

# stouffville comment

## Post office must be essential

It is starting to have an effect.

The postal dispute is now into its second week and after Canada Post tabled an offer on the weekend, CUPW leader Jean-Claude Parrot said the latest round of negotiations were "regressive."

Regressive is a word for all such labor disputes that put the public well-being at risk.

Residents in this area often speak of a tax revolt.

Well, why not a postal revolt?

Perhaps we should all lobby the government to make the post office an essential service. Business in the area should go along with this idea, as they are the ones hardest hit economically - aside from seniors, that is. Oh, and welfare recipients and single parents.

And just about anyone else who relies on the mail.

The post office must be deemed essential, just as the medical profession is now



## Postal strikes should be outlawed by Ottawa

As the two sides in the postal strike trade shots, the ones who seem most affected are merely spectators.

It appears as if the innocent have been caught in the labor melee since contract negotiations broke down between Canada Post and the Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW).

It is hard to believe little more than a week has passed since workers began rotating strikes. But it has been a week of name calling, firings, organizational mayhem and picket line violence.

Is there any wonder little progress has been made at the bargaining table?

But in the midst of all this,

those who appear to be hardest hit by the conflict are neither management or employee.

They are those who merely wait for the mail - the general public.

From the small business owner and local resident to the pensioner and welfare recipient, the strike has been everything from an inconvenience to a crisis.

Across the greater Toronto area last Thursday, people lined up for hours at temporary depots to collect their mail.

Many of those people were senior citizens cuing to collect Canada Pension cheques. Others were withstanding the torrid 32 degree Celsius weather to receive



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welfare payments. Some even succumbed to the heat and required medical attention.

Perhaps local residents were lucky the announced temporary depots here failed to open Thursday.

Even when the depots opened a day late, some residents couldn't

get their mail. At many locations only Canada Pension cheques were available.

Those looking for personal letters or unemployment insurance cheques were turned away empty handed.

Many arrived to pick up mail fearful of crossing picket lines and lengthy waiting periods under the sun.

While neither threat materialized some people still left disappointed.

"I've driven five miles to hear that my mail is not here," one lady said angrily.

She was told to come back and

check for mail the next day. But she indicated she had no intention of returning.

"I think the whole strike is ridiculous. I think it's pretty unnecessary," she concluded.

I would have to agree with that point. If the government ever needed tangible proof how essential mail service is, it need look no farther than the events of the last week.

It's time the powers that be stopped leaving us at the mercy of Canada Post and its workers every few years. It's time the feds passed legislation making postal strikes illegal.

## Bad luck is the only luck I have

Have you ever noticed how some people are naturally lucky and others never seem to find the winning combination?

Every summer when my mother comes to visit, we buy lottery tickets, and every summer we don't win a nickel. We spend hours coming up with 'lucky' numbers calculated on family birth dates, addresses and ages, and we play them faithfully, and unsuccessfully, until Mum goes home.

We've tried quick pick and scratch and win. We scratch but we lose. We could paper the walls with those little bits of paper, which say 'sorry, try again' under the silvery part. Occasionally we may win a can of root beer, but that hardly compensates for a first prize of a Jaguar XJ12 or a 40 megabyte computer with color monitor and free software.

Members of my family are good losers, probably because they've

had lots of practice. At the end of last year, my brother booked his 1991 holiday.

He wanted a new and exciting destination. He chose Yugoslavia.

In the days before the recession, my husband used to go to an annual business convention where, at the end of each session, everyone was presented with an executive gift.

Some people received fine china, others vintage wine.

My husband came home with a fire extinguisher.

I hate to appear ungrateful, but it's difficult to wax lyrical about a fire extinguisher. It didn't even match our decor. Knowing our luck,

though, it will probably come in useful. We're not total losers, however. We have won, but not taken advantage of, numerous four day holidays in Florida (just give us your credit card number and claim your prize...).

And our name has been selected as eligible to win many a Readers Digest contest with a cash prize of \$10 million.

Some years ago when I purchased Basil, my late lamented Austin Mini, the old man and I were presented by the dealership with identical T-shirts emblazoned with the legend 'Econo-Mini'. Part of the solution. The car broke down the first time we took it out.

Looking on the bright side, we still have the shirts. You win some, you lose some, and who knows? Next time I buy a T-shirt, maybe they'll be giving away a free car to go with it.



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