

Stouffville Tribune

A Metroland community newspaper
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OPINION

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Roy Green

Even where it's supposed to be old-fashioned, voting is now high-tech

A few leftovers from my notebook after Monday's municipal elections in these parts.

• Because I'm a bit of a Luddite, I laughed at the reporter who was assigned to cover the Newmarket election, where computers were used to tally the vote.

"There's no excitement in that," I chuckled. "I'll be in East Gwillimbury, where it's done the old-fashioned way, with results written with black markers on charts taped to the wall around the council chamber.

Imagine my surprise, then, when I entered the civic centre Monday night to discover the town's Internet election page showing "Election 2000" blown up on a large screen. Very electric. Very modern.

Only 52 of 2,870 eligible voters turned out for election night at

CFB Borden

• The all-time winner of the Voter Apathy Award belongs to Base Borden, which spreads across two municipalities just southwest of Barrie.

It's true that most of the soldiers-in-training at the Canadian forces training base are short-term residents.

But when only 52 of 2,870 eligible voters turn out to vote in the local election, maybe it would be better to let them vote by mail for candidates in their home municipalities across Canada. Then again, considering the mess in Florida with absentee ballots, maybe not.

• Then there are those areas where you wish there was a lot more voter apathy. Like Newmarket, where 1,400 people actually cast a vote for the man who robbed the town of \$300,000.

• Like King, where 68 people voted for a man who had withdrawn from the race.

• Like Toronto, where more than 50,000 mayoral votes were cast for a man who chained himself to a toilet.

Third place, with 13,000 votes, went to a drag queen who complained people didn't take him seriously because he wore a dress.

• And in Toronto's ward 12, where more than 2,500 people voted for former councillor Mario Gentile, who was jailed in 1994 for accepting \$150,000 in bribes.

• Finally, it is truly amazing that so many 'dedicated' school board trustees in Ontario have lost interest in the post since the province capped trustee salaries at \$5,000.

LETTERS

Politicians should take moral stance, rather than easy way out

Kudos for publishing Houada Hayani's Nov. 7 letter. Israel should take blame for its crimes against Palestinians.

It echoes the sentiments of all fair-minded Canadians appalled at the bloodshed of Palestinians. What is so distressful is Tina Molinari's rant - "Residents insulted by Ottawa's endorsement of UN resolution."

As an elected member, it is her public and moral duty to decipher truth from convoluted logic and take a moral stance to aid the oppressed and not the easy route, which she chose to pacify the vocal chords of her constituents.

The latest eruption of confrontations between the Israeli occupation army and civilian Palestinian protesters became the playing field for the full force of the Israeli "spin machine" in a most deliberate, concentrated, and racist exercise of deception and dehumanization directed against a whole people.

"Blaming the victim" has been the common resort of the guilty in rationalizing and distorting the horror of the crime itself.

Whether battered wives, abused children or Palestinians long subjected to the brutality of the horrendous Israeli military occupation, the first (and last) resort of the cowardly is in maligning the victim, in accusing him/her/them of having brought about the deserved cruelty of the crime.

The most basic form of deception is in fabricating a false symmetry between occupier and occupied, between oppressor and victim.

JAVED AKBAR
Markham

Markhaven says thanks for response to fundraising effort

On behalf of the volunteers of Markhaven Seniors Home and the Markhaven Foundation, I would like to thank the community for their wonderful response to our Building Fund Campaign which has to date reached \$2.4 million of its \$3.5 million goal.

In particular, I would like to thank everyone who attended our 40th anniversary celebration dinner (An Evening with John McDermott) and all those who contributed to

our silent auction.

We are just over a million dollars shy of being able to turn the sod on our new facility and with the continued help of the Markham community, we hope to do this sometime in 2001.

This 96-bed facility with its new Alzheimer's Wing will be built on the same spot as the existing building at 54 Parkway Avenue, but will be more spacious and allow more privacy for residents.

Again, many, many thanks, Markham, for helping the seniors who call Markhaven home.

HARRY JAMES
Chairman, Board of Directors
Markhaven
Foundation

Holocaust still being denied, despite evidence of survivors

Last week marked the closing of Holocaust Education Week, which began Oct. 28.

Holocaust survivor, Gerda Steinitz-Friberg, the founder of the Holocaust Education and Memorial Centre in Toronto, has educated many people on her terrible experience of the Holocaust and how it has never ended.

However, there are still people saying, "Enough already, this is all history." Other people don't believe that the Holocaust had happened, even with the survivors' proof.

It is important that we educate the youth about this, so that it doesn't happen again, but it is still happening in different places in the world.

I think it is disgusting and disrespectful that

these people don't believe that the Holocaust had happened, especially with the survivors' proof, the numbers on their arms, pictures, and their stories.

I believe all students of all different cultures should learn about the Holocaust as well as other important historical events in their school curriculum.

I think the people who don't believe it happened should back down and let the survivors tell their stories to us because we need to learn our history and know about this tragedy, so it won't happen again.

The grade 7s and 8s from Parkview Public School in Unionville visited the Holocaust museum this past week where we received first hand information from Sally, a real Holocaust survivor.

Till this very day, she still has nightmares of her terrible experiences. This has opened up my eyes and the eyes of the other students to a part of history that had happened some time ago that we weren't aware of.

This has shown us how important history is to the youth today.

I hope that other schools can follow us and visit the museum to experience what we became aware of through a survivor.

Learning about the Holocaust wasn't just an eye opener for me, but a lesson learned.

RYAN SISTA
Grade 7
Parkview Public School
Unionville

(Editor's Note: Ryan Sisti decided to give his dream catcher to the Holocaust survivor so that she would no longer have nightmares.)

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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