs and the general public join with F2C we become stronger by the day, which then gives us the people power we need to tackle this issue head on. I'll bet this gov't cannot believe how quietly this smoke ban has been accepted – but their harmony is soon to be broken, folks!

Phil Johnson  
F2C Midlands

### PS \*Swindon hits back!\*

Freedom2choose proudly announces its latest recruit to the ranks of the only fighting force in this country against this devastating smoke ban law. Nick Labosquet of The High Street Club in Swindon has decided 'enough is enough' – he wants the freedom2choose!

We warmly welcome Nick and all his members to F2C.

### LOOKING BACK AT SOME MEDICAL 'FACTS'

In Victorian times it was believed that masturbation was a cause of insanity, blindness and (according to Dr. Isaac Baker Brown) epilepsy. Though, comfortingly, this applied only to women! Meanwhile, Dr. Sylvester Graham warned 'the masturbator would develop cancerous lesions and die a slow and painful death'. Today we regard such ideas as laughable, but the effect of other received medical wisdom was much more serious.

For many years it was held as a fact that cholera was an air-borne disease and though Dr. John Snow demonstrated, circumstantially, in 1849 that it is in fact water borne, his conclusions were fiercely opposed by the medical establishment until in 1883 the microbe was isolated by Robert Koch. The number of lives that could have been saved in the intervening 34 years, had the establishment acted on Snow's evidence, can only be guessed at.

Is the medical establishment today any more responsible?

We are constantly told that 'passive smoking' is responsible for all sorts of nasty diseases – in the face of contrary evidence from such bodies as the WHO and the HSE. While smoking rates decline, troubles such as asthma are on the increase. Yet smokers are blamed. Does this make sense?

'But it's obvious that passive smoking causes cancer,' says the anti smoking brigade. It was also 'obvious' that 'bad air' caused cholera and malaria (the clue's in the name) ... obvious, but not true.

**Freedom to Choose Scotland** had its first AGM at the Vogue Bingo in Lanark on 1 June, base of its chairman Martin Carroll. The meeting elected a committee and agreed to full membership of the International Coalition Against Prohibition following a presentation by Bill Gibson. Members from Fife, Ayrshire, Glasgow, south Scotland, Edinburgh and Middlesbrough were present.

**Freedom2choose member Dan von Rosen takes Freedom2Choose to the races:** both cars and staff will sport the logo at race meets at Brands Hatch in July, Silverstone in August and Donington in September this year. This is a magnificent opportunity to get the Freedom2choose message out to a wider audience. For further details please contact Phil Johnson on 07773 926818, or 0116 2997760.



**HAMISH HOWITT, 'rebel landlord', contests Hull by election, called by former Shadow secretary David Davis.** We applaud Hamish's efforts to bring the smoking ban experiment into the political arena and support his efforts to highlight the need to include it alongside wider civil liberties issues raised in this by election. F2C seeks to work with politicians of all parties and therefore remains unaffiliated to any individual party or candidate.

#### **THE WONDER OF AIR CURTAINS**

An Edinburgh publican told us recently of his experience working in a meat-packing plant. Part of the plant had to be kept at a constant  $-40^{\circ}\text{C}$ , while people worked quite comfortably in an adjacent area, yet the two areas were separated only by an air curtain. This man, a non-smoker who is more than happy to exclude smoking from his pub, made the point that if it can work for extreme temperatures, he has no doubt of its efficacy in separating smoking and non-smoking areas. The estimated cost of an air cleaning system (two plasma-clusters and an air curtain) sufficient for a reasonable sized smoking area would be around £1,000.

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