

THE TRIBUNE

Comment & Opinions

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Send your letters
to the editor
to the address below

EDITORIAL

Towns deserve more information on casino plans

The provincial government is in a headlong rush to get permanent charity casinos up and running in Ontario as soon as possible.

The process is moving far too quickly, however, and municipalities and the people who live in them need a much better explanation of what's happening.

At the moment, there seems to be little hard information on exactly where these casinos will be located or who will be operating them. This simply isn't good enough.

The residents of a community have an absolute right to tell the province to take its casino and stick it somewhere else.

But if the Toronto megacity and the way it was rammed through is any sort of example, it would appear the decision on casinos has already been made.

Ontario is turning into some sort of strange Nevada of the north. A lot of towns in this province are being asked to shake hands with the devil when it comes to these casinos. We deserve more information.

Jeanfeld

Election Special!

LOTS OF LAUGHS
WITH JEAN AND
THE GANG IN
A NATIONALLY
TELEVISED
DEBATE
ABOUT
NOTHING!



Windshield speck reveals a whole universe

"There is no new thing under the sun."

Ecclesiastes 1:9

Well, begging your pardon, O Learned Scribes, but there is one brand new thing under the sun. A whole new science, in fact Mark Hostetler invented it.

It's called Splatology.

Hostetler is an entomologist with the Department of Zoology at the University of Florida. That means he collects and studies insects. What separates Hostetler from his bug-grubbing colleagues is where he collects bugs.

Hostetler scrapes his specimens off windshields



Basic Black

Arthur Black

Or collects what's left of them — after they've gone splat!

Hence the name Splatology.

His favorite collecting ground — Hostetler's Olduvai Gorge, if you will — is the main bus terminal in Gainesville, Florida. That's where the big Greyhounds roll in after driving hundreds of miles across the American south.

That would be... the American insect-infested south.

Greyhound buses have windshields as big as pool tables, which means that on any given run, those buses um, 'interface' with an awful lot of bugs. "During some months," Hostetler recalls, "the front end was practically covered with insects! I had a fantastic time collecting specimens."

Not that he didn't turn a few heads in the Gainesville Bus Terminal while he was out there, crawling around the front ends of Greyhounds clutching his tweezers and his specimen jars. Hostetler

remembers one kid tugging at his mother's arm and asking "Mommy... why is that man scraping bugs off the windshield? Is he crazy?"

Crazy, no... definitely touched. Hostetler undeniably caught the 'bug' bug. He decided that the Gainesville Bus Terminal wasn't enough. He had to go out there in the North American wilderness and meet those insects on their own turf.

And so in the summer of '94, Hostetler set out on a cross-continent tour in his 1984 Honda, specially rigged up with a catch sheet to trap the carcasses of insects that ricocheted off his windshield.

Hostetler piloted his mobile bug catcher from Florida up to Massachusetts, then west to Detroit and Chicago, up to South Dakota, across to Seattle, north to Vancouver and then down to California, across the southern U.S. and back to Florida.

He drove through mountains and prairies, through swamplands and even suburbs.

As you can imagine, he hit a lot of bugs along the way.

So many, in fact, that they inspired a book.

It's called *That Gunk On Your Car* and it's dedicated to the proposition that all those bugs that go splat on your windshield are worth

more than a muttered curse and quick spritz with the windshield washer.

For one thing, according to Hostetler, each bug produces its own, species-distinctive splat.

Mosquitoes usually leave a small grey-black dot. If there's a spot of blood in it — congratulations! You've taken out a female mosquito (they're the ones who bite us humans).

Butterflies and moths go out with a thick white or yellow gunky splat.

And that's enough of that. Suffice to say that Hostetler has compiled characteristic bug-splat images for 25 different kinds of insects ranging from flying ants to mole crickets.

And why?

Why would a guy choose to spend his spare time analyzing insect impact patterns on windshields when he could be running for office, selling crack or writing advertising copy for hemorrhoid creams?

A nature writer by the name of Fred Kauffman puts it perfectly: "Hostetler shows that gunk is not 'junk' says Kauffman, 'but a whole universe of small and fascinating creatures. We get to know all about the unlikely hitchhikers we collect on long car trips."

Exactly. Hostetler's book opens your eyes to the universe within that speck on the windshield.

New resident impressed with car dealer's kindness

Dear Editor,

A local car dealer's motto is "Come as a customer - leave as a friend."

However, in my eyes it should read "Come as a STRANGER - leave as a FRIEND."

Last weekend I experienced car problems. I had to conduct a very large meeting on Monday in Markham and was afraid to drive that far.

I turned into Stouffville Chrysler this lousy Monday morning and asked for their help.

Not only did they take time to diagnose my problem, but they also filled up my almost empty transmission oil, then took the car for a spin to make sure it was OK.

LETTERS

When I asked for the bill I was told not to worry, we'll catch you next time!

I must add that I am new in town and was a complete stranger, walking off the street, to these Good Samaritans.

Only in small town Canada can one experience such kindness and trust.

Many thanks, indeed, to Peter and staff, consider changing your motto. Your new friend

Margaret Bibby
Stouffville

STOUFFVILLE TRIBUNE

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