

# Reader resents RAM's thrust

Dear Editor:  
I was reading the article on RAM in the 24 October edition of the Weekender and find it difficult to take those people opposed to the supermail boxes seriously. They have that typical attitude, "somebody else gets something that I don't, now I want it too!"

What's the big deal about crossing the street to pick up your mail? People have to go to work, to the hairdresser, to get their Brie cheese, to RAM meetings or whatever. Can't they make a quick stop at the box on the way out or back? Personally, I find the boxes very handy. What could be more convenient than having the parcels delivered, rather than getting a card and having to stand in those ridiculous lines at the Post Office?

It might be easier to support the cause if RAM was concerned about the elderly or disabled, those

who will be inconvenienced by the boxes. Why not direct their efforts towards solving those problems, or ensuring the boxes are intelligently located, rather than complaining about something they were well aware of when they purchased their house.

There is no doubt the supermail boxes will save Canada Post, and ultimately us, the taxpayers, significant dollars. It takes five minutes for the entire street to have mail delivered at the boxes. Think of the savings in manpower.

Canadians are so damned worried about not getting their fair share. It seems to me the government has to start saving somewhere, and if it means the house five doors up the street gets home delivery, and I don't so be it. So get off your butts, pick up your mail, and stop your complaining.

Mitchell O. Smith  
Markham, Ontario

# Supermailboxes cited as symptom of big problems

Dear Editor:  
The Saturday October 24 issue of The Weekender carried a front page article describing the Residents Against Mailboxes (RAM) fight against supermailboxes. A RAM spokesperson is quoted as saying: "We cannot sit idly by and not oppose this high-handed, discriminatory, and unmandated action by the federal government!"

With all due respect to the RAM spokesperson, the Mulroney government was elected to reduce the rapidly increasing level of government spending, and thus reducing postal expenditures is not an "unmandated" action.

It is indeed unfortunate that some Markham residents must now suffer the indignity of walking a few hundred feet from their \$300,000 homes to a common mailbox. Alas, when a government attempts to cut spending, some people will be hurt.

Surely we can all agree that it is better for the second wealthiest area in Canada to suffer slightly inferior postal service than for the government to cut funding in essential areas such as education and health care.

This is not to say that the RAM lobby group is incorrect in stating that Markham residents receive very poor service from Canada Post. Anyone who has ever spent a week waiting for a letter to travel to Markham from that far distant land known as "Toronto" will realize that the post office has not yet reached maximum efficiency.

Unfortunately, in their efforts to lobby for postal service improvements, RAM is attacking the symptom, rather than the problem itself.

The problem is threefold.  
First, Canada Post, as a government owned monopoly, has no real competition, and thus has no incentive to improve service.

Second, even if they wanted to, the post office is prohibited by law from offering other services to increase their revenue. The post office has outlets in every area of the country. Many businesses would no doubt jump at the chance to promote

their products through such a vast dealer network, if only the government would change the law and allow Canada Post to offer other services as is done in Britain.

Third, the very powerful postal unions are most interested in preserving their present easy way of life than they are in encouraging positive change. When Canada Post proposed opening retail postal franchises, the unions became horribly upset because they realized that their \$13 an hour jobs could easily be done by someone earning \$8 per hour.

The problem, then, is an uncompetitive, over-regulated, union-controlled postal service. As a result, we get lousy service.

The fact that many Markham residents do not receive door to door delivery is therefore merely a symptom of the far greater problem.

As any doctor knows, in order to cure a patient you must correct the actual problem, rather than merely trying to alleviate the symptoms. Similarly, RAM is fighting a battle that is destined to fail because they are attacking the symptom (lack of delivery) instead of the real problem (postal inefficiency).

If the residents of Markham truly desire better service, we must look beyond our own difficulties and lobby for real change at the national level.

We must advocate an end to Canada Post's monopoly, an end to Canada Post's limited areas of service, and perhaps even outright privatization to make the unions stand up and take notice.

I sympathize with RAM's cause, because as a long-time resident of Unionville I remember having to walk to the post office to pick up our mail.

However, let us not let our current inconveniences cause us to lose sight of what is a far more pressing problem. Only if these large scale improvements are made will all Markham residents be assured of door to door delivery for many years to come.

J. Douglas Hoyes  
Unionville

## We love letters

If you have a beef or want to pat someone on the back, sit down and write a letter to the Weekender.

Deadline is noon Thursday prior to publication. Names may be withheld on request at the discretion of the editor. Under no circumstances will anonymous letters be published.

The editor also reserves the right, due to space requirements and in the interest of conciseness, to edit letters.

The address is 9 Heritage Rd., Markham, Ontario L3P 1M3.

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