

Stouffville
Sun-Tribune

A Metroland community newspaper
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LETTERS to the EDITOR

Not all dogs have same energy level, temperament

Re: Why do towns always poo-poo dog parks? Column by David Teetzel, Aug. 19.

People seem to lump all dogs into one category. However, it is important to acknowledge dogs range along a continuum on at least two characteristics that are important to consider when talking about dogs being off-leash.

First, in terms of energy level, dogs range from extremely docile to extremely high energy. The extremely docile dog is likely to be content to stay on a lead and trot beside its owner.

The high-energy dog, on the other hand, is likely to chew the couch or a pair of leather shoes if they are not provided the opportunity to get off leash and expend energy.

Secondly, dogs range in temperament from extremely friendly to people and other dogs to extremely aggressive. Some breeds are more likely to be aggressive than others, but early socialization and training can have a significant impact in this area.

We have a 15-month-old Wheaten terrier who is very high energy. She loves people and is very playful with other dogs, with the exception of a few that have been aggressive toward her.

I would love to bring her to the off-leash area in Markham, but have not done so because of the hydro towers. It occurs to me one solution is to fence off areas in existing parks that are underused by people and create off-leash areas, perhaps 200 square feet in size.

For example, in the Toogood Pond ravine area, there is an open area of grass where I often see dogs playing off-leash.

This area is beside a path, but far enough away that dogs do not disturb people on the path.

The only problems I see with dogs being off-leash in an unfenced area is there are, unfortunately, some owners who don't have the good sense to keep aggressive pets on a leash.

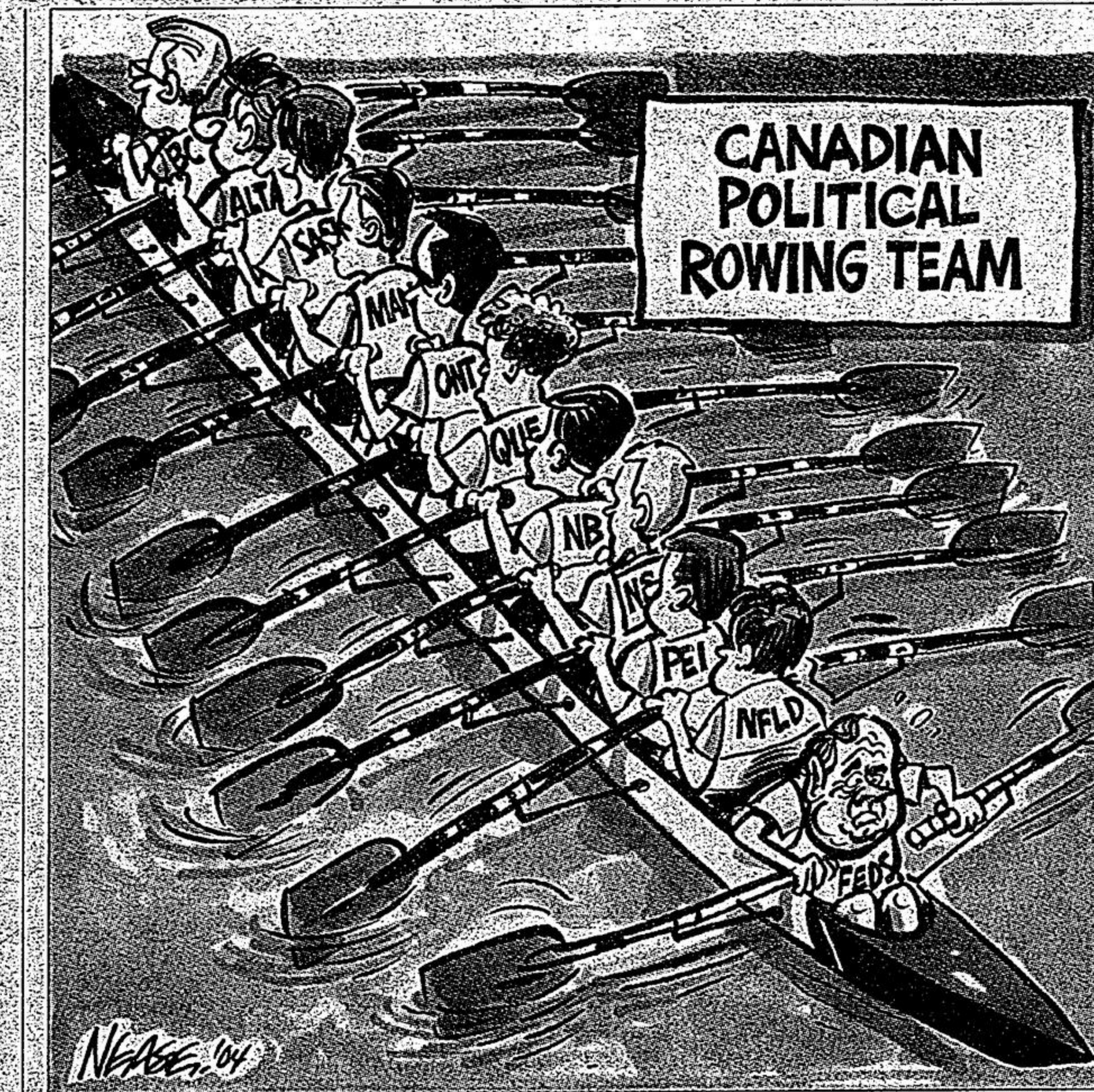
Also, some owners don't realize they cannot just walk or run along without looking back at their dog and still hope to pick up every poop. These things, understandably, anger other park users, including dog owners.

