

Stouffville Tribune

A Metroland community newspaper
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LETTERS

Councillor Allison will be missed

It is with considerable regret that our community learned of David Allison's decision not to seek re-election this fall.

During the last three years, the residents of Ward 6 benefited from Allison's hard work, dedication and, indeed, his courage to stand up on behalf of local residents.

Not only did he keep residents abreast of developments that would have an impact on our ward and surrounding areas, he steadfastly stood by his principles and the commitments he made to residents in 1997.

Allison did not need a job as a Markham councillor but, out of concern for the town he loved, he stepped forward.

We will surely miss David Allison and only hope our next councillor will reflect his dedication, professionalism and concern for existing residents.

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Nurses undervalued in health-care system

I consider Canada to be one of the best countries to live in for its health-care system. But even though Canadians value this provision, they do not value the people who provide the care.

When health-care cuts are needed, why are nurses the first to go? We are the primary health-care providers to the public and receive little recognition for our dedication and commitment to healing and helping the sick. Laying off nurses affects the quality of care the public receives.

When I graduated in 1996, positions were few and far between. Jobs were scarce and required experience, which made it impossible for a new graduate such as myself to find work.

It was only recently I decided to re-enter the field due to the increasing demand for nurses. Because of my four-year absence from nursing, I chose to go back to school to refresh my knowledge and skills.

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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OPINION



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Mike Barrett

Life's so-called hardships can be blessings in disguise

Remember that not getting what you want is sometimes a wonderful stroke of luck.

— the Dalai Lama

It's ironic that, for such a rough sport, hockey has provided us with some real gentlemen — the kind of people who exude such an aura of self-assuredness and calm, you want to stand near them, hoping some of that magic will rub off.

Last week, I had the opportunity to spend the morning with such a man.

It was Monday, at the Summit Golf Club in Richmond Hill. I was searching a photo-op at the charity golf tournament for the Herbert H. Carnegie Future Aces Foundation. Rain looked imminent, so I wanted to get this one done quickly.

After the introductions, I learned prior to the tee-off that morning that Leaf legend Johnny Bower had swapped hats with Herb Carnegie, giving him his NHL alumni cap.

This is significant because, despite being a tremendous hockey player during the '40s and '50s, Herb was denied the chance to play in the NHL because he is black.

I thought this gesture would make a great photograph and asked Herb if he wouldn't mind accompanying me out on the course to find Johnny and re-create the event. (Do you think all the stuff you see in the papers happened just then in front of the cameras?)

At any rate, it fell upon me to drive Herb out to find the goaltending great. I had to. You see, Herb is also blind.

This is also significant because, for a second time in his sporting career — this time as a champion senior golfer, he had been hampered by a cruel twist of fate.

Although barely able to distinguish the blur of day from night, Herb does not let this disability deter him from achieving a goal. To my surprise, he acted as my guide the whole way, mapping out our progress in his head, mentally playing every hole we passed on the course he has played for 34 years.

At every turn, we were greeted — well, Herb was greeted — by golfers, friends and well wishers; they all know him. Decorum called for many stops along the way, for there were many who wanted to pay their respects.

We also ran into several members of his family; his son Dale (no, not the *Win Friends and Influence People* guy), his daughters Bernice and Rochelle, along with a smattering of grandkids, all there to ensure the success of Herb's day.

The whole adventure took a couple of hours out of my busy day, but the rain held off and I got the shot.

After, as I stood close to this man, so rich in friends, family and purpose, I got something else. While life's ironies are sometimes cruel, they are sometimes opportunities in disguise. Sometimes, it depends on how you look at them.

Since job opportunities are now available to the non-experienced nurse, I feel optimistic about finding a position, though I still have reservations about the security of it. I believe my job as a nurse will be secure for the next five years. But since the demand-layoff pattern is cyclical, one can never be too sure.

People need to be aware of the importance and necessity of nurses. Our role in the health system is to support and help those in need of care and should, therefore, never be compromised.

BERNADETTE SICAT
THORNHILL

Collective flogging last thing parents need

Re: Parents who ignore movie warnings are selfish, a letter by Marlene Cooper, July 30.

As a parent, I make many decisions each day that impact directly on my children. Some decisions are more important than others and take a fair amount of thought, while others are little more than knee-jerk reactions to a situation.

I have never been a parent before and although many books have been written about parenting, I am convinced nothing can prepare you for what's in store.

One of the obligations I feel I must fulfill as a parent is to teach my children to make the "right" choices.

So when my 10-year-old asked me to take her and her brother to *Scary Movie*, I did not think much of it. I checked into its rating (AA) and proceeded to contact my neighbours to see if they wanted to join us with their two children. They did.

Our only intention was to spend some time

with our children, doing something they had chosen to do. There is hardly anything selfish or ignorant about what we intended.

Once the movie started, it quickly became apparent we had made a mistake and, within 20 minutes, despite the begging of our collective children not to do so, we exited the theater. This was not the first mistake I have made as a parent, nor will it be the last.

I'm sure that from her omnipotently righteous perch far above us mere mortals, Marlene Cooper must have seen my kid and I in line the day before at 7:30 a.m. in front of Chapters, waiting for the 9 a.m. opening to purchase the latest Harry Potter book.

For all she knows, many of those other "ignorant and selfish" parents may have done the same thing.

Many of them may have wanted to leave the theatre as we did, but perhaps were too embarrassed to do so. There may be a myriad of other reasons for it.

My neighbours and I were not aware of any theatre warnings and, admittedly, I could have done a better job of researching before deciding to go — there's no argument there and no one is skirting any responsibility.

However, you are crucifying parents who were prepared to spend an afternoon with their children; in my opinion a very good thing.

Parenting is very difficult at the best of times. The last thing parents need is the type of unsubstantiated, across-the-board collective flogging we got from your letter to the editor.

I should be so lucky that inadvertently taking my child to an "inappropriate" movie should be my biggest failure as a parent.

PETER ZOFF
RICHMOND HILL

Stouffville Tribune

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