

We must protect the land

What we call “nature” or “the natural environment” used to be called “home” by those who lived here in former times.

People immersed themselves in it for survival — to live, hunt, gather, harvest and hide. In some parts of the world the natural world still serves these purposes.

But in the developed world, especially here in heavily populated southern Ontario, humans are more interested in natural spaces for the beauty, tranquility and adventure they offer. They still hide in them, in a manner of speaking — hide from the cities our ancestors built.

Many people here like to escape into Esquesing Conservation Area, a wooded area that is increasingly surrounded by residential pressure.

Drive for a bit and you’ll find yourself sharing the beauty of the Forks of the Credit Provincial Park, east of Erin, with people who have driven similar distances from the Greater Toronto Area to find an escape.

A parking lot near an official entrance to the trails will be packed and the sides of the roads near unofficial entrances are lined with cars too. All of this foot traffic on trails takes a toll, especially when there are people who don’t respect the space and leave their mark, either with litter or by having trampled plants that were off the path.

“Without a doubt people are harming these areas,” says Nathan Perkins, who teaches landscape architecture at the University of Guelph.

The landscape is a fragile system and one that changes significantly, even through its own natural processes.

“We hasten that change,” he said. “And the more use, the more change. The change is usually away from what people desired to begin with.”

Finding peace in nature should include treating nature gently. A walk in the woods is probably better for mind and body than a walk down a busy street, but we also need to exercise common sense — common sense not to litter, and to stay on the path.

We have to protect these places we profess to love because, if we don’t, one day they’ll be gone. And, as Prof. Perkins points out, “once it’s gone, it’s gone.”

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THE INDEPENDENT & FREE PRESS

905-873-0301

Publisher: Dana Robbins

General manager: Steve Foreman
(sforeman@theifp.ca, 905-234-1011)

Retail advertising manager: Cindi Campbell
(ccampbell@theifp.ca, 905-234-1012)

Managing editor: Chris Vernon
(cvernon@metroland.com, 905-234-1020)

Distribution manager: Nancy Geissler
(ngeissler@theifp.ca, 905-234-1019)

Classifieds/Real Estate

Kristie Pells
(realestate@theifp.ca, 905-234-1016)

Advertising Sales

Jenny Hawkins
(jhawkins@theifp.ca, 905-234-1014)

Jennifer Spencer
(jspencer@theifp.ca, 905-234-1013)

Rachael Scutt
(rscutt@theifp.ca, 905-234-1015)

Kelli Kosonic
(kkosonic@theifp.ca, 905-234-1018)

Classified Call Centre

1-800-263-6480, Fax 1-866-299-1499
classifieds@metroland.com

Accounting

1-866-773-6575

Editorial

Cynthia Gamble: News editor
(cgamble@theifp.ca, 905-234-1021)

Eamonn Maher: Staff writer/photographer
(emaher@theifp.ca, 905-234-1023)

Composing

Shelli Harrison (sharrison@theifp.ca 905-234-1017)

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Letters to the editor

Does Spandex cause brain damage?

Does Spandex cause brain damage?

The question will have merit as you read.

I operate an 18 wheeler hauling HHLAW (High Heavy Long and Wide) in the Halton/Peel corridors.

The vast majority of other drivers as we call them are exceptionally respectful and move over in every attempt to allow passage for the equipment I move.

In turn I try my best not to impede traffic by moving to the side of the road at traffic lights to allow as many vehicles to pass.

Here is the glitch that created the question.

Cyclists dressed in Spandex riding on the roads on the 8- to 10-inch strip of asphalt to the right of the white line on the side of the road absolutely refuse to yield to the wide load coming behind them.

This has been without exception with some even going from several in single file to doubling up so as to block the way.

This sets up an extremely dangerous situation where vehicles behind my unit attempt to pass forcing oncoming traffic to take defensive maneuvers.

I have had more than a few cyclists dressed in track pants and sweat shirts in my path and every single one has slowed down and pulled off to the dirt for the 30 seconds it takes me to safely pass.

Therefore the question.

John R. McLellan

Boy, 6, wants his new bag back

My six-year-old grandson was playing after school at the park near Joseph Gibbons Public School his first week back at school. He is in Grade 2.

When it was time to leave the park with his mom, he did not notice he had forgotten his backpack.

Within an hour my husband went back to the park to look for our grandson’s bag.

It was nowhere to be seen. We all thought some Good Samaritan would

turn it into the school. Unfortunately that was not the case.

Someone had stolen his backpack.

Who would take a six-year-old’s backpack? It contained his lunch box, lunch containers and school work.

I am sure someone’s parents are aware that their child has a new Roots backpack, new Roots lunch box and new lunch containers. My grandson’s backpack and all items in it had labels with his full name on them.

What type of people are they? What message does that send to their children? It leaves us with a terrible feeling about people living in our community.

Heather Longland

Letters policy

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Mail or drop off: Independent & Free Press, 280 Guelph St., Unit 77, Georgetown, ON, L7G 4B1.