

OPINION

Stouffville
Sun-Tribune

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Editorial

Plight of poet ends with whimper

Well, the saga you read about here this past week has come to an abrupt conclusion.

We have no specific details why David Prashker, director of private Reform Jewish Day School Leo Baeck, quit his post amidst rumblings from some parents that his online poetry renders him no longer fit to oversee their children by day.

Mr. Prashker won't talk to us, the school won't comment and parents have been told to move forward and keep quiet about all this.

What we do know is that parents were alerted to Mr. Prashker's poetic ramblings by an anonymous e-mail.

Someone with access to the school's database sent out a warning of sorts to all parents, directing them to the educator's website with his "disturbing" poems and asking them if they are comfortable entrusting the care of their children to him.

Six of Mr. Prashker's poems were attached to the e-mail. They contain sexual imagery, violence and obscene language.

It seems the published novelist and poet's transgression was not so much in writing about the unorthodox themes in a coarse and vulgar way, but rather that he broadcast them to the world on the Internet.

Sure, Mr. Prashker has a right to express himself artistically, but at the same time, he is accountable to the parents he serves.

Many people in the broader community have weighed in on the plight of the poet.

Some say he showed incredibly bad judgment to post online poems of sexual fantasies given his position of trust.

Others say he has done nothing wrong, committed no crime and that his poetry reveals a moral centre, not a dirty mind.

But whatever you do in private is your own business. When you do it on the Internet, it becomes everybody's business.

We're quite certain Mr. Prashker wouldn't have run around the two campuses under his leadership handing out copies of his latest works poeticizing the killing of another human being, for example.

If there's a lesson to be learned here, it is that you need to be aware that everything you do or say online can and will be indexed by Google on the World Wide Web.

Govern yourselves accordingly.

YOU WERE THE ONE WHO PROMISED THE GRANDKIDS LAST YEAR, WE'D HAVE AN EASTER EGG HUNT ON THE FRONT LAWN THIS YEAR!

PHIL WHEELER
&
SUN-TRIBUNE



Off The Top

with Jim Mason
**Hurry hard:
Curlers welcome
in our house**

My Canada includes curling. Admittedly, I haven't been on the greatest terms with the game played on frozen sheets.

Maybe it was being force fed the sport at an early age in a Northern Ontario city where it seemed there was a rink on every second corner.

Brier champ Al Hackner lived on my old paper route in Thunder Bay. World champ Heather Houston's home was just draw weight from my parents' place.

In front of the hockey arena that churned out the Staal brothers amongst NHL stars is not a large puck or a replica of the Stanley Cup but an oversized curling stone Paul Bunyan may be able to chuck.

Now, the game is following me, with some rock-chucking Stouffvillites hopeful a rink can be built here.

We wish them a speedy delivery. Curling wasn't invented here, but it truly is the quintessential Canadian game. Clubs dot the national map, providing Canucks a place for recreation and socialization on those frigid mid-winter days and nights.

Throw a few ends with friends in matching sweaters and then enjoy a couple of beverages and some chow.

The national championships are so democratic they include every province.

Curlers shake hands at the end of every game, even when conceding before the end of regulation play. Too bad the NHL wouldn't adopt that rule and take us out of our misery after two periods of trapping, defensive hockey.

It's a tad surprising but kind of cool that celebs like Bruce Springsteen, Jon Bon Jovi and Toby Keith are into curling.

But it's really the sport of the average Joe and Joanne.

Curlers can cuss with the best of them, as anyone who watched the Brier on the weekend found out.

Curlers raise thousands of charitable dollars across the land.

Curlers are human. They're welcome here any time.

Jim Mason is editor of The Sun-Tribune.

Letters to the Editor

Working at Stouffville doughnut shop much more than just job

Whoever said a job could only ever be a job never arranged their cards to see the royal flush that was hiding and waiting to be discovered.

He never saw that beneath the rules and guidelines, there was something more, something special, something that would take hold of his heart and change who he was for the rest of his life.

On June 11, 2007, I joined the team at Tim Hortons in Stouffville.

I had no idea how remarkably my life would change over the course of the next nine months and 10 days.

I had no idea the friendships I would form, the mistakes I'd make, the tears I'd cry, the laughs I'd share, the customers I'd serve, the fears I'd face and accomplishments I would achieve would affect my life in such a profound manner.

When I went out looking for a job that was all I expected Tim Hortons to be. I expected to show up, make coffee, serve doughnuts, get paid and go home.

What I did not expect was to find another family and another home within the four walls of the store.

I did not expect to meet such a diverse group of people who would stand with arms open and welcome me.

I did not expect to gain self-confidence, self-respect and courage.

I did not expect to walk into my job as an afraid little girl, and then walk out as a strong and brave adult.

But I did.

Through difficult tasks that management pushed me through, I developed a confidence in myself. I developed courage that allowed me to believe in myself enough to dive into tasks head on and face my fears.

The management team never lost faith in me. They held their belief I was going to accomplish everything they set out for me.

When I began to let go of all the things that were holding me back, I realized I was never alone and that they were navigating me somewhere and that I would end there when I trusted them.

Although I am sad to leave, I know that it is not goodbye and that the friendships I have made during my time at Tim Hortons will last a lifetime.

And once all the nostalgia is gone, I am left with a smile because I finally understand who I am.

KIMIKO CARTER
STOUFFVILLE

Old elevator fit for rats, parties

Re: Fight on to preserve Stouffville grain elevator, Feb. 7

My thoughts on the grain elevator?

I have no warm sentiments. I think it is dangerous to passengers waiting to board GO trains as sheet metal can fly off the structure because it is so old and could cause serious injury.

Secondly, rats live there. I found a dead one on the GO platform one day.

Thirdly, teenagers party there, which is not healthy or good for our society.

CAROLYN MANCEY
STOUFFVILLE

LETTERS POLICY

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

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