

stouffville comment

Panizza will be missed in Stouffville

It came as sorry news that Bob Panizza, the personable CAO at the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville had resigned.

Panizza has contributed a great deal to the community - he came here as a man of vision. However, the sad truth is that Stouffville very nearly did him in. The top position in the town's hierarchy is no picnic, but Panizza was hamstrung in his efforts to get things done. And he was assuming several roles at once.

Finally, last week (whether the SOS protests were the last straw is a matter of conjecture) Panizza took up a position in Markham, and chose his family over his career. And no one will fault him for that.

Simply put, Stouffville isn't ready for Bob Panizza.

It doesn't have the money, the support staff or the infrastructure to put into place many of the ideas Panizza had in mind when he came here from Vaughan three years ago.

His professionalism, energy and dedication cannot be placed in doubt. He'll be missed.



Back to the country has new meaning

More from the country notebook:

I am a prime candidate for spinal therapy. They don't tell you in the pages of Country Living magazine that there is a great deal of backache that goes hand in hand with a house in the boonocks.

I knew that farm owners had to do plenty of intensive labor, like lifting cows' hindquarters so their udders line up with the milk bucket, and pulling the plough when the John Deere is in the shop, but I was not prepared for the knots that crept into my lower lumbar regions after a weekend of toil.

I loaded logs, unloaded more

logs, chopped logs and stacked logs. When the logs rolled across the garage floor in an avalanche of bark and sawdust, I re-stacked them.

Then I lugged a bag of bird seed through the snow to fill the bird feeder. It astounds me that birds can still fly after wolfing down a handful of these lead pellets.

"Take the feeder off the tree first," my wife yelled as I attempted to hoist the 50 lb. bag over my shoulder. Her reasoning startled me to such an extent that the bag flopped in the middle, spilling bird nuggets down my coat, my boots, and all over the ground,



MINUTE WITH MAIR
ANDREW MAIR

missing the feeder altogether. I was immediately swarmed by a herd of ravenous, slaying chickadees. To free myself from these avian divebombers, I took to shovelling the driveway.

My father always said an honest winter day's work included "getting on the other end of that shovel." Our pioneer ancestors

never had to shovel a country lane. They had Babe, the Ox to plough the drive. I have no ox, but I do have Melnor, the Magic Snowshovel, guaranteed to last until the sun goes supernova, so I put it to honest use. Three feet into the task, my back must have assumed I was tackling the Aegean Stables, and promptly gave up the ghost.

The rest of the day, I promised myself, I would spend in tortured relaxation, with a heating pad beating down my wrenched back muscles. However, as is always the case, there was one more task at hand. As I lay on

the bed, there was a terrific clattering above my head. Rattles, scratches and noisy thumps led me to believe I would not be granted my much-needed rest until the job was done.

So I spent the next 40 minutes crouched over, in dire pain, in my attic with a broom frying to corner an enormous red squirrel who was jealously guarding a storehouse of nuts in my insulation. Once the squirrel was evicted, I laid back down just as the unmistakable sound of logs crashing to the floor came rumbling in from the garage.

Tackling high cost of adolescence

No one warned us about the high cost of built-in adolescence.

I'm not talking about meeting payments for post-secondary education plans, or skiing, or dance classes or even the gallons of hot water lately devoted to baths and showers.

The potential cause of a major economic downturn in many households is zits. A medical alert was issued recently at Chateau Gilderdale. Skin was breaking out. In blissful ignorance I offered to drop into the drug store and buy some Clearasil. One teensy little tubette, comprising a measly 30 grams, set me back a stunning seven dollars and forty-nine cents. Before tax. That's 25 cents a gram. At that price you would expect a magic potion capable of transforming writers of a certain age into Goldie Hawn. Being an



KATE'S CORNER
kate gilderdale

insensitive adult, it was hard for me to see the aforementioned blemishes (as those euphemistic copywriters call them) in the first place, but then my eyesight isn't what it was.

And neither is my once-fragile ego. It's no good telling your children you think they look just fine. As a parent, you are considered older than Methuselah and as cool as Joe Clark.

It is a known fact that parents are incapable of finer feelings. "My parents understand me" is not a sentence which trips lightly off the tongues of the young and the appearance-obsessed.

Your opinion of looks, music, food and clothing will be greeted with all the warmth your teen usually reserves for an operatic aria by Maureen Forrester. Saying, "Well, I think you look wonderful" is just another nail in the coffin of youthful self-esteem.

Parental approval is something you should keep to yourself. It must certainly never be divulged in front of your offspring's peers.

Your job is to buy vats of goop guaranteed - in most cases - to render your teen's complexion flawless and to create a black hole where your bank account used to be.

It doesn't end at a tube of cream. There's a whole line of products without which no young person's bathroom cabinet or self-esteem would be complete.

And just when you thought it was safe to go shopping, a hair crisis breaks out.

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