

Stouffville Tribune

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PUBLISHER Ian Proudfoot

LETTERS
to the
EDITOR

Pedestrians must pay attention

Re: Markham student hit by car, dies in parent's arms, Nov. 5.

I've read several letters to the editor regarding the heartbreaking accident that killed Jorge Luis Martinez Jr. Nov. 1. These letters plead for drivers to slow down and be more careful. I agree and add my voice to that plea.

I must go further and ask all pedestrians to please obey all traffic signs and signals, to use common sense when crossing roads and to please put your life in your own hands, not in the hands of a driver.

I travel our local streets every day and every day I must stop, slow down and shake my head at kids crossing against red lights, crossing against walk signals and just simply not looking before entering a busy street.

Most of these occurrences take place around Markville Secondary School, on Carlton Road and on Bullock Drive between Centennial Community Centre and Markville Shopping Centre. All the kids involved are teenagers.

On one occasion, a number of kids were crossing McCowan Road from west to east on the south side of Carlton. They started walking on a yellow light and crossed the centre barrier on a full red light.

I was turning left onto Carlton with one truck in front of me and I could see the kids were not looking and that cars were fast approaching a green light from behind me.

One kid out of five looked and grabbed the rest before they were all struck by oncoming traffic. The driver approaching the intersection would never have seen the kids because several of the vehicles at the intersection were trucks.

Many times while driving along Bullock beside Markville Shopping Centre I see kids are crossing the street and never look to see if it's safe.

Many kids cross through the Centennial Community Centre parking lot and never watch traffic around them. They're teenagers and to some degree they feel they're invincible. They're not.

Drivers need to be more careful ... so do pedestrians.

DAVID KATES
UNIONVILLE

Private nursing homes bad idea

Population growth, especially in the Toronto area, is creating a huge problem for the Ontario government: how to take care of the fast growing number of elderly?

First came the expensive community care access centre system, then a lucrative business was created for private corporations owning long-term care nursing homes — a very expensive set-up for taxpayers at a time when hospitals badly need more beds,



more modern equipment, more doctors and nurses.

Instead of privatizing elder care, why not build new nursing homes as extensions to existing hospitals?

These nursing homes would be less expensive, professionally run, safer and faster for needed help during medical emergencies.

A nursing home connected to a hospital would certainly be willing and able to provide the treatment to save lives.

I say yes to more funds for hospitals and no to public-funded, privately owned and operated nursing homes.

ARVIDS E. ZAKIS
STOUFFVILLE

Thanks for supporting veterans

I would like to express sincere appreciation to the A&P store in Stouffville for its financial support of veterans activities and for the use of its property for our band. As a corporate citizen in our community, A&P is number one.

As veterans, we could not have won your freedom in the war years without the support of dedicated women who worked so hard back home to supply needed guns and supplies.

They worked in ammunition plants, drove trucks, buses and streetcars. They worked on construction jobs, operated cranes and bulldozers and toiled on assembly lines.

They even took the time to send us knitted socks and sweaters. These unsung heroes have never been formally recognized or thanked for that they did for their country.

Today, these women continue to volunteer their time and service to veterans at legion halls across our great land.

I would personally like to thank them for their courage, commitment and support.

H. PAYNE & ROYAL CANADIAN LEGION
STOUFFVILLE

Cops should curtail rude drivers

Weekday mornings around 8:45 I drive down Unionville Main Street to Unionville Gate, then south on Kennedy Road. On most morning I witness three things:

- Drivers who are good neighbours and extend courtesy to others, such as not entering an intersection until they know they can clear it before the light turns red;

- Drivers who take advantage of those who try to keep intersections clear: they nose in and steal the rightful place of the courteous drivers.

- Drivers who believe they are so important they deserve to get ahead of all the good people patiently waiting to make the turn from Main Street.

They zip down the right lane, turn in the dead-end, then muscle their way into traffic ahead of everyone else.

I can't condone road rage, but who among

us hasn't wished a calamity on those discourteous jerks who steal our time, patience and rightful places?

Those louts who rob us of our good natures or vandalise a good day. Those bad drivers aren't just bullies and thugs, they're thieves: they selfishly take from the rest of us to squander on themselves.

But we can do something. Whenever you see a driver being deliberately courteous, like not entering an intersection when they won't make it across, let's all give them a little wave, an approving nod or a thumbs-up.

But to those who would take the roads from us, give them a head-shake no or a finger wag: some sign of disapproval.

Maybe we should all start doing this to the stop sign runners too.

In an ideal world, the police could enforce a "local traffic only" bylaw south of Unionville Gate, but I wonder if a RIDE unit down there between 7:30 and 9 a.m. once in a while is the answer: just make a point of stopping the queue-jumpers for about 10 minutes each.

PHILL GILES
UNIONVILLE

Taxes on gas guzzlers
will solve SUV problem

Re: SUV lovers don't ask about environmental effects, Nov. 14.

Credit goes to staff writer Mike Adler for highlighting the apparent carefree attitude of buyers and sellers when it comes to the environmental impact of vehicle purchases.

Given consumers and car companies aren't behaving in a sufficiently responsible way environmentally, I urge the federal and provincial governments to legislate the needed behaviour through higher related taxes.

I would support an immediate tax increase to raise the price of gasoline to \$2 per litre.

Annual vehicle renewal fees for eight and 12-cylinder gas guzzlers should be raised each year and peak at around \$3,000 a year by 2007.

Doing this would give current owners of inefficient vehicles time to wear out their cars and give auto makers fair notice the market for gas guzzlers will shrink.

The likely benefits of this approach are people would drive less and buy more fuel efficient vehicles; governments would reap extra tax revenue, which could be used to subsidize buyers of cleaner vehicles; businesses for whom gasoline is an expense would have to charge their customers more for products and services, thereby causing prices to more accurately reflect true (including environmental) costs.

Until the dollar cost of driving does match its total true costs, however, too many of us are getting a virtual "free ride", whereby our use of gas guzzlers is unnaturally cheap; it is our environment that continues to pay more than its fair share of the price.

BRUCE RHODES
RICHMOND HILL

LETTERS POLICY

The Stouffville Tribune welcomes your letters. All submissions must be less than 400 words and must include a daytime telephone number, name and address. The Tribune reserves the right to publish or not publish and to edit for clarity and space.

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