

# Comment & Opinions

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Send your letters  
to the editor  
to the address below

EDITORIAL

## Weather takes toll on pets

Phew, it's been hot. We're staying cool as best we can — in basements, air-conditioned buildings and swimming pools.

But what about our pets? Too often even the most conscientious owners forget how severe heat and humidity can affect their pets.

Every summer there are news stories about dogs being tied up in backyards with no shade or water, or pets left in cars with the windows rolled up. The results can be deadly.

The Ontario Humane Society office and shelter in Newmarket have had numerous phone calls during this heat wave from people concerned about pets left in cars in shopping mall parking lots or tied up in neighbors' backyards without adequate protection from the heat.

A Humane Society representative suggests pet owners should care for their cat or dog as they would a child.

You wouldn't think of leaving your sleeping baby in the car with the windows up.

You know it turns into an oven on wheels, even if parked in the shade. Even with the windows down, the heat-buildup inside a parked car can be deadly, for pets or children.

You wouldn't think of denying your child extra fluids on a hot day, so make sure your pet has ready access to lots of clean, fresh water all through the day.

If your dog must be tied in the backyard, don't just leave a small bowl of water, but secure a large bucket of water so it can't be tipped.

Other Humane Society tips are just plain common sense. If your dog is old or sick, heat can affect it more severely; if it has a large fur coat, have it clipped; and if possible, leave it at home in the basement instead of in the car or backyard.



## Try surveillance cameras to deter feline pests

Dear Editor,

Re: Your July 10 editorial on cats running free.

I'm relieved that you didn't recommend a bounty on cat pelts, so when you suggested hefty fines for the owners of the cats who are spraying and stinking up neighborhoods, I pondered the problem of how the authorities could go about identifying the perpetrators so that only guilty owners would be prosecuted.

It seemed to me that collecting samples for DNA testing would not only be too great a burden on the taxpayers, but the offending cats might die of old age before testing results were available.

May I suggest that it would be more economical to install video cameras at strategic locations and catch the villains red-handed, or as in this particular situation, high-tailed?

The surveillance cameras could

### Letters to the Editor

do double duty and catch some of those irresponsible chipmunks and squirrels in the act of vandalizing gardens.

Maybe we could arrest a few birds too, but first I think we should give them ample warning.

We could place several signs around the periphery of the township warning that ours is a bird-free

municipality and winged creatures are unwelcome.

Surely that would discourage some of the geese as well as the starlings and robins.

Hey, wouldn't the laws of nature apply here? With fewer chipmunks, squirrels and birds there would also be fewer cats. That is, if we could also convince people to quit feeding them.

Eleanor Todd  
Goodwood

## Bus ads will aid students' education



Guest  
Column

Chris Dainton

Have you stopped buying Adidas products or Allan candies since the school year ended? If so, it could be because you haven't had your daily shot of school bus advertising.

Advertising on school buses began in mid-January of this year in an attempt by York Region's public and Catholic school boards to raise money for one of the largest school bus operations in Canada.

"The reason we got into it was to generate money that we were losing from government grants," said Brian Jamieson, York Region Board of Education public affairs officer.

Some would argue that this compromise will lead to more and larger compromises. Next, will textbooks be sponsored by Guess Jeans? Will teachers wear Nike ball caps in class?

School should be a safe haven from advertising, where students can be free from influence for at least eight hours per day.

"It's nice that they're trying to make money, but there are enough places to put advertisements without putting them on school buses," said Doris Dang, a Grade 12 student at Brother André Catholic High School.

"With all of media's influence in society today, school should be a place to escape from it."

But how much are we actually dropping our standards? There was hardly a fuss when Doug Gilmour and his milk advertisers invaded my school by way of posters, contests, and even morning announcements.

Every time we wear a T-shirt, sweat-shirt, or hat to school bearing a brand name like Calvin Klein, Nike, or Adidas, we become a walking billboard. Advertising is already a part of our schools.

Whether advertising even affects us is debatable. It's our culture that decides whether or not a product will succeed — not a logo or catchy slogan.

The exception is, of course, cigarette advertising. Since it was deemed illegal in Canada, I certainly haven't seen anyone smoking (ha).

Sponsorship of schools by these companies will give boards the money they need to give us a better education.

A better education lessens the likelihood for us to be influenced by advertising. And it is difficult to argue that controlling advertising is more important than giving students resources needed for a proper education.

Two other Grade 12 students that I talked to agreed.

"I think it's good we're using our resources in a productive manner so that the funds raised can be used for educational purposes," said Matthew Macdonald.

"Our board is broke and we need all the help we can get," said Greg Petit. Tiny posters on the sides of buses are no crime, and can only be positive for the education system. As far as I'm concerned, the more of that bright yellow paint we can cover up with advertising, the better.

## Gambling harms society

Dear Editor,

Re: Governments promoting vice. People across the country are warning that government-sponsored gambling is unethical, immoral and unwise.

Provincial studies show that 2.7-5.4 per cent of Canadian adults (600,000-1.2 million) have gambling problems.

When Atlantic City began casino operations in the 1970s, it ranked 50th of all U.S. cities in per-capita crime. It was top of the list in just three years.

Those who consider gambling to be an easy source of tax revenue and purely a matter of free choice, understand neither its impact on the most vulnerable nor its harmful effects on society as a whole.

When a government adopts measures intended to fleece people, it shows contempt for the people it governs.

Norm Pemberton

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