

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.

Letters to the Editor,
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OPINION

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Stand up for your money

Re: Well building extravagant, letter to the editor by Randy Franks, May 17.

All I have to say about the waste of money on the well station is it doesn't surprise me.

It doesn't surprise me only two architectural concepts were presented.

It doesn't surprise me development charges aren't considered regular tax dollars by our mayor. It should. But it doesn't.

So I'm asking all who had a say in spending \$2.6 million on a well house to think of this...

Think of the kids in your town whose parents, due to hardship, can't afford to properly feed and clothe them.

Think of the person with a mental health problem who can't work or can only work part time.

Think of the kid who wants to play hockey but can't because his single mother cannot afford it.

Think of the senior citizen who is about to lose the home

for which he has worked his entire life, who has paid taxes to your town longer than you have.

Think of the neighbour who is disabled and can barely afford to live on the assistance he receives.

Maybe some of that money could have gone toward helping those more than 8,000 people waiting for housing in the region. What a shame.

I'm sure a \$2.6-million well house will help our emergency services workers carry out their duties so we can sleep soundly at night. Uh huh...

At least it was just development charges and not tax dollars, right?

Hitching posts? Are we in the wild West? Come on, people, haven't we learned we can't trust politicians? It is time to stand up for where our money goes.

Transparency and accountability. Those two words would make any politician run and hide.

NICK HOCHER
WHITCHURCH-STOUFFVILLE



Ontario taking steps to make adoptions work

S ometime when I was still in grade school, my parents sat down me, my two brothers and two sisters for one of those family chats

we had every once in a while that usually involved something momentous.

Like we were buying a camper trailer and trekking cross-country to South Dakota to see Mount Rushmore.

Or someone important to our family had died and our parents were breaking it to us, gently, all together.

Or my grandmother from Timmins was moving in — taking my bedroom — and we were having the basement finished and I'd sleep down there.

Or we were getting a new car. Or the cat had died. Or you name it.

Usually it was pretty big stuff, or so it seemed, subjects that merited a tribal powwow with all present.

One of those big conferences involved my parents' announcement of their attempt — it was more like a mission — to adopt two brothers who had been featured in our church bulletin as being in need of a home.

Everyone seemed excited.

I personally was excited because it said they liked sports and I liked sports and was always looking for someone to play catch with or road hockey and the two brothers I had just weren't that



Bernie O'Neill

into either.

Our house was big and, even with all the kids, it always seemed to be clean and in order with lots of food in the fridge and lots of activity.

For my father, who himself was one of seven children, I think he thought he easily had the means to support more children and it seemed a shame these brothers didn't have a permanent home. Somebody needed to step up.

I don't know how to put it other than that my parents both felt they had a lot more to give to the world.

People who were involved with the adoption visited our home, talked to my parents, took references, asked to see their bank statements and so on.

My father didn't seem to enjoy the grilling, follow-up phone calls, visit to his office, or questions about his personal life, how much beer he drank, who his friends were, what he read or watched on TV.

I think my parents were almost offended they had offered to adopt without reservation and were being put through a grilling worthy of a CSI episode (or in those days it might have been Starsky and Hutch). But they just smiled and hoped for the best.

I don't really know what the reason was in the end, other than the obvious, that they already had five kids and on some days that seemed like three or four too many.

Even if you did own a "big" house, you can never have enough bathrooms. (Never mind the Queen's Diamond Jubilee — if you've ever waited for your turn with all those brothers and sisters, the words "60 years on the throne" take on a whole new meaning).

My parents were hurt, but respected the negative decision of the powers-that-be, assuming things would get better for the boys — that something was being done to improve their situation.

It was several years later my parents brought home a similar bulletin, featuring the same two boys, still living in foster care and seeking a permanent,

adoptive family. The boys looked decidedly older now, in their early teens.

We all just shook our heads and wondered what could have been.

Ontario announced this week it will provide more financial help to families that adopt children who are age 10 or older. As it stands, very few children in this age category are adopted.

What astonished me about the report was that there are thousands of children out there who are candidates for adoption in Ontario, meanwhile people travel to China or Eastern Europe to adopt.

I am sure people are working in earnest to find homes for these kids and always do what's best for them.

But clearly something is wrong with this picture, whether it is restrictions on adopting a child who is not of your own cultural background — something I've never understood or agreed with, we are a multicultural society after all, we can have multicultural families, too. Or it is financial challenges, or red tape or simply lack of awareness. I'm sure we can do better.

Anything we can do to give these children a family, stability and a loving home is a step in the right direction.

Stouffville resident Bernie O'Neill is a York Region Media Group editor.