



COMMENT

THE CANADIAN CHAMPION

Fund is coming along but more help needed

The Champion's Christmas Bureau Fund is picking up steam as the holidays draw closer.

Over the past week donations have more than tripled to \$5,820 — making this year's goal of \$25,000 now seem within reach.

However, contributions are still down about \$3,000 from this time last year and a lot more help is needed if the community is to match the generosity of 1998.

Now in its fourth week, the Salvation Army fundraiser helps ensure all local families have a nice Christmas, complete with dinner and toys for the children.

The Champion realizes that numerous charities have their hands out asking for support -- particularly during the holiday season -- and that it's already a financially-strapping time of year.

But we're hoping we can enjoy the same result as last year, if not a better one.

Please send donations payable to the Christmas Bureau Fund, Box. 248, Milton, Ont., L9T 4N9, or drop them off at our office, 191 Main St. E.



OUR READERS WRITE

Carmichael's comments ill-thought out

Dear Editor:

We all appear foolish in private from time to time due to errors in judgment, but we try not to be caught that way in public.

Not so, for the representative of the North Halton Cultural Awareness Council, Elizabeth Carmichael.

She calls the Halton Police Services Board an 'old boys club', according to The Champion (November 30).

I would like clarification, please.

Are Ms Carmichael's remarks aimed at the age of the male members (she did say old), or is the gender of the board membership causing her to be cranky?

In either case, remarks such as these make her appear less than discerning in the public.

People should be recognized for their talent in any particular position, not just for being male or female.

Ms Carmichael's ill-thought out comments are a perfect example of just how befuddled attempts become when establishing a politically-correct minority quota system at any cost.

I guess I won't need to ask why more men aren't active in women's issues.

Jon Komov
Milton

Both genders should be on police board

Dear Editor:

Re: 'Police board criticism should be re-thought' (editorial) and 'Multicultural leader calls all-male Halton police board old boys club' (article) (November 30).

It's most unfortunate and somewhat ironic that the press has chosen to focus on Elizabeth Carmichael's reference to the Halton Police Services Board being, or being perceived as being, an 'old boys club', rather than on the excellent work of the North Halton Cultural Awareness Council (NHCAC).

Given the reporting, it appears Elizabeth Carmichael's crime was pointing out the obvious at a police services board meeting -- that seven men around a board table looks like an 'old boys club'.

Perceptions are important. This isn't just any board. This is a public body responsible for setting policing priorities and policy for the entire region.

Women comprise approximately

half of the region's population. Halton is becoming increasingly diverse.

Ms Carmichael didn't diminish the skills and commitment the seven men on the board bring to the table.

Her point -- what seven men bring is, at times, very different from what seven women or even what one or two women might bring.

Men and women from differing cultures add yet another important dimension.

Sometimes, the perspectives, insights, vision, approaches, priorities and experiences of women are very different from men's -- not better, just different and not always, but sometimes.

The same can be said for those who bring differing cultural backgrounds. It's the combination of gender and cultural differences that enrich the pool of ideas and thus the pool of possibilities to be considered when making the kinds of

decisions a police board must make.

Both men and women should have a place at the board table, as should members of differing cultures. Up until two years ago, they did. They don't now.

Why were some board members so indignant and so defensive? The recent editorial asserts Ms Carmichael's criticism of the board is "misplaced" and "unfair" because the board has no voice in deciding its members.

In fact, regional council decides who four of the seven board members will be.

There are three regional councillors on the police services board who have a vote.

One of them, Councillor Keith Bird, chaired the committee, which decided the board's community appointee.

Wendy Roberts,
Former chair of the Halton
Police Services Board



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by Steve Nease