

OPINION

Stouffville
Sun-Tribune

A Metroland community newspaper
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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Adopted country, community difficult to leave

We are an American family that has lived in Unionville for almost 10 years.

In two weeks, we will be moving back to the States. We recently came across an article appearing in this paper on June 29, 1996. Entitled *See you later, eh?*, it was about another family from the States.

At that time, we had only been living here for eight months. We saved the article, wondering if some day we'd be able to express the same thoughts and experiences as shared by that expatriate family. The answer is a definite yes. We have enjoyed our Canadian experience, as we reflect on our time here.

We've experienced downtown Toronto, including the CN Tower, Toronto Islands and Casa Loma. We've cheered on the Maple Leafs, Raptors, Blue Jays and Argos. We've attended concerts and theatre performances. We've visited Niagara Falls. We've travelled coast to coast and marvelled at the beautiful scenery. We've met some of the friendliest people in the world.

Many experiences became seasonal traditions. We'll remember Unionville Festival and Olde Tyme Christmas parade. We'll remember skiing and snowboarding in Collingwood.

We'll remember going to Forsyth Farms for pumpkins and Christmas trees. We'll remember the Markham Fair and the Ex. We'll remember Muskoka and Camp Mini-Yo-We.

We'll remember the numerous activities surrounding Main Street Unionville and Toogood Pond. The list could go on.

We have certainly experienced a lot of great things. We have seen what we think is the best of Canada.

Most of all, we'll remember living in Unionville. We are heartbroken over leaving friends, neighbours, church and home. We will truly miss this community that is second to none. We have had the pleasure of meeting, knowing and loving the most loyal of people. We've made lasting friendships.

We truly thank all of you who know us. We depart with a fond appreciation for Canada, our adopted country.

As we cross the border (with lots of tears), we take more than just our household belongings, our family and two dogs. We take a decade of wonderful memories.

We look forward to visiting in the future, so, therefore, it is very appropriate to just say, "See you later, eh."

God bless.

THE DAHLIN FAMILY
UNIONVILLE



Do telemarketers make you want to reach for a gun?

The phone rings, I say hello and there's silence.

After a few seconds, a youthful or heavily accented voice asks, "May I speak to Mr. Annan please?"

My name has only two syllables and they're both the same.

Yet, I could be Joe Btfsplk, judging by the difficulty the telemarketers have pronouncing it.

"Mr. Annan speaking," I reply, giving her a broad hint about the way I say my name. She continues, "And how are you today, Mr. Btfsplk?"

"Terrible," is what I'd like to answer.

"My rhomboid muscle aches every time I play golf. Would you recommend surgery or more therapy?"

But it's not the way I was raised. So, until recently, I'd say "fine" and listen for a minute or two to the sales pitch before interjecting, "I'm not interested, thanks."

(We interrupt this column for a commercial announcement: if you have something to sell people in York Region, try advertising in this newspaper instead of phoning people during supper. We now return to our regularly scheduled column.)

Americans decided in 2003 that they were fed up with telemarketing calls, so they created a national do-not-call registry.

Companies that phone people on the list



Bruce Annan

can be fined \$11,000. So far, 92-million residential phone numbers are on the list. Seeing the popularity of the United States registry, our government swung into action, too.

First, the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission studied the matter, hired a bunch more bureaucrats to write some recommendations, went on a few fact-finding trips and then decided it didn't have jurisdiction.

So, it lobbed it over to the government, where it landed with the (take a deep breath) standing committee on industry, natural resources, science and technology.

After saying their name a few times, the members of the SCINRST went for a long nap, then told the bureaucrats to draft some legislation. Which they did.

Then each of the opposition parties with

members on the committee — the Bloc, NDP and Conservatives — introduced amendments.

The bill creating a Canadian do-not-call registry for telemarketers received first reading in the House of Commons.

Before it goes to the Senate, it needs second and third readings, perhaps in the fall. It may only be another year before you can add your name to the list.

If and when that happy day arrives, the only telemarketers who can still call and bug you will be:

- The 80,000 registered charities in this country (if they each called you once every 10 years, that would be only 22 calls per day);
- Businesses that have a "pre-existing relationship" with you (i.e. anywhere you ever spend any money);
- Anyone having anything to do with politics;
- Anyone doing "a survey".

Is this starting to sound familiar? Remind you of any other "national registry" that doesn't work but costs lots of money?

Do telemarketers make you want to reach for a gun?

Canada's right to privacy laws are so strong that the government won't tell police the identities of dozens of war criminals it has allowed into the country.

But as a citizen, you still won't have much

right to privacy from telemarketers.

An Internet chain letter I received recommended the following: as soon as you realize it's a telemarketing call, say, "Hold on, please" and put down the phone. Hang it up again when it starts beeping and take satisfaction in knowing you've reduced the boiler room efficiency rate.

I tried it.

They phoned back the next day.

I don't quite have the nerve to use the Jerry Seinfeld technique: "This sounds interesting. Could I phone your boss at home later and talk about it? Oh, he doesn't like getting calls at home? Me neither."

If you think the much delayed, much amended do not call registry is shaping up to be yet another federal farce, call your MP's constituency office.

Maybe they'll give you his or her home phone number.

Congratulations on surviving until Tax Freedom Day, June 26 in Canada. Up until then, everything you earned this year has gone to the government.

Now you finally start working for yourself.

Enjoy the summer — taking a two-month break like Ottawa?

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LETTERS POLICY

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

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Stouffville
Sun-Tribune

A York Region Newspaper Group community newspaper
The Sun-Tribune, published every Thursday and Saturday, is a member of the Metroland Printing, Publishing and Distributing Ltd., a wholly-owned subsidiary of Forstar Corporation. Metroland is comprised of 70 community publications across Ontario. The York Region Newspaper Group includes The Liberal, serving Richmond Hill and Thornhill, Vaughan Citizen, The Economist & Sun (Markham), The Era-Banner (Newmarket/Aurora), Stouffville Sun-Tribune, Georgina Advocate, York Region Business Times, North of the City, yorkregion.com and York Region Printing.