

Question of the Week

What do you think could be done to attract businesses to locate in downtown Essex?

May I illustrate my response with an account of an event I witnessed downtown this summer. An American couple exited their auto and stepped into garbage and filth. They were appalled at what they saw. The gentleman quipped, "This is disgusting" and immediately exited town.

Shoot the messenger, if you will, my friends – but walk the town as I do. It is filthy – cans, plastic bottles, cigarette ends, paper, coffee cups, hamburger refuse, tree grates full of garbage. Even my golden retriever has stepped over broken glass on a regular basis! Why would a visitor stop to shop?

Next week I will provide one idea, a financial incentive, that would encourage residents to help out on a regular basis cleaning up the town. It's all about civic pride.

– Robin Blencoe, Essex

This is a definite issue, as many stores are sitting vacant on the main street, which does not present a good image for the town. Town council and the BIA should work together to promote the idea that Essex is a good place for business to locate. Essex is a growing community with much to offer new businesses.

– S. Lypys, Essex

Next week's question:

In your opinion, what makes Essex a great place to live?

To respond to next week's question **CALL DAN** at **519-776-4268, ext. 14** to leave your response. You must provide your name and phone number. You can also drop us an email at essexfreepress@on.aibn.com or **FAX** us at **519-776-4014**. Please be brief – 25 to 40 words. Deadline for responses: Monday at 9 a.m.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Amalgamation must work

Municipal council is an important position. We need sober, intelligent people. There are so many legalities to follow, council needs to work together. The council we have received top marks from the auditors on how they handled our money. Not even a private citizen could find fault with the financial statements.

Our council had to bring our sewage systems up to the new Ontario standards at total cost to us. Unfortunately, previous councils didn't take advantage of more grants for roads and sewers when they were available. If one listens to Canadian news, we hear municipalities all over Ontario are in debt, some a great deal worse than us, due to the downloading of services from the province.

Amalgamation must work. We have no choice but to move forward.

Brenda and Gord Dunn
Harrow

Accusations not supported by facts in Essex

It never ceases to amaze me how the election process can bring out so much negative talk, innuendo and accusations. Enough is enough already! Please stick to the facts, what you really know, and what you are really going to do!

All of this talk about 'huge debt' and 'incompetent management' is not accurate. If you are going to criticize, please provide concrete proof to support what you are saying.

Your town has provided you with factual information. Why not read it? I have taken the time to review a document compiled by the town administration that gives a detailed analysis of the municipal debt. It was easy to read and understand. It gave me a sense of comfort to know how effective our council and administration is taking care of business.

In the past three years, Mayor McDermott, along with Deputy Mayor Dufour and their team have done an excellent job of building a base for this municipality to move forward. Hopefully, the next four

years will keep us on that path.

I wish everyone the best of luck in their campaign efforts, but let us not forget that not everyone will be successful...but hopefully they will still have some self-respect.

M. Achilles
Essex

No signs for Kingsville candidate

I have been reading with both disgust and amusement the trials and tribulations that candidates are having across the city and county with their election signs. Now don't get me wrong – destruction or removal is a serious criminal offence and should be prosecuted to the fullest extent.

But, take a step back for a moment. What do these signs really say about the candidates? My name is bigger than yours? I have more signs than you do? Vote for me because you can't walk, drive or look anywhere without seeing me right behind you anyway? And what will become of these thousands of signs on the morning of Nov. 14? Landfill, recycle bin or bonfire for most I regret. Perhaps saddest of all, a few lonely signs will be locked away in a cold storage shed for four more years until the 2010 elections for a second chance at life with new hope and vigour. Poor signs – they didn't ask for this life. Cold, rain, wind, dogs.

On the flip side, I made a conscious decision at the start of this campaign not to stake-in a single law sign in Kingsville. Why? Not because I can't afford them, or because I can't wield a rubber mallet as good as the next guy or gal. But, as a financial planner, I just couldn't justify burning \$2,000 on Nov. 14. Instead, I am donating the \$2,000 I would have spent on signs to local schools, charities and youth groups in 2006-2007 – win or lose. That seems like a much better use of money to me. In fact, I wish all of the county were a "no-sign zone". Then candidates could not hide behind their colours, and voters would have a

true chance to do their homework and vote based on content, character, substance and vision, not just because mine is bigger than yours.

I guess time will tell, as ballots start heading back to town hall this week, whether an upstart young council hopeful with character and vision can win one of five seats on principle – and without a single lonely flapping lawn sign. My faith in our voters and system says I can.

Jim Augerman
Council Candidate
Kingsville

Protection for Lakeshore heritage

There are currently efforts to blame me for certain legal costs incurred by Lakeshore council three years ago. Here is what actually happened.

In 2002, Lakeshore council violated a provincial statute by removing much of the municipality's architectural heritage from the full protection of the Ontario Heritage Act. It passed a motion depriving most of Lakeshore residents of the right to propose that historically significant buildings receive municipal heritage designation.

Four concerned citizens and I asked the courts to determine the legality of council's policy. The three judges of the Divisional Court of Ontario who heard the case unanimously agreed that Lakeshore's policy clearly contravened the Ontario Heritage Act. They revoked council's policy and restored the rights of all Lakeshore residents to propose heritage designations. As a result, the architectural heritage of Lakeshore now has the same level of Heritage Act protection that is available to all other Ontario municipalities.

The Court also ordered the municipality to help defray part of the legal fees incurred to restore legal protection for Lakeshore's heritage that had been lost because of council's mistake.

It is dishonest to infer that the five citizens who acted to correct council's

error should be blamed for those costs.

On the contrary, isn't it about time our municipalities are led by people who have the courage to stand up against powerful self-serving organizations and fight for the well being of us all?

David Tremblay
Stoney Point

Misconception of Lakeshore candidate

It seems as if all I am hearing about lately is politics. Politics in the newspaper, in the mail, on TV, and on countless lawns across Windsor and Essex County. Don't get me wrong, it is great to see men and women stepping up for the good of their community, but I am beginning to wonder if that is the intention behind every candidate.

During these campaigns, doubts have arisen in one area in particular and I would like to set the record straight. In Ward 5 of Lakeshore, councillor Victoria Beaulieu's agricultural background is in question when it shouldn't even be an issue. Victoria has grown up on a reputable fourth-generation farm in Albana and is more than aware of the struggles that are associated with rural life. Victoria has even owned and operated a farm in Albana before moving to St. Joachim in 1989. She operated a cash crop farm with potatoes for Hostess, cauliflower and peppers for Omsteads, tomato seedlines for Heinz, black tobacco and snap beans. Councillor Beaulieu has also graded tomatoes for the Department of Agriculture at Hunts in Tilbury and is a past member of the 4-H Club. Besides her commitment to agriculture in this great County of Essex, she has shown determination to the citizens of Lakeshore in numerous ways over the past three years.

This election season, no matter what township you belong to, try to base your decision on what each individual person has accomplished.

S. Slade
Lakeshore

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