

## Stouffville Tribune

A Metroland community newspaper  
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# OPINION

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Frank Daggett

*We should not be sending our trash elsewhere*

I'd like to share a revelation that I've had during my time here... "It came to me when I tried to classify your species and I realized that you're not actually mammals. Every mammal on this planet instinctively develops an equilibrium with the surrounding environment. But you humans do not. You move to an area and you multiply and multiply until every natural resource is consumed. The only way you can survive is to spread to another area.

"There is another organism on this planet that follows the same pattern. Do you know what it is? A virus. Human beings are a disease. A cancer of this planet. You are a plague..."

These are the words of Agent Smith in the cyber-fantasy film *The Matrix*.

Every time I hear about the Adams Mine landfill debacle, I'm reminded of this dialogue.

Let's face it, the Greater Toronto Area is growing and spreading at an alarming rate with no room for its waste.

The area is multiplying and natural resources are being consumed (can you say, 'Oak Ridges Moraine?').

The only way to survive is to spread to another area. In this case, the only way to deal with our waste is to spread it to another region of our province. An area where, unlike the GTA, vast natural resources can be found — for now.

Being from Northern Ontario, Cochrane to be specific, I've come to appreciate the uniqueness of that region; the greatest difference being the expanses of open, undeveloped land.

But the north is not without its own environmental dilemmas and serves as historic reminders why the Adams Mine should not be a host to the GTAs trash.

You don't have to look any farther than Sudbury, home of the world's tallest smoke stack, a 379-metre-tall polluter with the dubious distinction of causing much of the acid rain problems we now have, as well as extensive defoliation and deforestation.

When Inco was smelting its ores, low-lying stacks served the facility but spewed out its sulphuric emissions right onto the city. The stack was developed to spread the pollutants beyond their own area. They succeeded but at the expense of other regions.

Sudbury has since taken a number of steps to rectify the situation and has been recognized for its efforts with environmental awards — perhaps too late.

York Region still has an opportunity to show leadership rather than wait and see what Toronto will do.

We can still encourage people to be more conscious in recycling, reusing and reducing.

We can, and should, deal with our waste on our terms instead of burying it in our neighbours' back yard.



## LETTERS

### Loss of Toni Clark, a 'true skating mom,' will be felt by many

The skaters, parents and executive committee of the Markham Skating Club express our deepest sympathy to the family of our dear friend Toni Clark, who died tragically on Monday evening.

A fixture at the Markham Village Arena, Toni was a committed volunteer at the Markham Skating Club for many years. Whether it was as synchronized skating co-ordinator, music co-ordinator, inter-club championship chairperson or helping with the ice show, Toni was always there to help in whatever capacity she was needed.

She was a true skating mom who loved figure skating but, most of all, loved to watch her daughters Ashley and Chelsea skate. We will miss her more than words can express.

JEFF WAYNE  
President, Markham Skating Club

### Second-hand smoke studies are complex and difficult to understand

*Re: Credentials unnecessary to point out smoking studies were flawed; letter, Feb. 10*

The writer's passion is admirable, but appropriate credentials are extremely important. Proper training in statistics, medicine and epidemiology are necessary because the design and understanding of complicated studies can be very difficult even for experienced professionals.

Interpretation and conclusions drawn may not only be incorrect, but can also be biased by personal agendas. Even professionals can err. The study of diseases is extremely complex because of the multiple variables involved. It is unlikely that the average person is able to truly appreciate the complexities involved.

Further, it is possible that the World Health Organization study, which the letter writer said found no significant statistical evidence linking environmental tobacco smoke and diseases, may not be entirely correct. Over time, if copious studies confirm the WHO study, then its findings will be substantiated. Until then it would be foolish to disregard the work of many experts all over the world, unless one is a conspiracy theorist.

As for the assertion that ionizing radiation

from X-rays is a cause for cancer, it is always used judiciously — the pros must outweigh the cons. The average person annually receives more ionizing radiation from outdoors than from medical radiation. Dr. John Gofman (who made the assertion) has his own unique opinion but, once again, the overwhelming consensus differs.

Also, please note that smoking is a form of air pollution.

In medicine, "prevention" and "do no harm" are fundamental principles. Risk management is critically important. We try to teach patients to do everything possible to minimize their risk of mortality and morbidity as that directly influences their quality of life. Whether or not patients choose to follow, this advice is their prerogative. Unfortunately, more often than not, the law of action and consequences eventually catches up and physicians are left with a salvage job. Hence our anti-smoking stance.

Finally, while individual rights are important, perhaps those of the overwhelming majority should be given priority and that is neither a hate crime or genocide.

DR. ROBERT KWAN  
Unionville

### Bible has controversial views on many things besides homosexuality

*Re: Laws on sexuality are based on the Christian Bible, not red-necks; letter, Feb. 6*

I have no wish to inflame the issue of same-sex marriages any further, since I respect any person's right to an opinion. I offer only little sections of the Bible so that those who are

quoting it may re-examine their comments in a different light.

Regretfully, we must place a woman's views as subordinate to that of man's. For it is clear in the Bible that women are commanded by Paul to be silent in the church and to be obedient to men. He further says that "if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home, for it is a shame for women to speak in church." Cor. 14:34-35. Further, God places a dollar value on human life, with women worth less than man. Lev. 27:3-7.

Let us not forget that there are many examples of Biblical intolerance in that God orders the sons of Levi (Moses, Aaron, and the other members of their tribe that were "on the Lord's side") to kill "every man his neighbour. And there fell of the people that day about 3,000 men." Ex. 32:28 or, from Deuteronomy, the demand to kill everyone who has religious beliefs that are different from your own. Dt. 17:2-7.

This vengefulness goes so far as to include one's own children. "Happy should he be, that taketh and dasheth thy little ones against the stones." Pr. 22:15

So same-sex marriages are an abomination while Abraham married his sister and God blessed their marriage (Gen. 17:15-16). Where does one draw the line?

There is a grave danger in accepting the literal translation of the Bible without the gift of common sense which has been bestowed upon man. So please, let us "love thy neighbour as thyself." Lev. 19:18. Respect others and their beliefs that differ from your own, lest ye be judged.

TOM LOVENJAK  
Markham

## 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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