

Editor's Mail

No one admits problems exist

Dear Mr. Thomas:
What absolutely amazes me is that in all the mail printed in your paper concerning Mr. Lord's cat, is that no one is willing to admit the problem exists! Right or wrong, the firemen do drive "crazily" through town and the cat could have been a child or elderly adult.

Anyone, who has been on Main St. when the siren wails, has witnessed the firemen's drive, if they want to be honest about it. Having once been a near victim while driving on Main St., (because of parking on both sides of the street there was simply no where to go but forward) I feel very strongly on this issue.

How many of us have forgotten (or not been able to) a moment when our young child in his/her excitement and natural exuberance darted out onto the street completely unexpectedly and totally unaware of the possible devastating results simply because they are too young to comprehend the pain and damage that could be caused?

And then how about "Old Aunt Jane" or "Uncle Joe" who are not quite as steady on their feet as they used to be, and perhaps a little hard of hearing as well. I can envision many situations here and seen a few which have caused me to hold my breath momentarily.

Old or young we can trip and fall while crossing a street quite legally. Sometimes the siren has stopped wailing and yet firemen are still arriving at the hall. It is my understanding that the first firemen at the hall turns off the siren, particularly at night so that the local unaffected citizens can sleep in peace, and so someone from out of town just arriving may have failed to hear the siren and be unaware of what is happening.

All these things can and do happen in spite of awareness, knowledge, and teachings. It may only happen once, but once is too late! Does it have to happen before we can admit the problem does exist?

Like all of you, I no more want my house to burn down than be killed in an accident—both are realities—terrible realities which must be openly admitted and honestly dealt with. Is it necessary to sacrifice one life for another?

I feel that perhaps this is more a criticism of small town methods (entirely necessary to a degree) being employed by a town and township that has outgrown this system, than of any individual fireman. However, it is the firemen's responsibility to drive in a safe manner at all times (in spite of every minute counts in getting to a

fire) in order to protect himself and the local (or otherwise) citizens.

There are no easy solutions in a situation such as this. Improvements can be made only when open minds confront the fact that there is a conflict here—there is no room for self-righteous indignation.

I, too, hope Alfie's death was not in vain for, yes, he could have been a child, yes he could have been an elderly adult or even an innocent driver. Whether we like the facts or not they speak for themselves, and when we can get past "he was only a cat that should have been kept of the streets" and "too bad" if anyone gets in the firemen's

way, then, and only then, can we deal with the real existing problem facing us all—what safety precautions can be taken while still maintaining the efficiency of the fire department?

Sincerely,
Gillian C. Gould
R.R. 3, Stouffville

P.S. My husband has lived most of his life in Toronto and works there daily. He refutes the fact as one reader stated that "everyone pulls over" for the fire trucks. Unfortunately it just isn't so. Many do—many do not.

Reader queries work

Dear Editor:
Well now I know—or do I?

For several weeks, I've been casting a wondering eye in the general direction of two green monumental "toothpicks" at the corner of Market and Somerville Streets, not knowing whether to laugh or cry.

At first, I believed Hallowe'en had arrived a month-and-a-half early; that it was someone's idea of a practical joke. However, since no one bothered to move it (them), I felt they must be permanent.

Thanks to Jim Holt of The Tribune staff, I think I know what they're supposed to represent. Or do I? I'm really not sure.

Stouffville is an ultra-conservative community. Yet, weird tank-trap type objects or "monuments" that no one understands, continually keep popping up, and in the strangest of places.

Sincerely,
Charles Vernon
Stouffville

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