TAMMY MORRELL-BELLAI
UNIONVILLE

EMS, police, bicycle riders deserve credit for quick action

Re: 15 cyclists on Markham club reunion ride hit in Pickering, Aug. 17.

The next time your readers hear the scream of a siren or the whir of a rescue heli-



copter, offer a silent thank you and clear the road for them to pass. They are in the business of saving lives.

Earlier this month, what should have been a reunion ride turned in to a near tragedy for a group of cyclists.

Heartfelt thanks to the police, ambulance, helicopters and EMS personnel who rushed to the scene. Sincere thanks to witnesses who offered assistance until emergency services arrived. Your help was invaluable.

Special praise must be reserved for the cyclists who, in spite of their own injuries and the shock of what happened, raced to the assistance of their friends and family, providing first aid and comfort. Each of you deserves a gold medal.

We always knew you were a special group of individuals, but your reaction that Saturday was exceptional. We love you all.

C. SHANNON
MARKHAM

Thanks to volunteers, sponsors for successful jazz festival

Now that the dust has settled, so to speak, I can take a moment to reflect on last weekend's Markham Jazz Festival and express sincere gratitude to all who came to celebrate our seventh year of operation.

The weather co-operated and made it

possible for thousands of delighted fans to descend on Markham and the village of Unionville to hear exceptional jazz artists perform.

Co-operation from the village and its businesses, the neighbours, police and others involved was outstanding, creating a great feeling of togetherness.

All concerts from Friday night at the Markham Theatre to Saturday and Sunday at Toogood Pond Park, including the Saturday evening pubs and restaurants, were met with eager anticipation.

It has been most gratifying to receive so many phone calls, e-mails and letters from fans who expressed a feeling of this being the best festival so far.

This could not have happened if it hadn't been for the sponsors who had faith in us and the devotion from the many volunteers who worked with our staff to ensure all went well.

I thank them from the bottom of my heart.

Now I am off to Germany to sing the praises of Markham with the Men of Note chorus. We will join in the celebration of William Moll Berczy in Nordlingen and Wallerstein and carry a message of goodwill from Markham, which we hope will bring more people to our town in the future.

HAL A. HILL
FOUNDER AND ARTISTIC DIRECTOR
MARKHAM JAZZ FESTIVAL

Well-planned community includes paths for cyclists

Re: York Region cyclists still waiting for safe streets, Planning to get moving, Aug. 21.

It is interesting to note the relationship between these stories.

While cyclists are waiting for separate bike lanes and York Region is trying to find ways to get traffic moving, the suggestion to build dedicated bicycle lanes as part of the upcoming plan to widen Hwy. 7 and Yonge Street for rapid transit lanes has been ignored.

Cycling could become year-round transportation by placing dedicated cycling lanes on major routes that are priorities for snow plowing.

Wouldn't it be great to relieve congestion and provide safer cycling with dedicated lanes that would connect across Markham?

It would also go a long way toward fulfilling Markham council's commitment to connect the town with cycling lanes or paths.

Dedicated bicycle lanes on arterial roads will get a lot of cyclists out from behind the wheel during rush hour.

Perhaps a good use of taxpayer dollars would be to add a few extra feet of pavement to the Hwy. 7 and Yonge project that will soon be underway. That would reflect well on the "well-planned community" about which regional planning commissioner Bryan Tuckey spoke.

DON HUTCHINSON
MARKHAM

Be selective about who buys land

Re: Too much farmland growing houses, Aug. 5. Smaller lots on Rose Avenue 'tip of development iceberg', letter to the editor, Aug. 19.

As a former Whitchurch-Stouffville council member, it is with great interest that I follow the saga of development in Stouffville. Recent letters to the editor piqued my interest.

Farmers sell their farms to developers and then complain the developer will grow houses.

Likewise, the family of Randy Mole sells its house on Rose Avenue to a developer, then Mr. Mole complains the developer will build extra houses on the street's large lots.

Both letter writers say too much development is occurring and suggest the town should fight it.

When this happens, as we know from past experience, developers are free to pursue their cases through the Ontario Municipal Board, which usually costs the town hundreds of thousands of dollars.

So while taxpayers foot OMB expenses, farmers and Mr. Mole can complain about it while banking the proceeds of their sales.

If they feel that strongly about halting development in Whitchurch-Stouffville, they should be more selective about who buys their land.

PETER DOBRICH
WHITCHURCH-STOUFFVILLE

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