

THE LAST WORD - *Cont'd from page 20*

1.5% County sales tax. If we apply these taxes to our vehicle purchase, my math says that tax-wise we are paying 6.5% LESS tax in the state of Florida on our vehicle purchase PLUS the basic price gain on the model of our choice. It is a considerable difference in any language.

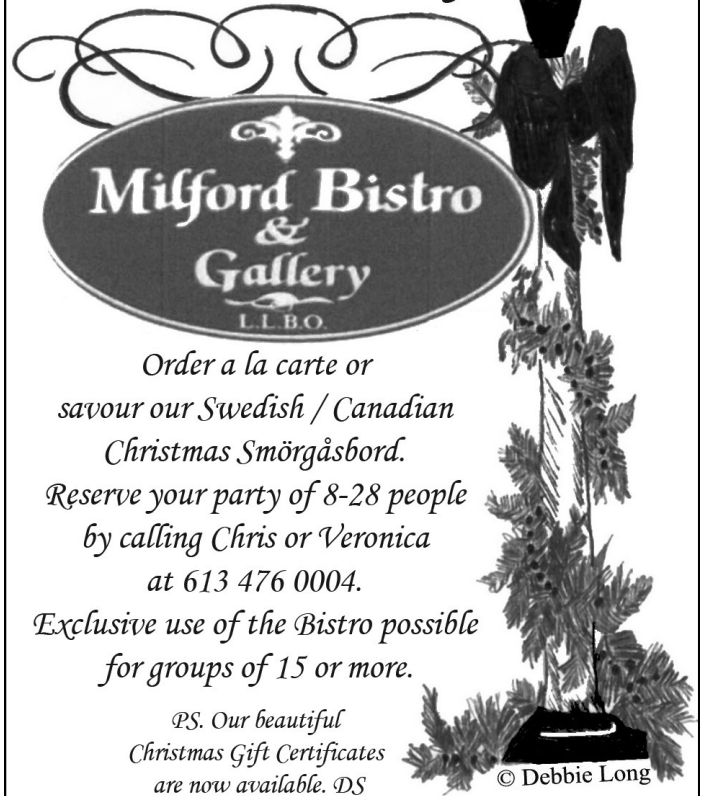
Vacations: A family member has recently been trying to book a vacation for 2008 and I suggested that they look at cruise pricing which has always been in US \$\$\$\$. We have a Canadian dollar that has now passed the US dollar in value so paying for a cruise in \$US should be cost effective. "Not so," said one travel agent. The cruise lines they claimed, are now increasing the \$US prices of their cruises.

Finally, and I promise you this is my last example: Greetings Cards. On Saturday I visited the Greetings Card store of one of Canada's major producers. I picked up the card I wanted and took it to the check out. "**That will be \$5.95 plus tax please,**" said the assistant. "**Wait a minute,**" I exclaimed, taking the card back from her. "**It says here that this card is \$3.55 US or \$5.95 CAN. Since the Canadian dollar is stronger than the US dollar I would like to pay the US price please and the store will gain 3.5%.**" "**I am not allowed to do that,**" said the assistant, "**and you are one of many customers who have asked the same question.**"

Currency differential as applied to retail sales is NOT a simple problem. There is the increased cost of imports into the USA due to the weakness of their currency and this will have an effect on some of their pricing in future. There is the decreased cost on imports in Canada due to the strength of the Canadian loonie. There are taxes to consider etc. etc. But in lay-persons language there is no way that any vehicle or major white goods item should cost more in Canada than the USA, and the sooner Canadian distributors start to give their clients a fair deal for their loonie the better. The price reductions that have recently been announced on a few hundred items at the big box stores is not even the tip of an iceberg and, in my view, an insult to Canadian consumers. Mr. Flaherty take serious note please!

Bill Yates, Friend of the County.

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