

Comment & Opinions

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Send your letters
to the editor
to the address below

EDITORIAL

Prisons are not solution to crime

Readers of these pages will know that a prison may be in the offing for the area. And while prisons bring jobs, the debate is often centered on the NIMBY (Not in My Backyard) principle.

Instead, residents of this provincial riding should be wrestling with the question of whether more prisons is a solution at all. Statistics and all research indicates that committing someone to prison will not solve the problem. In fact, sending someone to prison is asking for more and worse trouble. Prisoners are rarely "rehabilitated." Research has long borne out that sending someone to jail for a minor offence simply teaches them how to be a better criminal. The theory of penance simply does not work. Certainly, we must restrain violent and dangerous criminals from encountering society, but locking up everyone who smokes a marijuana cigarette, or gets too many speeding tickets is a waste of taxpayer dollars. There are other more suitable punishments.

We don't need new prisons, we need new crime-fighting solutions.



NEWS ITEM: WILDFLOWER WALK COMING UP

STOUFFVILLE TRIBUNE

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The Tribune welcomes your letters to the editor. Please keep letters to no more than 300 words. Note that letters may be edited for space, libel, spelling, grammar. While we endeavor to print as many letters as possible, we regret that not all letters may be printed.

Entertainment section is all about you

Let us entertain you.

This is, in a nutshell, the idea behind our new and improved entertainment section that appeared for the first time last Thursday.

Newspapers are here to inform the reader of what's happening. But we also have the pleasure of entertaining you.

For access to much of the news, there are logical places to look. For political news, we can sit in on local council meetings.

For education news we travel to the school board HQ or call around to local

schools to find out what's happening.

But the arts and entertainment that form the cultural base of your community are not so obvious.

There are a lot of hidden talents out there, and we'd like to know about each and every one of them.

We're planning lots of movie reviews, as well as a listing of events in the three communities that make up our division. But entertainment covers so much more than the musician, the painter and the actor.

Parents, let us know about your son or



Just a Note

Julie Caspersen

daughter who's left town and is now the understudy in an off Broadway play.

I'm sure there's a cartoonist out there who'd be willing to let us into his studio to teach us there's more to his work than line drawings and words in a bubble.

Being old is 'next happening thing'

Last week I dropped into the drug store and picked up a copy of Fifty Plus, a freebie publication for the mature reader.

Although I was still days away from my dotage, certain facts needed facing. I wasn't getting better, I was getting older and it was time for me to check out the thrills and spills of life in the slow lane. On page one there were a couple of stories about inspiring people who had overcome adversity and were still going strong, even though they were old enough to be my parents.

Beneath them lurked a mega ad for financial services. Indeed, judging by the overall commercial content, senior citizens get to read about RRSPs, estate planning and annuities year round, instead of just in February. This did not come as glad tidings to a chronologically mature reader with a woefully adolescent attitude to forward planning.

Most of the ads were accompanied by photos of privileged white males in suits, one of whom appeared to be wearing a rug from the emporium made famous by the jet black bangs of Jag Bhaduria. Purveyors of dentures, funeral services and fish and

Kate's Corner

Kate Gilderdale chips were also amply represented.

Editorial content included an overview of services for snowbirds who spend the winter months in Florida; an article on male impotence which cheerfully advised readers that 'Sure, you are no longer what you used to be, and a dissertation on helping your children build a foundation for retirement. I'm guessing of course, but I imagine you have to have a foundation of your own to build on first, so I skipped that bit.

Practical advice abounded and there was a whole feature devoted to bridge, but nowhere was there a section for seniors with an attitude, hell's grannies or people bent on growing old disgracefully. Of course, with aging boomers such as myself crossing the threshold of the half century in massive numbers, that lack will surely be remedied immediately, if not sooner, at a shopping mall near

you. Once upon a time in the '70s - a dire period of bad hair and worse clothing which has somehow gained a reputation for leading edge coolness in the '90s - a friend gave me a book entitled 'It's Hard To Be Hip Over 30.' At the time, I was hovering on the brink of that august age, going through the angst for which my generation is tiresomely famous, and already mourning my lost youth.

Back then the people who brought us everything from the weather to aluminum siding had not quite cottoned onto the fact that flattery would get them everywhere. Now that 30 seems like just another stage of childhood, however, they're working on making old the next happening thing. It's already started in England, where a Levi's campaign features three craggy geezers (69, 79 and 86 respectively) and a 79-year-old woman with long white hair, a fab figure and a great face, whose wrinkles she cheerfully displays. She looked as though the last thing on her mind was investments.

She didn't look young, but she did look cool. It may be hard to be hip over 30, but be patient. Life begins at 80.

We'd love to go behind the scenes of a play to photograph the largely unsung crew responsible for backstage work and scenery design.

And what about the woman who's volunteered hundreds of hours over the years arranging fundraising concerts to benefit her organization.

I'm sure there's an award-winning floral arranger out there who'd like to take us through the steps of choosing just the right bloom for a centrepiece.

Surely there's a church choir so angelic of voice that it's been called on to tour. And jewelry makers, don't be shy, show off your creations.

The list of arts and entertainment mediums is endless. We've got the space, so let's use it. Now that's entertainment.

Dog walker responds

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

I am one of the dog walkers in and about the Orchard Park School area and Ms. Brown may have seen me or one of my many dog-walking friends on that fine Tuesday morning. I must say that I and my fellow dog-walkers in this area are a very fastidious bunch.

We do make every effort to clean up any dog dirt that our canine companions may leave behind.

I might add that bacteria-laden damp dish rags by the kitchen sink pose a far greater health risk to a child than that dog on the front lawn.

Sharon Hall,
Stouffville