

Sun-Tribune

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LETTERS to the EDITOR

MP elected on marriage stance

Re: *MP Wilfert reneging on support of gay community, letter to the editor by Ian McCallum and Cheryl Cooke Harrington, Aug. 16.*

Oak Ridges Liberal MP Byron Wilfert, along with his many parliamentary colleagues, including the prime minister, Cabinet and Paul Martin, voted in 1999 to uphold traditional marriage.

They went so far as to confirm it should remain the union of one man and one woman. It was on this basis and others they were re-elected and it is on this basis we expect our democratically elected politicians not to renege on their promise to the Canadian people.

While there are some who say one's personal belief system has no place in the public square, it was the belief systems of our founding fathers that created Canada with their constitutional affirmation of the supremacy of God as the authority to whom we must ultimately give account.

Further, it is not certain all homosexuals choose to go so far as emulating heterosexual unions in the form of marriage with all the legal implications that it imposes.

Many might prefer the common-law arrangements and spousal benefits they now enjoy. Putting this to a public and parliamentary debate would put the decision-making process where it belongs, in the hands of the people and Parliament of Canada.

If changes can't stand the test of the ballot box and Legislature, they should not be able to bypass the democratic system by appealing to judicial activists. These people are unelected and picked by the very person who not only reneges on his promises, but undemocratically tries to ram through change by this means.

RICHARD VAN SETERS
PRESIDENT, MARKHAM
CANADIAN ALLIANCE ASSOCIATION

Vote no, Mr. McCallum

An open letter to Markham MP John McCallum.

I voted Liberal in the last federal election. I am also opposed to same-sex marriage.

Should the Liberals go ahead and make same-sex marriage legal, I will not vote Liberal again. Nor will anyone else in my household.

Marriage is an institution made by God between a man and a woman. To change God's law is an abomination.

We are to love the sinner, but hate the sin. Same-sex marriage is wrong and if it becomes legal, it will open a can of worms for the family and society.

Please vote no to the same-sex marriage legislation, Mr. McCallum, for the family, society and God.

BRENDA D'NALLO
MARKHAM



Region not serious on health

Re: *Too long to confirm West Nile virus tests, Aug. 7.*

This editorial stated "Our public health department is taking West Nile seriously." I doubt if this is true.

After the report of a positive test on a bird in the Aurora Road and Ninth Line area June 23, I found a dead bird (possibly a crow or black bird) in my front yard during the July 1 long weekend.

I phoned the West Nile hotline. I was told by a recorded message to leave my phone number and I would be contacted by the department concerned.

To date, I have not received a call. If the regional health department is taking things seriously, do you think it would ignore my message?

G. WONG
STOUFFVILLE

Advertise volunteer opportunities

Re: *Stories offer little support in student volunteer mandate, Aug. 14.*

I felt frustrated reading about the lack of opportunity for young people, particularly those under 18, to find volunteer opportunities and meet their community service requirements.

It seems to me what is lacking is some sort of clearinghouse concept where groups look-

ing for volunteers can advertise their opportunities to the schools.

A case in point is the tennis program for mentally challenged young adults I support as an adult volunteer at Armadale Tennis Club in Markham.

The program runs Monday evenings from mid-June to the end of August and provides about 15 hours of volunteer experience for someone who isn't afraid to have fun with people who love to play tennis.

We're not looking for an Andre Agassi or Serena Williams and you certainly don't need to be 18 years old. If you can hit a slow-paced and reasonably accurate shot to someone on the other side of a net, then we have a great opportunity for you.

I think there are hundreds of other large and small volunteer-hungry programs losing out because they don't know how to advertise.

It's not rocket science, all we need is a phone number, an e-mail address or a website we can use to advertise. The province needs to figure out who will play the key role of matchmaker to link students and opportunities.

STEVE WATSON
MARKHAM

Thanks for successful jazz festival

Despite all the problems that have been sent our way these past few months, last weekend's Markham jazz festival was a tremendous success both artistically and in

fan attendance.

We are extremely grateful to the many hours of preparation put in by our volunteer committee. And I must not forget the additional volunteers who came just for the weekend and worked very hard.

We were also thankful to the sponsors, many of whom, with great loyalty, came back again, and the new companies who gave of themselves to be a part of the festival.

The venues that participated were a plus to the festival, presenting a wide variety of artists chosen by the festival. We have been inundated with calls from fans who enjoyed your food and service.

And a special note of thanks to York Regional Police officers who enjoyed the music, but remained alert and friendly. We are lucky to have officers of this calibre.

HAL HILL
FOUNDER/ARTISTIC DIRECTOR/PRESIDENT
MARKHAM JAZZ FESTIVAL

Residents fight for hamlet

Re: *Bypass could mean better future for Victoria Square, July 29.*

Residents of Victoria Square and area, through the Save Victoria Square Ratepayers Association, have done an excellent job in continuing our fight to retain the character of this hamlet.

When residents were called upon to ensure we were heard on an issue to protect the hamlet, they showed up. The first threats came with the rezoning application in 1996. It has been a long road and our residents have had to pay attention to these developments consistently to make sure we were not paved over.

The proposed north-south bypass is a relief to many residents. We anticipate traffic volumes may be reduced by 80 per cent on Woodbine Avenue.

The 404-Elgin Mills Road interchange, now under construction, will likely increase traffic on Elgin Mills. But we hope the north leg of the Woodbine bypass takes a lot of pressure off Elgin Mills. This road will remain at two lanes through the hamlet.

The environmental study mentioned in Frank King's column will also review the opportunity to assess the need for an east-west bypass. We have stressed the need to consider the north leg of the bypass as the first part of what could be an east-west bypass. This is one of our next focus issues.

Victoria Square's west flank is already slated for residential property up to the proposed bypass. All properties adjacent to Victoria Square will have lot sizes similar to that of the hamlet, which is about 1/3 of an acre.

All these amendments are designed to keep our little enclave mostly intact. I suspect if we are as diligent as we have been in the past, those trucks and traffic referred to in the column will be reduced to the point where we will have our sleepy hamlet again soon.

JIM ROBERTSON
PRESIDENT, SAVE VICTORIA SQUARE
RATEPAYERS ASSOCIATION

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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