

THE TRIBUNE

# Comment & Opinions

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to the editor  
to the address below

EDITORIAL

## Let's be civilized

While the protest against Bill 160 continues at a different level at schools and in the community, the protest has sunk to a new low with a reported incident at a local trustee's home recently.

Teachers and union leaders are urging that parents and taxpayers who oppose the education reform bill wear or display green ribbons to show their concerns.

Apparently, someone cut down the 'Apple Green Ribbon' protest put up at Uxbridge Secondary School, and left them at the home of trustee Faith Neumann, along with a rude note.

As one of our letter writers has written, it's a sad day when a peaceful protest becomes an irrational show of anger.

It's irrational because in the current showdown between teachers, their unions and parents opposing Bill 160, and the provincial government and its supporters, trustees are an unfair target of abuse.

Like the school boards and the innocent students, they are in the middle of this struggle, not technically on either side.

As any private citizen, they have a right to their opinion on the wisdom or folly of the current education reform bill before the legislature, and they have a job to bring their constituents' views on the bill to their school board table. Trustees do not deserve to be the target of anger or abuse in this situation.

The Apple Green Ribbon Campaign is a non-threatening, civilized way of protesting government legislation. It is certainly far better than depriving our children of their schooling.

Let's remember that adults demonstrate democracy in action for their children, and sinking to nasty tactics in the struggle won't improve education or raise the morale standards.



## STOUFFVILLE TRIBUNE

A Metroland Community Newspaper

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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.

## Sabbath booze sales a drop in the bucket

Prohibition is over but nobody cares.

When the big cheese at the Ministry of Consumer and Commercial Relations announced Friday that beer and liquor stores can legally open on Sunday, I took a break from reality, closed my eyes tight, crossed my fingers and toes and hoped we'd see a radical public-attention shift away from the spat between the teachers and the government to Sunday booze store openings.

I don't know about you, but I know



### Off the Record

Joan Ransberry

what a double shot of whiskey will do. While I've read this long-winded Bill 160, complete with its \$10 words, I don't know if it's a good thing or a bad thing.

Maybe it's too much work and no play, but I'm taking this position: If there's a government, I'm against it. Besides, what do you expect? I'm an old hippie; I'm a scribe living in the eye of a menopause hurricane with not a hormone supplement in sight and, as a bonus, I'm apprenticing to become a professional curmudgeon.

Let's get back to the sauce. Society would unfold as it should, providing it had a personality. But since it's the '90s,

nothing very human shakes us or wakes us. Sorry folks, but, compared to the '50s, the '90s are dull. If this was 1957 and the government announced it was taking the Sunday lock off beer and liquor stores, all heck would break loose.

The local bootlegger would cry in his beer, the men in the God business would take to the pulpits and deliver their finest demon rum sermons. Yes siree, the men of the cloth would join forces with Charlie Farquharson and tell us if we buy a bottle of beer, we'll go "to hell in a hand cart with worn brake linings."

On the home front, local government would sway this way and that. Finally, not knowing what to do, the elected would rattle away about the importance of democracy when asking the people to "vote" on it. At which point, people would jump on "wet" or "dry" bandwagons; every opinion would be exaggerated; bribes would be offered, bribes would be taken and when the day was done, nobody would be speaking to anyone. I'd love it.

But since it's the '90s, here's what's taken place in the past few days: When Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations David Tusubouchi said about 700 liquor stores and 425 beer stores in Ontario will be allowed to open seven days a week, providing it's okay with local municipalities, Whitchurch-Stouffville Mayor Wayne Emmerson spoke up. Emmerson is taking a wait-and-see approach; a couple of local councillors did the one-word "choice" chant and not one letter to the editor on the subject arrived in the newsroom.

I kind of wonder if we could lump the teacher-government problem and the booze sale issue together. Let's let the government have its way, providing, of course, all education decisions are made by minds soaked in Sunday-purchased booze.

## Felines clash with non-cat lover

Our frolicsome felines, Spasm and Poc, skated perilously close to the edge one night last week when I was out and Mr. Wallethead was minding Le Chateau.

Had our daughter not been home at the time, I fear that this charming but amoral duo would have been in serious danger of being strung up by their tails as a warning to other havoc-wreaking kitties.

While my old man has learned a significant lesson from the experience — do not leave your jacket draped over a chair within a couple of feet of a glass cabinet — the two perpetrators of the crime I am about to reveal remain blithely unrepentant.

The cataclysmic event, as related to me in whispers by Clare, was over within seconds, but the resulting mayhem was enough to send the blood pressure of one not entranced by cats right off the Richter scale.

It seems that our animal companions challenged the jacket sleeves to a fight and their attempts to establish sovereignty over their inanimate adversary caused the chair to tip and crash into the cabinet.

Three panels were irrevocably



### Kate's Corner

Kate Gilderdale

destroyed. Clare wisely figured that pointing out to her distraught daddy that it could have been worse, and that some of the crystal could have been smashed as well, would not have been particularly helpful immediately post-apocalypse.

Even the most moderate of men needs some time to re-establish his inner child, laugh at adversity and achieve closure.

Expecting the unofficial head of the anti-cat league to smile tolerantly, and then forgive and forget, while his feet are still surrounded by shards of glass from the Great Cabinet Disaster would be unrealistic, to say the least.

Cats may have no sense of decency, but they know when someone is out to get them and they proved extremely adept at avoiding contact with Mr. Wallethead's flailing right foot. Indeed, they kept an unnaturally

low profile all night, sneaking out to test the emotional climate only when I returned from my own 'Rendezvous with Madness,' the annual fundraising film festival at the Queen Street Mental Health Centre.

My evening, like the film, was wonderful but had a rather bleak ending, one which resonates sadly every time I go into the dining room.

The glass cabinet now stands doorless, its front facing the wall, until the requisite repairs can be effected and the door replaced.

Poc and Spasm, meanwhile, are right back into the fray, adding the finishing touches to the destruction of a wicker chair in the bedroom and clinging by their claws to the banisters with all the tenacity of Mike Harris clinging unwaveringly to Bill 160.

My husband was recently asked to name his heroes. To his dad and Sir Winston Churchill I would like to add Ambrose Bierce, whose definition of the feline is one which I feel sure matches the sentiments of my long-suffering partner. 'Cat — a soft, indestructible automaton provided by nature to be kicked when things go wrong in the domestic circle.'