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Comment & Opinions

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EDITORIAL

Take care over holiday weekend

It happens every long weekend. For once, this newspaper would like to publish an edition after the Victoria Day weekend in which we don't have to report on some unnecessary tragedy involving a local resident.

This coming weekend marks the official start of the summer season and all the great times that go along with it. Please remember that this weekend will also feature a huge increase in the amount of traffic on the roads, boats on the water, and people taking part in all manner of recreational pursuits.

Police forces are urging everyone to take extra care as they travel to and from the cottage or campground. It's better to arrive a little bit late rather than not at all because of an accident.

Boaters must also take extreme caution this weekend as the waterways will be crowded. Safety has to be the prime concern of those on the water. To that end, please do not overload your boat, and make sure everyone has a lifejacket.

Mixing alcohol and the operation of a vehicle, be it boat or car, is also the cause of far too many tragedies.

Have a great time this Victoria Day weekend. But don't be foolish and don't be a statistic. We don't want to be writing a story about you next week.



I've got that home town feeling again

It happened in Orono. It happened in Whitby and now it's happening in Claremont—I'm getting that home town feeling. I like it.

While officially a hamlet of Pickering, Claremont seems to stand on its own.

Even though I've only lived there for seven months, I don't sense that Claremont leans south to urban Pickering, east to Ashburn, north to Uxbridge or west to Stouffville or Markham.

When the province gave birth to both Durham Region and York Region, in 1974, municipal boundaries changed and, in the process, hamlets were all but forgotten.

At the time, politicians insisted that the birth of regional government and having one municipality swallow up parts of another would have

no impact on anyone, the politicians lied and people knew it.

In many ways, being ignored was a good thing. It meant hamlets took a hard look at themselves. Hamlets liked what they saw. If you doubt this, check out the real estate. Today, buying a house in hamlets like Claremont, Lemonville, Udora or Leaskdale means selling the farm.

Since my farm is not for sale, I didn't buy in Claremont. I'm a renter. I've got a small apartment. It's home to me and my live-in grandson.

I'm pleased with my move to Claremont. I grocery shop in Stouffville and go to the movies in Uxbridge.

After working at *The Tribune* for two years, I took stock. I liked the Stouffville and Uxbridge-based job



Off the Record
Joan Ransberry

but hated the commute from Whitby. Pulling up stakes there to be closer to the work place was difficult. Whitby is a great spot. Not only does it have friendly people, Whitby has the best local government in all of Ontario.

My contacts were open, helpful and always pleasant. If a public relations course was held in York or Durham, I'd insist that the teachers come from Whitby.

I've been a bit of a Gypsy having lived in most of Durham's municipalities. My roots begin on a farm in

north Orono which is now part of the municipality of Clarington. Orono will always be home. When I visit my parents, I read the Orono Times. I look for old Orono names. As well, most of my dead relatives, including both sets of grandparents, are buried in the Orono cemetery. When I visit the many graves, I know I'm home.

When I was married, I lived in Newcastle for 12 years. While six miles south of Orono, the Village of Newcastle is very different. I don't know why.

I lived in Bay Ridges in Pickering for a couple of years. Sorry, I was not impressed.

While Ajax has some fine people and I enjoyed my eight years at our sister paper *The News Advertiser*, Ajax has no downtown. This bothered me.

And then there's Oshawa. This is not a pretty city. It has little charm. I will, however, give Oshawa credit. Oshawa takes care of its own. It's a meat and potatoes, one-horse city. Still, I prefer living in Claremont.

A few days ago, I visited the Claremont Public School to find out about an upcoming historical tour.

Because I live there, I'm attending the June 13 tour, hosted by Claremont Public School students.

It features 15 houses and buildings in the four corner area.

While at the school, I found out that the Claremont General Store has been a landmark for more than 125 years; that the hamlet lost three of its four public schools to fire; that in days gone by, Claremont had a number of hotels; that many of the old houses still have the original ginger bread.

Feeling that you're home matters. Thank you, Claremont.

Don't call young women 'honey'

Dear Editor,

I'm writing this letter in the hopes that some of the Stouffville merchants will think twice before they speak to a paying customer. I believe all ages deserve respect and I find that older people generally get more of it. You should know that I'm 21.

I'd like to make mention of an experience I had one Sunday at a local car wash. The spray gun I was using wasn't working (there was no soap). I went and found the guy in charge and hoped he'd come in time for me to show him. When he got to the bay, I sprayed the gun so he could see it didn't work, and he gestured for me to give it to him. As I handed it to him, I wasn't sure if he had a grip on it, now I didn't want him or myself to get wet, so I was a little reluctant to let go but he assured me he had a hold on it.

LETTERS

when he told me "slow down there honey, take it easy."

I can count on one hand the number of professions where that phrase would be appropriate. As a matter of fact, one in particular comes to mind and it's not the car wash.

My money was just as good in Markham (I had to go to the mall anyway).

This is just one small of too many unfortunate experiences I've had here in what I thought was a small friendly town. I work and socialize out of town and I find myself constantly defending where I come from because apparently we spend our weekends cow-tipping and shopping at the flea market for spandex

When I left the car wash I considered these things, and wondered how what the guy at the car wash said would make someone who wasn't from here feel. What kind of impressions do remarks like that leave?

There's been some talk about spiffing up Stouffville's Main Street. While it's one thing to look great on the outside, well you know where I'm going with this. Hopefully anyone working inside these great looking shops, more importantly, anyone dealing in customer service, will consider how a bad attitude can hurt business.

If you've got what someone needs but aren't happy to give it to them, people usually go somewhere else. I think a little class can go a long way.

Honey, (name withheld by request) Stouffville

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