

STOUFFVILLE

Comment

Open town for business

There should be a sign outside of Whitchurch-Stouffville. Closed for business.

For years and years, this community has put up roadblocks to business. Be they through taxation, zoning restrictions or archaic signage laws, the reputation of Stouffville as a business-killer precedes it.

Another case in point was made last week when the giant chair in front of Sheraton Antiques was hauled away by bylaw enforcement officers for the town.

Evidently, this chair constituted a sign advertising a product. Yet for almost a year, the chair posed no problem.

Apparently, the chair was hauled away to prevent other businesses

Our View

from drawing attention to the fact that they are open in similar ways.

It all stemmed from a mattress dealer who tied a bed to a telephone pole outside his store. Bylaw officials had had enough, evidently, and moved on the owner of the giant chair.

The real issue here is not whether a six foot chair constitutes signage.

The issue is that this town's leaders have not responded to the needs of the business community.

Businesses on Ringwood Dr., Edward St. and Sandiford Dr. have tried for years to be able to put up some sort of sign letting people passing on Main St. know that they

exist. The town has refused, saying that signage adds to the clutter and distracts from Main St.'s charm.

Instead, businesses are left to flounder on their own, hoping reputation and good service alone will bring in customers.

According to Jag Bhaduria's latest parliamentary report, \$3 billion is available to be spent in this constituency.

Unless the town liberalizes its policies, our share of that money will not be forthcoming.

These policies have been the death of many good businesses in our town.

When will the politicians open their eyes, and open this town for business?

Stouffville Tribune

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It was no way to treat a lady

Debra Surman is a convivial 24-year-old lady whose enjoyment of people and love of sport has been reinforced by the fact she is a survivor.

Since the age of 16, she has been umpiring for the York-Durham Men's Slow Pitch League, an ideal arrangement for her in that she had come to know many of the players while growing up in Stouffville.

She could gab with the guys between calling balls and strikes and ruling on safe or out calls.

It looked like her umpiring career, and her life might be in jeopardy, back in 1988 when she was involved in a serious car accident that saw her unbuckle her seatbelt so she could throw herself in front of her infant nephew in an effort to protect the toddler.

She succeeded, but sustained life-threatening

injuries, losing her spleen. The spunky teen recovered and eventually returned to the field to umpire again.

But an event that occurred while working a game on June 19 of this year has led to Debra calling it quits with the men's slow pitch league. She'll continue on in her other umpiring assignments both in Stouffville and in Scarborough, but has sworn off the York-Durham loop.

It seems that an individual, who will go unnamed, took exception to being called out by Debra on a technicality in a game played that night. The player, who is married with a child, responded by saying something about her being "just a girl doing a man's job."

Overhearing this, Debra suggested he act like an adult if he was going to play men's ball.

When he mocked her fur-



From where I live
Bruce Stabley

ther, she ejected him from the game.

It was only the second time she had ever given a player the boot, the first involving an out of town player at a tournament.

The player responded by refusing to leave the diamond.

He staged a temper tantrum, complete with an obscene gesture and vulgar sexist insults.

Debra finally called the game, forfeiting it to the other team.

At the league hearing held July 10 to decide what disciplinary measures should be meted out, Debra was assured by supportive players throughout the

league that the man would get a hefty five or 10 game suspension.

Apparently, this fellow has a bit of a reputation for poor sportsmanship.

Area resident Ron Renwick, upon hearing of the incident, insisted on going on record as saying the offender has also cast a pall on a local adult darts league with his behavior.

But in the end, the player was given but a token one game slap on the wrist and was ordered to apologize to Debra.

As of Tuesday of this week, that apology was still forthcoming.

It should be pointed out that this whole affair was brought to my attention, not by Debra, but by a female member of a prominent local family with a strong background in sport and civic commitment.

She shared Debra's disgust at how she had been treated by a grown adult male.

Meanwhile, Debra won't umpire York-Durham Men's Slow Pitch League games anymore.

In her eyes, she was humiliated on the diamond by an ignorant man for simply doing her job.

She believes a genuine apology from this man, along with a commitment to dedicate himself to the principles of good sportsmanship, is the least that should happen here.

Because that's no way to treat a lady.

Things we can do without

Things that are all part of life's rich pattern that I wish were not.

Supermarket doors that don't open automatically, despite the fact you have been programmed to walk straight through them without the massive inconvenience of having to lift up your hand and push.

Perfectly nice sweat-shirts which are given away free at golf tournaments, but which, when unfolded, turn out to have a large and unsightly company logo emblazoned across the chest, turning the unfortunate recipient into a walking billboard.

Concert T-shirts, buttons, jewellery and other memorabilia featuring some rock group du jour, the purchase of which requires you to re-mortgage your house. Two or three months down the road, these same essential accessories will be much too five minutes ago ever to be worn again by the very offspring who previously couldn't live without them.

Store flyers featuring weekly specials which are delivered on one day, but don't take effect until later in the week. Those of us who don't pay attention to life's little details spend a lot of time restocking shelves with toothpaste and washing powder and then missing the actual sale altogether.

Instructions in bold black print, advising that it is essential to test a creme bleach or hair color on a small hidden bit of your self before using it on the area for which it was intended. As manufacturers surely know, nobody actually follows this golden rule, which is why you see so many peculiar hair colors and funny looking skin blemishes on otherwise sober and conservative individuals.

Sale flyers which offer between 10 and 50 percent off nearly everything in



KATE'S CORNER

the store, but which always exclude the items you're lusting after such as stereo equipment, cameras, telephones, cool clothes, expensive appliances or cosmetics which make you look 12, instead of 92.

The grovelling respect conferred by critics on artist Christo for his works, which include wrapping in polypropylene large chunks of California's beautiful coastline and Berlin's Reichstag. Videos preceded by commercials for other videos which take longer than the actual movie you paid good money to rent.

Pay-TV with commercials, which allows the cable companies to have their cake and eat it, too. Silly phrases like "You can't have your cake and eat it too, which, when you give it a modicum of thought, makes no sense whatsoever."

Certain news media, who for the last five years have been bitterly complaining that the NDP failed to live up to most of their campaign promises, bitterly complaining that the Tribes are wasting no time living up to theirs.

The endless analysis of Divine intervention in Hugh Grant's career, which was probably just a publicity stunt dreamed up by his agent to counter growing media criticism of Mr. Grant's over-exposure on the screen, as opposed to on the back seat of his automobile. Mud from Molson Park which has adhered like cement to the clothes, boots, hair and skin of my children following their attendance at Lolla-palooza.

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The Tribune welcomes your letters to the editor. Letters should be no more than 500 words in length and can be typed or neatly hand-written. Your letters can be on any topic, but The Tribune reserves the right to edit for length, label, grammar and spelling and good taste.

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