

Stouffville Tribune

A Metroland community newspaper
9 Heritage Rd., Markham, ON, L3P 1M3

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LETTERS

Mayor's stand on gay rights signs represents moral majority

Re: *Complaints registered on gay billboards, Jan. 27.*

I agree that, as a community, we are to accept, help and guide individuals out of disorientations such as homosexuality and lesbianism.

However, there are organizations that want main line society to also accept the act of homosexuality as natural and normal. This seems to be the case of Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG).

Looking at the human anatomy alone should tell you that this act is not normal or natural.

We live in a fallen world with many destructive tendencies such as pedophilia, gambling and drunkenness, as well as homosexuality. These tendencies must be curbed, not promoted. Just driving down the road with its speed limits, stop signs and traffic lights shows that society must restrain itself to survive. Removing restraints can only lead to disaster.

The billboard further states, "It's not a choice." Thousands will tell you otherwise — ones who have come out of this lifestyle through ex-gay organizations such as Exodus International and New Direction.

As for Markham Mayor Don Cousens removing his support for these signs, at last a politician who listens to the people and is not afraid to admit he made an error in judgment. He recognizes where the moral majority in Markham stands.

MARTIN LEGEMAATE
MARKHAM

CTV used anchor's mistake to promote its 'multiculturalism'

Re: The firing of CTV anchor Avery Haines. "Canada, the true north strong and free," a country built on the principles of equality and multiculturalism. These principles are what set Canadians apart from anyone else in the world.

Avery Haines was a talented anchor for the CTV. She has a husband and a son.

She stuttered on some of the words during a newscast one day and made a mistake. She joked about it to hide her embarrassment.

LETTERS POLICY

Stouffville Tribune welcomes your letters. All submissions must be less than 400 words and must include a daytime telephone number, name and address. The newspaper reserves the right to publish or not publish and to edit for clarity and space.

Write: Letters to the Editor,
9 Heritage Rd.,
Markham, ON, L3P 1M3

Email: letters@econsun.com

OPINION



much like what most of us would probably do in her situation. The newscast was re-shot, but the original tape was accidentally aired.

Later, the boss decided to fire her on the basis that her remarks were racist and sexist.

The only reason she was terminated was as an example: the CTV wants to tell the Canadian people what a multicultural-friendly station it is. For the CTV, the cost of this campaign was free. However, Haines lost a chance at a promising career and had every major newspaper in this country ridicule her.

I believe Haines made the remarks not because she was racist or sexist, but because she was not. With ease, she was able to say something so sensitive by media standards and turn it into harmless humour. This signifies her acceptance of equality and multiculturalism into her everyday life and speech.

This tragic incident should never have happened and those responsible should be frowned upon. How can we terminate somebody's career for something we all do every day — telling jokes?

VICTOR NG
UNIONVILLE

Music Mania thankful for ongoing support from community

Music Mania would like to express sincere thanks to all the people who donated items for the Music Mania New Year's Eve party at Cedar Beach Pavilion.

Your generosity enabled us to host a successful and fun evening.

More than 300 people braved fears of the

Y2K bug to enjoy the company of our friends and family. Donated items were given as door prizes and auctioned off to help defray some of the costs of our show.

Rehearsals have already started for our 40th anniversary show, *Still Crazy After 40 Years*, to be presented April 27, 28 and 29 at SDSS.

SHARON AND DAVID BAXTER
PUBLICITY DIRECTORS, MUSIC MANIA 2000
STOUFFVILLE

Calendar and faith column welcome features in newspaper

I wish to express my appreciation for two particular sections of your newspaper.

On Saturdays, the Focus on Faith section contains insightful and encouraging information in an attempt to balance the more distressing everyday news.

The Tuesday edition features the Community Calendar which announces local events and meetings of non-profit organizations. As a member of one such organization, I know first-hand the benefits our club has received from this form of public awareness.

Residents of Markham and Stouffville are delighted to find we exist, since advertising or even a telephone listing would be beyond our budget.

Thank you for including these important community listings and, by doing so, contributing to the personal triumph of individuals and the success of non-profit groups.

TINA MARIE BACHAND
MARKHAM

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Frank Daggett

It shouldn't take a law to get us to sign organ donor cards

I'm one of the guilty ones. Although I did so while in high school, I have not signed an organ donor card in more than 10 years. It's not that I'm apathetic to the plight of those waiting for organ transplants — now more than 1,380 in Ontario — I simply have not taken the time to sign a card.

And being in the media, I would have to all but bury my head in the sand to not be aware of the issues of organ donation we face in Canada.

Right now, the Canadian rate of transplant is 14.5 donors per million people, while demand for organs has doubled in recent years.

The U.S. rate of donation is 50 per cent higher than ours and, in Spain, the rate is double that of Canada.

While people who neglect to sign organ donor cards, such as myself, are part of the problem, there are other reasons why Canada has one of the lowest rates of organ transplant in the industrialized world.

Federal and provincial governments are now trying to better co-ordinate organ donation. Premier Mike Harris said co-ordination is the central component of the provinces' plan to double Ontario's donation rate by 2005.

Health Minister Allan Rock said last October a council will be established to develop a comprehensive and integrated strategy for Canada.

Unfortunately since a parliamentary committee report which studied ways to improve the organ donation rate in Canada, was handed to Rock in April, 66 people died waiting for organs before his announcement.

It is time not only for individuals such as myself to do our part, it is also time for the government to do its part by establishing a national network to replace the existing hodgepodge of organ donation systems.

Individually, consider the tragic yet triumphant story of 14-year-old Sabrina Gotman. The Mississauga girl received a double lung transplant last April, only to lose her battle Jan. 17 to an infection and her body's rejection of the organs.

Despite her death, the Gotman family takes joy in the fact that Sabrina's death was not in vain. Because of her selflessness, she gave others a second chance by donating her organs.

Her message of the need for organ donation will continue. One of her requests was that filling out an organ donation card be mandatory.

It shouldn't take a law forcing people to sign donor cards to increase the rate of donation. It should be an act as selfless as Sabrina's. The words of her mother Linda say it all.

"Organ donation is the most important and precious gift you can give, but how can you ask if you are not willing to give?"

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Serving the community since 1888



Canadian Circulations Audit Board Member



Ontario Press Council

Canadian Publications Mail Product Sales Agreement #1403419
Subscription rates by mail: 1 year - \$69.55 (tuesdays only)

Stouffville Tribune, published every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday, is one of the Metroland Printing, Publishing and Distributing Ltd. group of newspapers, which includes the Ajax/Pickering News Advertiser, Alliston Herald/Courier, Barrie Advance, Barry's Bay This Week, Bolton Enterprise, Brampton Guardian, Burlington Shopping News, Burlington Post, City Parent, Collingwood/Wasaga Connection, East York Mirror, Erin Advocate/Country Routes, Etobicoke Guardian, Flamborough Post, Georgetown Independent/Action Free Press, Kingston This Week, Lindsay This Week, Midland/Penetanguishene Mirror, Milton Canadian Champion, Milton Shopping News, Mississauga News, Newmarket Aurora, Georgina Era-Banner, Northumberland News, North York Mirror, Oakville Beaver, Oakville Shopping News, Orillia Today, Oshawa/Whitby/Clarington/Port Perry This Week, Peterborough This Week, Richmond Hill/Thornhill/Vaughan Liberal, Scarborough Mirror, Stouffville Tribune, Today's Seniors, Uxbridge Tribune and City of York Guardian.

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