

Stouffville Tribune

A Metroland community newspaper
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LETTERS

Cartoon about cigarette pack labels part of the problem

After viewing the cigarette pack warning labels cartoon by Steve Nease, Jan. 27, I must confess to a feeling of cynicism and despair for the human race as a whole.

Is the cartoon a statement on how the non-smoking public views the smoking public?

Having shared my sister's valiant battle for the last five months with lung and brain cancer due to cigarette smoking and watching her decline into the final stage of this devastating disease, I can only hope that we, as a caring society, can find a solution to this serious problem.

Unfortunately, my sister passed away Feb. 4.

I think the cartoon is part of the problem, not part of the solution.

DAISY EDWARDS
MARKHAM

Cartoonist's sense of humour appreciated by reader

Re: *Cartoonist should quit picking on Chretien*, Jan. 13

Thank you, thank you, thank you for having an excellent cartoonist like Steve Nease working for your fine paper. He definitely ranks on top with the best in this country.

I have never found him to be unfair to anyone, any group or politician. He always seems to hit the nail right on the head with his drawings. This is an indication that he has great knowledge, excellent background research and an open mind toward things going on around him. He has all the knowledge and good humour that letter writer Larry Israelson seems to be missing.

As long as Chretien's Liberals have been in office, they have done absolutely nothing for this country but raise taxes. What a record.

It is Chretien's Liberals who make hidden taxes, like extra pension fees, go through the roof. Even so, they are floating in billions of taxpayers' hard earned money.

It simply boggles my mind how people can be so blind and unknowing. If a government hasn't done absolutely anything for the average Canadian, how can anybody in their right



mind call that good government?

Even though the much-needed money from Ottawa is missing to pay for health care, Ontario Premier Mike Harris and his Conservative government managed to cut taxes to the average worker over 60 times. That, in my eyes, is good, responsible government.

Steve Nease, please keep up the good work. Most of your readers, I'm sure, are looking forward to your great sense of humour in the next edition of the paper.

HEINZ NITSCHKE
MARKHAM

Approval of new pool complex raises quality of life in Stouffville

I would like to thank town council for approving the building of a new recreational complex. I am especially looking forward to the availability of a year-round swimming pool. It will serve the needs of many people of all age groups.

Programs for seniors are going to be in greater demand as our population of seniors increases, as well as the need for swimming lessons for babies, children and adults, as well as recreational swimming.

There are three retirement communities already plus nursing homes within Whitchurch-Stouffville. There are also many younger families moving to Stouffville.

This town has a history of generosity for projects which enhance the quality of life for all its citizens. I am proud to be a member of this community and applaud those who give so much of their time and talents to make this

town such a good place to live and raise our families.

SUSAN SNOOKS
STOUFFVILLE

Delivering woodchips publicizes effort needed to save moraine

Re: *Woodchip warnings circulated*, Feb. 12.

Thank you to reporter Mike Adler for the inspiring article. Dozens of volunteers participated in the three-day woodchip party and helped create more than 16,000 tiny woodchip bags that will soon make their way to the doorsteps of Richmond Hill residents.

The goal is to encourage people to oppose the destruction of the Oak Ridges Moraine, and attend a special council meeting to consider the proposed redesignation of 7,000 acres of moraine land from rural to urban.

The meeting will be held Feb. 23 at the Sheraton Parkway Hotel in Richmond Hill.

It will take a huge outpouring of public opposition to persuade Richmond Hill councillors to change directions, but it can be done.

The decisions made on this swath of green space will affect not only the people of Richmond Hill, but also the citizens who live in Markham, Stouffville and beyond.

For now, we face the daunting task of delivering 16,000 woodchip bags, which we hope will be distributed every day this week and into next weekend. Anyone wishing to help can call Save the Rouge at 780-3938.

RAMONA WALL
SAVE THE ROUGE VALLEY SYSTEM



Debora Kelly

Canada may face American-style health-care crisis

During my annual winter getaway in south Florida, I'm not used to seeing much news about Canada in the pages of the daily newspaper there — except for the year when the Quebec referendum loomed. (That story obviously appealed to the Americans' Boston-Tea-Party/Civil War sensibilities.)

This month's trip was different. Like us, Americans are in the midst of an intense debate about their health-care system. And, when talking health care, the pros and cons of Canada's system often enter the discussion.

Judging by letters writers in the Fort Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel, our health-care system is lauded for its accessibility — yet Americans, for the most part, seem to believe it comes with a hefty price tag only us whipped Canadian taxpayers would be willing to bear.

(One thing Americans have been taking advantage of is the 'affordable' prescription drugs here, where the price of medication is 60 per cent lower than in the United States. Taking into account a favourable exchange rate on the dollar, it certainly is worth the trip to Canada for those who can't afford or are unwilling to pay the high price of drugs.)

For the most part, it seems to be recognized that Canada's universal health-care system, for all its merits, is not the answer to U.S. woes. Yet the country, one of the wealthiest in the world, has acknowledged it is not acceptable that a reported 44 million of its citizens have no medical coverage, while others have only partial coverage and some have problems with their health maintenance organizations.

But on returning home, it's hard to be smug. One story in the daily newspaper details the desperate shortage of radiation therapists — in Ontario alone, 1,400 breast and prostate cancer patients are on a waiting list for treatment. Facing waits ranging from four to 14 weeks, some patients are opting to be treated in the U.S. for which the Ontario government picks up the tab, leaving support systems behind.

While we, in theory, have a universal health-care system, in reality, for the growing number of Canadians on waiting lists, health care is as inaccessible for them as it is for the millions of Americans who can't afford coverage.

And now I read a futurist is predicting that within the next 17 years, Ontario's health-care budget must grow by 45 per cent — that's a mind-boggling \$9.5 billion — to meet the needs of aging boomers. Hiking taxes or trimming other programs won't cut it here.

Clearly, our system is in need of dramatic reform if it is to offer accessible, quality care to Canadians in the future — our dilemma is no different than the Americans' in that sense.

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.

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