

Stouffville Tribune

A Metroland community newspaper
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Tracy Kibble

User fees would deal with mess left by beach-goers

More than 12,000 people poured into Georgina on the longest and hottest weekend of the summer of 2001.

So many people, in fact, the town couldn't handle the incredible volume of visitors or the associated problems. Each of its four public parks from Willow Beach to Pefferlaw were jammed with vehicles, its beaches bloated with sun-bathers, barbecuers and babies.

Exhausted town bylaw officers handed out more than 600 \$25 parking fines for a total of \$15,000 and collected \$30 from each car that passed through the gates of all four parks. Big deal.

Residents from Thornhill, Markham, Richmond Hill, Newmarket and as far away as Scarborough and Toronto headed to York's poorest town for a day of fun in the sun, outdoor feasts and, most of all, a dip in Ontario's sixth largest lake.

Everyone wanted to slip into the cooling, gentle waves of the region's biggest recreational economic boon for an entire day and everyone wanted to walk along its sandy shores.

But what was left behind was appalling and downright disrespectful.

Washroom and portable toilets overflowed, forcing visitors to utilize nearby properties to relieve themselves. Garbage was thrown in parks, into the lake and over fences on people's lawns.

Noise levels were out of control long into the evening, forcing some cottagers to pack up and head home.

The town recognized the need to tighten certain regulations and has agreed to pass out garbage bags, increase parking fines, add gates where needed and close parks earlier on long weekends.

But much more needs to be done. The town should be tracking how many people head to the beaches each weekend and use those numbers to weigh against costs to taxpayers.

For instance, the town charges each car \$30 to park for the day. If five people from each car spend a day on the beach, let's weigh revenue against costs. Each of the five visitors uses the beach, the washroom facilities and trash receptacles several times during the day.

By the time Georgina residents pay for staff to patrol the beach, staff the gates and clean the mess — not to mention costs of hauling away trash — that \$30 doesn't go far. In fact, the town is likely losing money.

What needs to happen is this. Each car should be charged \$30 to park and \$5 for each person. If the visitors are barbecuing on town property an extra \$10 should be charged. That's a mere \$65 for a family of five to enjoy a day of fun in the sun.

If you think that's steep, price a family trip to Wonderland, any theatre, restaurant or entertainment facility.

Georgina has been getting robbed for far too long.



LETTERS

Liberal MP's claims on economy a bunch of hogwash

In our house, junk mail gets tossed out right away and that includes Oak Ridges MP Bryon Wilfert's newsletters. However, for the first time, I read his Quarterly Response.

What a bunch of hogwash.

Wiefert claims the Liberals repaid \$33 billion of our debt since 1997/98.

The fact is, only \$15 billion can be attributed to Finance Minister Paul Martin's debt reduction; \$18 billion was due to economic growth.

The "Spenderman" likes to spin that reduction as a major government achievement.

The savings of \$2 billion in interest payments should not be retained by the state but returned to the rightful owners, the taxpayers.

In last year's election, there was a tax rage, so the Liberals crafted the first tax relief, not nearly as generous as the Opposition's plan.

Since 1993, the government has enjoyed uninterrupted economic growth, but what Martin has done is, when revenue comes in stronger than expected, he quietly spent the surplus on political friends, key constituencies, etc.

The "hidden surplus" during the past four years of approximately \$20 billion was needlessly spent and not applied to the heavy debt burden.

The Liberals are hopelessly addicted to pork-barrel spending.

Just remember the HRDC scandal and Shawinigate. Wilfert was vice-chairperson of the HRDC and his answer was, when questioned by the media, "We should move forward, rather than dwell on spilled milk."

The fact is, due to Prime Minister Jean Chretien and Martin's economic policies, we are gradually slipping down and out of the First World.

A collapsing health-care system, a tanking currency, widening gap of productivity and living standards with the Americans and no military is sure to erode the strength and health of our country.

LISA MYERS
RICHMOND HILL

Anti-smoking lobby will go to any length to impose will on others

Re: Will smoke police be handcuffed? Bylaw enforcement officers want special powers, July 28.

This proposal by a fanatical anti-smoking lobby shows it will go to any length to impose its will on others.

This is in the tradition of the Spanish Inquisition, heretic burning, the Salem witch hunts and, more recently, the Nazi rise to power and the excesses of Soviet Communism.

Bravo, York Region. By pursuing this proposal, you are well on the way to joining the above distinguished company.

For the rest of us, welcome to the Brave New World of rule by special interest groups.

WALTER ORAWSKI
AURORA

No decision made yet on merging of information services

Re: Information service would serve all of region, Information Markham in amalgamation plan, July 5.

While the headline suggests that a merger of Information Markham with Helpmate in Richmond Hill is already in the works, a partnership between the two agencies is only one of many potential models under consideration by those involved in the Regional Community Information and Volunteer Centre (RCIVC) feasibility study.

We thank you for your interest and coverage, but wish to emphasize that a decision on

how the proposed RCIVC would be structured has not yet been reached.

LESLIE WALKER
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, INFORMATION MARKHAM

Slow, almost certain death of moraine is Harris legacy

What a legacy the Harris government will leave behind. The unnecessary deaths in Walkerton and now, the slow and almost certain death of the Oak Ridges Moraine.

The committee set up to develop a plan for the Oak Ridges Moraine is questionable. How can a developer be concerned about the environment?

Parts of York Region have more green space destroyed by developers than is caused by a yearly plague of locusts.

GLORIA CERNIVIVO
WOODBIDGE

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