

Stouffville Tribune

A Metroland community newspaper
9 Heritage Rd., Markham, Ont., L3P 1M3

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EDITORIAL

World enters 2002
with resolve, hope

The times, they have a changed.

As we prepare to ring in 2002, few of us would disagree the world is a different place today.

Sept. 11 brought terror close to home in a way none of us could have possibly imagined.

The horrific terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon in Washington undoubtedly changed our lives in ways we still don't fully comprehend.

By the week's end, several significant forces had already emerged from the rubble — yes, terrible sadness, fear and anger enveloped us, but something else had grown stronger — resolve and solidarity.

Resolve we would not be bowed by this.

Yet even now, as many of us confidently get back on planes and buy champagne to toast the new year with a renewed appreciation of optimism, few of us would not admit to having a new awareness of our vulnerability.

Perhaps you still hug your children and loved ones tighter than you ever did before, the memory of the tragedy lingering in your mind.

Few of us would disagree freedom cannot be taken for granted. We struggle with how to protect our free and open society, with its ingrained right to individual privacy, with the new need for control and intervention.

We know now there are many in the world with little respect for the ethics, codes of honour and tolerance that guide our society.

Yet, like never before, we know the power of compassion — that force alone may alter our legacy.

Few of us would disagree — particularly now that we are so deeply aware of the poverty and despair existing in countries around the globe — we are, indeed, fortunate to live in a country like Canada, such a rich, tolerant and vibrant democracy.

We mark the arrival of the new year with particular poignancy this year; we made it through a year that has changed the course of humanity, the reverberations of which will be felt throughout eternity, yet, somehow, as Canadians, we can still have great, shining hope for the future. Together, we have much to celebrate and much to protect.

Here's wishing you and yours peace and prosperity in the new year ahead.

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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THE
GHOST OF
CHRISTMAS
PRESENTS...

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Stouffville bylaw enforcement
overzealous during holidays

Re: Enforcement of bylaw prohibiting street parking in Stouffville between 2 a.m. to 6 a.m. Dec. 1 to March 31.

We understand the need for such a bylaw during the winter as it is a great advantage to have the snowplows able to clear our streets in the event of a snowstorm.

On Sunday, Dec. 16, the bylaw officer must have spent most of the early morning hours issuing citations across town. It was a clear night, with no snow to be cleared and probably the biggest day of the year for home Christmas parties.

To be issuing tickets on this night is not only poor timing but smacks of a money grab by the town or just plain mean-spiritedness by the bylaw officer. It could even be detrimental to people making the right choice to 'not drink and drive'.

Here is how we were affected:

- Our son, a mechanic, was called and asked if he could help a friend whose mother's car had died at Durham 30 and Bloomington Road. It was in a place where it could have been a hazard. He towed it back to our house, but was unable to get it fixed late Saturday evening, so he left it in front of the house. At least it was less of a hazard there than at the intersection where it died. The car was ticketed.

- Our parents, who live a few blocks from us, had guests who live about an hour out of

town. Because they had a couple of drinks they decided to stay over and drive back in the morning. Their car was ticketed.

- Our neighbours had a Christmas party in their home. Several of their guests made the smart choice to stay over or to take a taxi home. They, too, were rewarded for not drinking and driving with citations.

This, we believe, to be but a small sampling of the irritation in the town of this overzealous and poorly timed enforcement campaign. Surely, there must have been a better way to increase our awareness of this bylaw.

How about refunding or cancelling these tickets to show, particularly to out-of-towners, that Stouffville really is a terrific place to live or visit?

JOHN AND TERI MCTAVISH
STOUFFVILLE

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at yorkregion.com

Your opinion is important to us on our letters to the editor pages and on our website.

We invite you to join the ongoing discussions at yorkregion.com and you're welcome to launch your own discussion there, too.

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David Teetzel

End of year
has long been time
to stop the world

Long before we developed the modern calendar, the ancient Maya followed a 365-day year.

They had 12 months, each 30 days long. If you do the math, you realize that leaves five days not properly accounted for.

And because the Maya attached a little too much importance to their calendar, that was a terrifying prospect. They considered the last five days of the year a time of potential disaster, unprotected by any of their vast pantheon of gods.

So they stayed locked away in their homes, doing as little as possible until the calendar got started again.

We have moved beyond fearing the last five days of the year (our modern, sophisticated society lives in terror and paranoia pretty much every day) but we still shut down as much as possible for the week between Christmas and New Year's Day.

If we're hiding from anything, it's probably bill collectors — or anything else that reminds us of financial reality.

Back in the days of the ancient Maya, people kept their children huddled safely in the hut. But today, parents are pushing their children out the door.

The glow is off all those holiday presents, the return to school is a long way off and the whiny chorus of 'I'm bored, there's nothing to do' has begun.

Some, myself included, have dragged ourselves into the office, in a fuzzy counterfeit of ordinary day-to-day life. Work gets done, albeit as an inconvenient interruption to the munching of chocolate and swapping of stories.

It's funny how we become so fixated on the calendar at this time of year. We spent weeks counting how many shopping days till Christmas and now we're preparing to indulge in all manner of celebration, nostalgic because we're turning over a page on the calendar.

Not that I'm complaining. Back at the newspaper office, the tried and true end-of-year survival tactic is to regurgitate the past 12 months of news stories in a "year in review."

That seems redundant this year because one event has so thoroughly eclipsed everything else. Historians will, no doubt, condense 2001 to a single day and the fallout thereof.

This year, we're all a lot more concerned about what might be coming next. That's why you'll notice the stories in today's newspaper focus more on the year ahead than the year that was.

I wish we could tell you for certain what 2002 will bring. Sadly, we can offer little more than educated guesses about the factors that will influence your life. But don't go back to huddling in your hut, fearing the future. It didn't work for the Maya and it won't work for you.

Get out and enjoy this slowed-down time of year. My prediction is we'll soon be wishing we were bored.

Stouffville Tribune

Serving the community since 1888

Canadian Circulation
Audit Board Member

Ontario Press Council

Canadian Publications Mail Product Sales Agreement #1403419
Subscription rates by mail: 1 year - \$69.55 (Thursdays only)

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Fax: (905) 294-1538

Classified:

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Stouffville Tribune, published every Thursday and Saturday, is one of the Metroland Printing, Publishing and Distributing Ltd. group of newspapers, which includes the Ajax/Pickering News Advertiser, Alliston Herald/Courier, Barrie Advance, Barry's Bay This Week, Bolton Enterprise, Brampton Guardian, Burlington Shopping News, Burlington Post, City Parent, Collingwood/Wasaga Connection, East York Mirror, Erin Advocate/Country Routes, Etobicoke Guardian, Flamborough Post, Georgetown Independent/Acton Free Press, Kingston This Week, Lindsay This Week, Midland/Pennington Mirror, Milton Canadian Champion, Milton Shopping News, Mississauga News, Newmarket/Aurora, Georgina Era-Banner, Northumberland News, North York Mirror, Oakville Beaver, Oakville Shopping News, Orillia Today, Oshawa/Whitby/Clarington/Port Perry This Week, Peterborough This Week, Richmond Hill/Thornhill/Vaughan Liberal, Scarborough Mirror, Stouffville Tribune, Today's Seniors, Uxbridge Tribune and City of York Guardian.