

EDITORIAL

With Frances Niblock



Valued Acton volunteers

Last week I spent an hour in a field with some people who made me believe in the power of dedicated volunteers.

Two acres of the donated field will soon sprout vegetables in leased garden plots — part of an innovative program to rent garden space to people who want to grow their own food but don't have a garden.

I was there to take photos of the organizers, members of Acton FoodShare, the Acton Horticultural Society and a local church, all of whom are trying to help hungry people help themselves with dignity.

It struck me that these people were all there on their own time; that they were volunteering because it was the right thing to do and it felt good.

Volunteers never expect and seldom get the thanks, let alone the praise they deserve, as they quietly do what needs to be done.

Next week is Volunteer Week — what a perfect time to say thanks.

Topping the Thanks List has got to be Acton FoodShare volunteers and donors.

The volunteers worked 70 unpaid hours a week at the food bank to which local citizens and business donated over 70,000 pounds of food last year.

It's no wonder that the big Toronto food banks marvel at the generosity of Acton donors and the FoodShare operation.

Thanks to increased donations of food and cash, FoodShare was able to feed 361 more hungry Acton families this year, 30 per cent more than last year.

Thanks to FoodShare for giving a hand up, not a hand-out.



LETTERS

Drivers Beware!

To the Editor,
Ontario Drivers Beware!

The Ontario Legislature is about to begin a new session at Queen's Park but it has an old issue before it that is threatening to cost Ontario drivers more money.

Bill 164 is the act that changes automobile insurance for the sixth time in seven years. No system is perfect and there is always room for improvement, but the approach taken on this change goes too far too fast and won't serve the motoring public any better.

Each week, hundreds of drivers phone their agents or brokers looking for a better price on auto insurance. These are people who aren't looking for a fancy system, they just want reliability, good service and stable pricing. We have that now under the Ontario Motorist Protection Plan (OMPP).

OMPP is the semi-no-fault insurance system we've worked with in Ontario since 1990. It took the emphasis off of blame and put insurance company resources into the hands of accident victims faster. You don't have to sue someone in order to receive benefits. The result was a more predictable system for insurers, which led to stability in pricing for consumers. In fact, rates have decreased at most companies since 1990.

The new legislation increases benefits to a point where they could only be supported by premium hikes. It also increases the number of people who could sue, which

will cost the system more money. However, it takes away the right to sue for economic loss (loss of future income). In short, Bill 164 creates a costly and complex insurance plan for Ontarians.

The Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs met through the winter holding hearings across Ontario to find out what people think about the plan. The response was overwhelming. Out of 72 people and groups who addressed the committee, 15 said they were either neutral or in favour of the legislation, while 57 said they were opposed. That's 80 per cent. The way I do business, 80 per cent rejection means I go back to the drawing board. The Ontario government must be convinced to do the same and withdraw Bill 164 until it comes up with a plan that won't cost us more money.

Sandra L. Moon
Clare Court

Integrity praised

To the Editor,
Congratulations everyone on the integrity of your newspaper.

I received my copy of your April 7 edition and read with interest the Ilka Higgins court result, noting that she was found not guilty.

How often in any newspaper is it that this kind of result would have been buried somewhere in the depths of a paper, where it could easily be missed, leaving others to wonder. "Most often," would be my observation.

Knowing the person compounds the feelings expressed above.

Congratulations again. Keep up the good work.

Jan Mowbray
Rockwood

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LETTERS

Freedom of conscience

To the Editor,

I am writing to protest the NDP government's proposal to implement the recommendations of the Task Group of Abortion Service Providers. I believe that the government will be doing a great disservice and injustice to the people of Ontario by imposing abortion on demand at all hospitals.

Although I believe a woman has a right to say what happens to her body, she does not have the right to kill another human being, even if it resides within her body for a short while.

Just as no woman wants to have a child imposed on her through rape or incest, so no woman or man should have it imposed on them to perform an abortion to kill an innocent child.

Our health care givers have rights which are protected under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms (read "Responsibilities"

instead), and to insist by law that they have no choice in the matter of abortion is wrong and violates their rights.

Women need to be educated regarding the development of a pre-born child, and the complications abortion can cause.

They need to be encouraged to use other methods of birth control or abstinence (especially in the case of our young people). If a woman doesn't want children she should be encouraged to be sterilized.

I would demand that my government use my tax dollars for real life affirming health-care; not for programs that destroy life.

Your pro-choice agenda is really no choice at all, since you want us all to conform to your way of thinking. A pro-life choice, on the other hand, speaks for the life of mother and child, and the good of both.

By implementing your pro-choice agenda, you are taking away our freedom of choice, freedom of speech, freedom of expression, and especially our freedom of conscience.

Coby Adema
Greenore Crescent



Don't be shy!

Send us a Letter to the Editor.

Please sign your letter and include your address and phone number.