



The Tribune

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Neighborly togetherness dying

Ever notice how that carefree, open space, togetherness between neighbors seems to be passing? Privacy is becoming all-important and the most evident sign of this change is the number of fences being erected between individual properties.

As the community grows, becomes more congested, with fewer and fewer people knowing one another, the tendency to seek one's own privacy increases.

It's a way of life that has been prevalent in the Old Country for years and visitors are always struck by the fences, stone walls and hedges surrounding each property, no matter how small. In Canada where communities were smaller, there was more open space and neighborhoods changed only slightly from year to year, it was different. However, the last few years has seen a change. Toronto with

its booming 50,000 new residents every year has sent thousands pushing out into the smaller surrounding communities.

Towns such as Stouffville and Markham have hundreds of residents who have little interest in the community outside of their own fifty-ft. lot. They know little of their neighbors in the next street or have little interest in knowing them. It's a trend reflected in the declining churches, community projects and general neighborliness — and it's done a lot to bring on the fences.

While it's true that not all of the exploding population lives in this manner, the numbers who do are increasing alarmingly and as city life becomes more and more the pattern for such communities as Markham and Stouffville, the trend will continue.

End criticism, finish arena

The Markham Centennial Arena, which name may be changed, is nearing completion but bitter criticism over costs and management still looms over Mayor Tony Roman.

The Mayor, also in the vulnerable position of arena committee chairman, was furious over accusations by some members of council that cost were booming sky-high and the entire arena project has been totally mismanaged. In an effort to set the record straight, Mayor Roman told the critics that anything that has gone into the arena was voted on by a majority of council.

Sure the arena is going to cost more than expected...sure the consultant had caused

problems along the way. And the inclusion of a lounge, estimated at \$72,500, has posed more discontent.

But the fact is the building is there and almost finished.

In his letter to The Tribune last week, Don Deacon, M.P.P. York-Centre, claimed the arena will be "A white elephant of a sports centre". If so, why has ice time been booked months in advance by hockey and figure skating clubs from Metro, Markham and other centres?

The only course to take is get it finished, forget the high costs because it is inevitable, and learn from any mistakes or misfortunes for the planning of the next sports complex in the Town of Markham.

Can Lewis take the risk?

Little has been heard lately from those political pundits who would have given considerable odds that the present Liberal Government would not last over ninety days. Even the Tories show little zeal about going to the polls at present.

Only David Lewis, leader of the NDP, who would dearly love to oust the Trudeau regime, is considering the risk. Mr. Lewis is well aware that to have taken the blame for bringing on an earlier election would have spelled disaster for the NDP.

Now as time has gone on, this particular danger has lessened but a new problem has arisen. The popularity of the Liberal government has shown signs of reviving and if this

trend continues Mr. Lewis faces a new challenge.

Mr. Lewis knows too, that if he should decide that the time is opportune to force an election, he must keep clear of public service strikes. When the public is harassed and inconvenienced in a strike involving public service, he knows that they don't blame the government, not even the workers, but the infernal NDP who agitation they believe, has brought on the strike. Most strikes today believed by the majority of the people who are not unionized, to be the wish of the NDP.

To sandwich an election time between these problems is the chancey risk being pondered by David Lewis.

Two sides to fairgrounds sale

The recent sale of the Markham Fairgrounds to a Vancouver development firm for \$2.1 million has created bitter criticism from town residents and local citizen groups, but like any other argument, two sides must be considered.

The Markham Fair Board offered to sell the 30-acre site to the municipality on more than one occasion, however, the \$2.1 million price tag was too steep for Markham to pay simply to preserve the historic grounds. And rightly so. Other municipal responsibilities, further up the priority ladder, demand available budgetary funds.

The Markham and East York Agricultural Society shouldn't stand alone in the guilt circle. If the fairground sale was tendered and appraised, as pointed out by solicitor Paul

Mingay on several occasions, a higher price could have been secured. It is understandable that the Fair Board felt that a larger site was needed to offer Markham residents a better fair, but negotiating a sale of such a valuable parcel of property without advertising or having it appraised is contrary to all aspects of good business.

Kiwanis Club of Markham president Ted Napier said recently that the service group was taking a non-political stand against the sale and called the closed-door negotiation a 'downright shame'.

But the fight isn't over yet. When the developer applies to the Town for rezoning the site, as pointed out by Mayor Tony Roman, all people opposed to the sale will have an opportunity then to make known their protest.



This summer, keep Ontario beautiful.



SUGAR AND SPICE

We're stupid once a year

By BILL SMILEY

WE'RE STUPID ONCE A YEAR

BY Bill Smiley

There's no place like home, as some wise man or woman once said. I think most likely it was a man.

For a woman, home means washing clothes and dishes eternally, scrubbing dirt, making beds, and all those other rotten jobs that make "home-making" a dirty word.

For a man, it means a good, hot cup of tea instead of lukewarm coffee, a meal that tastes like food instead of wet Kleenex, clean sheets smelling of sun, and going around in his underwear and bare feet if he jolly well feels like it.

That's exactly what I'm enjoying today, after four days in The City. I've just had a decent cup of tea, a great, slurpy bacon and tomato sandwich, and I'm in my shorts and bare feet.

