

# Comment & Opinions

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Tuesday, May 6, 1997  
Vol. 109, No. 19

## EDITORIAL

### A fond farewell

Rather than an editorial, this should be called 'thank-you.' You as a community of readers (and writers) have inspired me, informed me, trusted me, and supported me. A few of you have criticized me and challenged me too.

All this in a very public day's work that has lasted 11 years. Arriving on your diverse doorsteps twice a week for 11 years has been a daunting privilege and a responsibility. Sometimes the phone would start to ring the same day as your paper arrived. It means the vital signs are strong. We don't have to agree, only to think.

Journalism is a lot like standing in a dark room with a flashlight. The more lights on the subject the greater the accuracy. That's why your quotes and comments, letters and phone calls are valued and they keep editors like me on track.

The thought of steering this paper through the millennium with you was tempting.

But it's time to pass along the editorial reins of this newspaper (and of the Economist & Sun). My successor is Andrew Mair who has earned his stripes with us for nearly a decade.

Happily this has nothing to do with any health challenge. The decision came after nearly a year of deliberating. I'm planning to spend summer in the hammock, gather speed and see what opportunities present themselves this fall.

It's a freefall into freedom, and frankly it's taking a little courage to be just myself and not your collective voice.

- Jo Ann Stevenson



## STOUFFVILLE TRIBUNE

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## People will really think we're 'cookie'

In Stouffville, the proof is in the cookie. When it comes to elections, I've got one rule - Elections must be wrapped, sealed and delivered in fun.

When the federal election was called 10 days ago, I expected Stouffville to heat up straight away. I waited and waited and waited some more.

Nobody struck up the band; the bells didn't ring, the whistles didn't blow and the old fire truck didn't rip through town with its siren blaring.

I started to have evil thoughts...I'd sacrifice my first born to see a bare-knuck-

le fist fight between the Grits and the Tories. I'd throw in my other four kids to see the Reform Party and the New Democrats arm wrestle on Main Street. I'd offer up my father, my brother and 19 cousins to see the Bloc get into a piddling match with the Natural Law Party.

Nothing helped. Instead of fun, I witnessed four serious-minded individuals, each worried about the state of the nation, come forward to get themselves picked as federal candidates for their respective political parties, and without much fanfare, they're going door-to-



### Off the Record

Joan Ransberry

door in search of votes. Important - yes, fun - no. Realizing this, I did what I do well. I sulked. Nobody cared, so I gave it up and went to my favorite out-of-the-office eatery and bought a cookie.

That's when it hit me - If I could convince Heritage Ice Cream Parlor and

Deli owners Ross and Wendy Cowie to be my partners in crime, maybe I'd have some fun after all.

Wendy and Ross agreed - and Stouffville's Cookie Election was born.

The Cowies selected their top four best selling homemade cookies and designated a political party to each.

Believe me: Besides being very nice people, Ross and Wendy are the king and queen of cookies. Their cookies are out of this world.

Here's the lineup in the cookie election: The Reform party is a chocolate peanut butter, the Liberal is oatmeal raisin, the New Democrats are chocolate chip and the Progressive Conservatives are white chocolate macadamias.

The Cowies picked a cookie to represent the Quebec separatists. Drop into the Main Street parlor and see the Bloc cookie. To add to the spirit, the Heritage Ice Cream Parlor has been decorated in Canada colors - Balloons and flags are compliments of that great Canadian Linda Sargeant of Lindy's Florist. Each of the local political parties donated election campaign posters.

It's simple: Buy a cookie, cast a vote.

Cookie sales/votes will be recorded daily on a blackboard. If you want an up-to-date on who's winning, read *The Tribune* on Tuesday, Thursday or Saturday.

*Election Bulletin... Just In.*

The cookie election is working its magic. There is life in Stouffville - Oak Ridges PC candidate John Andersen has just announced he'll host a party at his Stouffville headquarters on Main street on Saturday from 3 to 6 p.m. Liberal Bryon Wilfert and NDP Wynne Hartviksen are door knocking in Stouffville while Reform Party candidate Edward Sarafian has opened his office in Woodbine Avenue in Gormley above Sam's Restaurant. Most important, the cookies are coming out of the oven in great numbers.

## More time with sock drawer needed

That was the week that was, all right. Ellen came out of the closet and TVO broadcast a program on female bodily functions. One reason I didn't watch the former was because I had never heard of her until a couple of months ago, when she became world famous for being (possibly) gay and (maybe) willing to declare her sexual preference on network TV. The other reason was, I was in the throes of reading a really good book.

Happy though I am for Ellen (and others who think they have found their soul mate of either official gender) I must confess I am not especially interested in the private passions of the rich and famous, or, indeed, of those of anyone with whom I am not personally acquainted.

Presumably, however, ABC thought it was doing a brave and noble thing, although its affiliates didn't let that get in the way of making a quick buck. According to CBC Radio's World News, in which Ellen's gayness was judged to be of international import second only to the Manitoba flood disaster, some stations charged three times the going rate for anyone who advertised in the Great Closet Clearance episode.



### Kate's Corner

Kate Gilderdale

It seems to me that folks are gay or straight because they were born that way, and that being gay is not something to be proud or ashamed of - it's just a fact of a person's life, like being tall or short. Still, it is one way to be get into a 'community', which is where it's at in the 1990s.

Think about it. When was the last time you heard tell of a spokesperson representing the heterosexual community? Heterosexuality is not only uncool, it's terribly five-minutes-ago, with even the most rabidly fundamental fundamentalist giving it his or her diehard approval.

Preston Manning, Roseanne Skokes and the former Florida orange juice lady have all made it abundantly clear that they have no problem whatsoever with heterosexuality, which is a bit of a drag for those of us who happen through natural inclination, to embrace this particular lifestyle. There are many adjectives you could use to describe

Preston Manning, but hip is certainly not among them.

Still, all of this pales in comparison with the current drive to bring menstruation out of the closet. As a member of the female community, I have never been offended by the lack of publicity accorded this basic but necessary function, and certainly don't consider it the basis for great art or in-depth analysis on TV.

Thus I managed to avoid the groundbreaking television documentary, which encompassed such delights as an art exhibition entitled 'Menstruation Bathroom', and a country and western soundtrack, which included a song on the same topic. I was further persuaded not to watch after the program was warmly recommended by Michele Landsberg in *The Star*.

Call me a traitor to the sisterhood, but suddenly cleaning out my sock drawer seemed like a great way to spend the evening. And if I'm in denial, I'm not planning to come out of that particular closet anytime soon.

I conclude this week's sermon with a quote from a button, seen in London, England in 1982: 'Gay Whales Against The Bomb.' Let's hear it for the gay whale community.