



COMMENT



THE CANADIAN CHAMPION

Box 248, 191 Main St. E.,
Milton, Ont. L9T 4N9

(905) 878-2341

Editorial Fax: 905-878-4943

Advertising Fax: 905-876-2364

Classified: 905-875-3300

Circulation: 905-878-5947

Ian Oliver Publisher

Neil Oliver Associate Publisher

Jill Davis Editor-in-Chief

Karen Smith Editor

Wendy McNab Advertising Manager

Steve Crozier Circulation Manager

Teri Casas Office Manager

Tim Coles Production Manager

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Get those flags wavin'

With the World Cup of soccer winding down this weekend, there will likely be a lot of celebratory flag-waving by either Brazilian or German fans wherever large pockets of them have gathered for Sunday morning's final match.

Few world events — the Olympics included — can be credited for bringing Canadians, transplanted from all other corners of the globe, out to celebrate their native heritage.

At no other time do we see so many flags representing so many different nations proudly displayed out car windows, in windows of homes and on the more traditional flag pole.

Many believe this month-long party we have to wait four years to enjoy helps to unite people of different world cultures in a celebration of the pursuit of sport.

Monday, the day after this year's World Cup ends, will likely provide a hangover for some, but hopefully a reminder to many that there's another country's flag they might consider displaying or waving on July 1. For Canada, the home for which so many of its inhabitants left their native lands in order to seek a new life full of prosperity and freedom, celebrates its 135th birthday on this day.

Built on a foundation of welcoming immigrants from all nations to its shores, this country's birthday deserves the same emotional celebration that has seen so many other flags flown in recent weeks.

If you took those same World Cup revellers who proudly flew the flags of dozens of different nations, and had each of them display a Canadian flag out their car, in their home or up their flag pole, we would be in for a patriotic display this nation hasn't seen in years. Flag-waving is a simple enough task. It's also the very least anyone who's genuinely proud of where they live can do for a truly great country like Canada.



OUR READERS WRITE

It's time to stand up and be a proud Canadian

Dear Editor:

I consider myself an average Canadian citizen.

This year, though, I decided it was time to not only feel proud to be part of the greatest country there is, but also to display some patriotic symbolism for Canada's 135th birthday.

No problem, I thought. Zellers is a Canadian company, owned by The Bay, Canada's first department store.

On Saturday, June 22, I went to our local Zellers store at Milton Mall.

I walked in the front door and there were approximately 10 four-by-six-inch Canadian flags. In a box on the floor, underneath all the flags for the World Cup were the larger Canadian flags.

I walked through the store, asked an employee, and was told that was all that they had in.

Needless to say, I left disappointed.

I then decided to drive to Walmart, an American-owned company. What to my wonder did I see as I walked in the front door — Canadian flags and wind socks of

all sizes, Canadian banners, ribbons, chairs, hats, t-shirts, sweat-shirts — even chairs with the Canadian flag — and more.

What I wonder is wrong with our Canadian companies? Are they afraid to be Canadian?

Why do I, who would like to shop locally and support a Canadian company, have to resort to shopping from an American-based company.

Isn't it time to stand up and be a proud Canadian, eh?

Brenda Johnson
Satok Crescent

Due to early holiday press deadlines for Tuesday's Champion, coverage of Canada Day activities at Rotary Park will be published next Friday.

Glorious and free, Canada has so much to celebrate

In three days, Canadians will celebrate the birth of a nation.

Red and white flags, shirts, hats and balloons — most of them decorated with maple leaves — will line streets across the country come Monday.

It's a day for us Canadians to be proud of our heritage, a day to celebrate our North American roots and wave that flag in all its glory.

It was only in the last few years that I could honestly say I was proud to be Canadian (except when I travelled to the States, when my national pride always seemed to take over). I never thought living in this great land was anything to toot my horn at, but as I grew older, I realized just what Canada means to me and what it means to all of its people.

Monday will mark our country's 135th birthday, which will be celebrated nation-wide. Our American neighbours will get the chance to do

some celebrating of their own Thursday, when the United States turns 226.

When I was younger, Canada Day was just a time to light fireworks in the park and wave a flag around. But, of course, now it means much more.

People constantly complain about the state of our health care system and how it's failing us. Although I agree the system needs major improvements, Canada has one of the best health care systems in the world. Unlike our neighbours to the south, we don't have to pay every time we go to the doctor or hospital if we don't have health insurance. I think if we switched to an American-like health care system, people would then realize just how lucky we are.

Miltonians will be able to join in the Canada Day festivities right here at Rotary Park Monday. The day-long activities will include a ceremony at Victoria Park at 11:30 a.m., followed by a



Random thoughts
with **FANNIE SUNSHINE**

parade with a local pipe band to the park. Partygoers will be entertained by games, face painting, a dunk tank and pony rides. The evening celebrations will kick off with live entertainment and end with fireworks. I was told more than 7,000 people attended last year's Canada Day celebrations, and this year promises to also be well-attended.

And no party would be complete without traditional birthday cake, which will be handed out to all park visitors.

If you get a chance, take time on Monday to reflect on what Canada has given the world. For example, did you know that basketball and five-pin bowling were Canadian inventions, along with lacrosse, kerosene and rollerskates? The creators of the telephone, walkie-talkie, the zipper, pabulum and the pacemaker were also all Canadian. And comic book hero Superman was also invented by a couple of Canadian boys named Joe Shuster and Jerome Siegel.

Canada can also claim actors Mike Myers, Jim Carrey, Keanu Reeves and Joshua Jackson.

But perhaps, most importantly, we can claim the ultimate glory — both the men and women's hockey team bringing home Olympic gold.

Happy Birthday, Canada!