We've just had our annual splurge in The City, and even my wife gave a groan of pure pleasure as we pulled into our driveway last night and the cat came running to greet us, flinging herself on her back and rolling her

belly ecstatically. That's the cat, not my wife.

I haven't the slightest idea why, but every summer, when sensible people fleeing like lemmings from The City — the old girl and I take off from our sylvan retreat in the heart of tourist land and head for the concrete canyons of the same City.

There's no intelligence, let alone common sense, in it. We can't afford it. We don't even like it. But we go.

Don't ask me for a logical explanation. It would be like asking a caribou why he runs back and forth, with wolves snapping at his heels.

And the wolves are there. In The City. Just waiting for us caribou. Unfortunately, they don't look like wolves, so you don't know what's happening to you until you're hamstrung. The look like cab-drivers and waiters and bartenders.

But one can't blame the wolves, can one? That's what they are for: to weed out the cripples.

Well, I can tell you that if you are not crippled, at least financially, after a few days in The City, you've been staying with your relatives.

For some reason, we always stay in the best hotel. After all, it costs only about three days pay for each night in the swank joint. This is part of the whole midsummer madness.

And, what the heck, it's only three dollars each to see a movie. And what the shoot, room service charges only \$1.50 for a pot of coffee, and a meagre \$1.50 for a sandwich. And, of course, you can't take it with you, so spread it around a little.

And then there's the swimming. The big hotels have a swimming pool. Of course, only the common people swim in the pool. That's what we tell ourselves every time we remember we've forgotten our swim suits.

This is about the point where I start to pound my head, thinking of the milelong stretch of clean white sand and clean blue water back home.

But there's one thing I'll say about The City in summer: It's cool.

Oh, not out with the rabble on the streets. They, I understand, sweat just like the rest of us.

But in the big hotels and the bars and the restaurants, air-conditioning has worked a miracle. Or something.

You can almost go into some of them without an overcoat. Some of the bars are so un-cool the waiters don't even have blue lips. But in most of them, the customers are sitting around racked with pneumonia and arthritis.

I don't know why I'm complaining. Nobody forced me to go to The City. And if anyone tried, it would be like attempting to force a mule to walk backward: I wouldn't go there if you paid me. Especially in the summer.

But I went. I guess it was for my wife's sake. She loves a few days in a big hotel. No laundry. No meals to cook. No brains.

However, the annual stupidity is over again, and, as I said, it's great to be home. No more of that ridiculous wasting of money on things priced seven times too high.

No problems like that at home. Nothing here but the old cat and the new woodpiles. Let's open the mail: Might be a nice fan letter. Yike! Town taxes, \$484.00. Fuel bill from last winter, \$130.00. Bank manager wants to see me. I guess it's back to The City. The Argyle Syndicate

ROAMING AROUND

ROAMING AROUND (By C.H. Nolan)

So You're Getting Old

So you're getting old — isn't it awful? Don't you believe it, you'll find there are many compensations. True, my hair is gray though I'm still a few years short of pension age, I do have to resort to a cane, but my head is working right. However, to a great many I can be considered old.

Now think of the compensations of middle life. Right away you don't have to worry about what you're going to do with your life as you've pretty well done it. Hopefully, you've stopped worrying about a lot of things, the most of which never happen.

Whatever your job is, your ability has been established so that too can be struck off as a concern.

Being in the newspaper business may help, but nevertheless, you can stop being upset about what people may be saying about you, as it doesn't really matter now. You may still have your likes and dislikes but you don't hate anyone anymore, you remember they're getting older too.

You find out that the simple pleasures are still the best after all.

Even envy can be lifted behind — envy of someone with a bigger pay cheque, a finer house, a fancier car. The income that you have established over the years seems adequate and along with reasonable health it leaves you satisfied.

You receive satisfaction from learning that the buildings that were new when you were a boy, the movies and plays you thought were so great, are now considered quite unique and may even be milestones in entertainment and architecture.

Political parties have a much more same sameness and you realize that none of them have the answers and the questions will continue to be asked long after you're gone.

You realize too that all the churches are heading in the same direction, all trying to get one foot in heaven by one route or another. Any time spent worrying over whether this one is right and the other one wrong, can be put aside.

You have ceased trying to be or wanting to be consistent with everyone else in their excitement over parties, snowmobiles, politics and a host of other modern day adventures, and the feeling is gone.

So you're getting old — don't worry, it's not all that bad.

Not all bad

While we know that a large number of residents look on the continual development and building of new homes in town with considerable misgivings, there must be something said in favor of some new areas.

The acreage of the former Booth farm south of Summit View School, and particularly that portion stretching to Main St. has been an unsightly brush patch for some years. To have this land developed with streets and new homes will certainly be an improvement, if only to the eye.

The Main St. portion of this residential plan has been on the books now for some ten years. It's pleasing to know the ultimate clean-up is in sight.



Children from all over the Town of Markham take part in various activities and games under the supervision of councillors

and sponsored by the Town's parks and recreation department. This circle of youngsters had their outing recently at the

Victoria Square Community Centre.

—Mike Gerhardt