

OPINION

PUBLISHER Dana Robbins
GENERAL MANAGER Shaun Sauve
REGIONAL EDITOR-IN-CHIEF,
METROLAND CENTRAL
Joanne Burghardt

Stouffville
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905-640-2612
Fax: 905-640-8778
Classified: 1-800-263-6480
DISTRIBUTION
1-855-853-5613

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EDITOR IN CHIEF,
YORK REGION
Lee Ann Waterman

Managing Editor
Jim Mason
jmason@yrmg.com

Advertising Manager
Mara Sepe
msepe@yrmg.com

Circulation
Manager
Sabrina Brown
sbrown@metroland.com

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E-mail jmason@yrmg.com



COLUMNS

Mean streets: Top 5 parking rules you can break, drivers

Got a lovely piece of yellow paper flapping in the summer breeze under your windshield

wiper, Whitchurch-Stouffville?

Hearty congratulations.

You've broken a parking regulation.

Allegedly.

Officially, you've violated Bylaw 2008-114-PR – just in case you don't have the town bible of all rules and restrictions at the ready and your lawyer is on the other line.

Even town spokesperson and Stouffville native Glenn Jackson is not exempt from being papered with a canary yellow "reminder notice". He posted receipt of his gift on Facebook – with a smiley face – last Thursday.

"Well, well, well. I guess I'm not immune. Gee, thanks bylaw :)," he wrote

Jackson posted his reminder notice with the complete list of infractions.

We've boiled it down to our own Top 5:

1/ "Parking longer than three hours" in one spot. (A \$35 fine, if you didn't get off with a warning.)

Sadly, some downtown merchants and GO train passengers don't follow this rule.

Vehicles were papered last week on Main Street in the downtown core following complaints from shop owners.

And many residents don't realize this also applies in residential areas, too. 24/7, 12 months a year.

2/ "Obstructing a sidewalk" (\$35)

You obviously can't park on the street and your garage is full of, well, important stuff. So one of your family's two or three vehicles dangles across the sidewalk or blocks it completely. Pedestrians, cyclists (who should be on the road) and baby strollers detour to the boulevard or the street.

3/ "In a disabled parking space without a permit." (\$300)

No excuses here. You should



Off The Top
with Jim Mason

be ticketed, towed, possibly jailed and definitely inducted into some bad girl/boy hall of shame.

4/ "So as to interfere with the removal of snow" (\$50)

This one "is not applicable today BTW," Jackson wrote in post. Thanks, Glenn.

And you can't park on your street from Dec. 1 to March 31, between 2 and 6 a.m. Wait for it. You'll see the yellow tickets on the snowy windshields when you wake up.

5/ "Within three metres of a fire hydrant." (\$50)

For those of you who only carry an old-school, imperial system tape measure in your glove box that's 9.84252 feet.

And if you've ever rubber-necked at any kind of blaze, you know how much space fire trucks need to get the job done. Give them room.

Fires do happen, as several Stouffville neighbourhoods can attest to in recent years.

My favourite rule breakers? Easily those wacky garage sale motorists. They'll leave their minivan running, doors open, three feet from the curb in front of a hydrant or driveway should they spot a must-have deal of the decade on Blue Mountain Pottery or Victoria's Secret lingerie in a yard on the block.

Rules be damned.
Happy parking.

Jim Mason is editor of The Sun-Tribune. Follow him on Twitter @stouffeditor

A wedding for the ages

Weddings of significance are not uncommon. You can think of some. We all can.

Like: John F. Kennedy and Jacqueline Bouvier, (1953); Mel Ferrer and Audrey Hepburn, (1954); Prince Rainier and Grace Kelly, (1956); Richard Burton and Elizabeth Taylor, (1964); Prince Charles and Lady Diana, (1981); Brad Pitt and Jennifer Aniston, (2000); Prince William and Kate Middleton, (2006). Occasions that will long be remembered.

However, no ceremony locally will be memorised with greater gladness and exultant happiness than the celebration Aug. 6 at Stouffville's 19 on the Park – the union of Mayor Justin Karl Altmann and Jenny Elizabeth Hillier.

If ever a marriage was made in heaven and validated here on earth, this was it. More than 2,000 people attended, filling the town square to capacity and spilling the overflow onto nearby bleachers. Never in recalled community history has an event of this nature been so enthusiastically received or so perfectly organized. Cheers and applause echoed onto Main Street.

The bride, beautiful in a fitted off-white sequined gown, was accompanied by attractive attendants in fitted street-length pink/lilac dresses. The groom was handsome in a navy-blue suit with matching grey bow-tie and vest. He was supported by brothers Aaron and Sean.

Prior to the ceremony, invited guests were transported from the town office to the wedding site in stretch limousines. The bride, accompanied by her father arrived by horse and carriage much to the delight of awe-struck downtown spec-



Roaming Around
with Jim Thomas

tators. Cameras were everywhere including coverage by two Toronto TV stations. Perfect weather added to the enjoyment of well-wishers.

There were flowers throughout the square including the entrance; along the carpeted centre aisle and across the gallery. All ladies in the audience received florets and heart-shaped fans.

Town crier Marcel Bossi and flag-bearers representing Branch 459 of the Royal Canadian Legion opened the ceremony. Town councillor Rob Hargrave served as master of ceremonies.

Hargrave praised the mayor for his much-appreciated desire to assist fellow residents within the community including neighbours. Then he chided: "Today, have your fun, then it's time to get back to work." Later, Debi Patterson, executive assistant to the mayor and ceremony supervisor, requested a recall of the official kissing custom saying: "Wait a minute, I think you can do better than that," much to the delight of onlookers. They complied.

But the most audible response occurred with the introduction of Sun-Tribune Citizens of the Year, Joanne George with her born-blind yellow Lab 'Smiley' wearing the mayor's chain of office. Together, they presided over

the cutting of a ceremonial red ribbon.

Rev. Peter Pallant delivered an inspiring address citing "true love" as central to a successful marriage. "It's love that brings us all together," he said.

Responses by sisters of the bride and brothers of the groom prompted both tears and laughter. "Mom was the glue that held our family together," said Aaron.

"Our world was turned upside down," said Sean, referring to July 28, nine days prior to the wedding when their mother, Tanis Altmann passed away.

Jenny spoke of her husband in glowing terms describing him as a, kind-hearted and gracious man with strong moral integrity. "I know we'll be even stronger together," she said.

"We're embarking on a journey that will last not a minute short of the rest of our lives," she concluded.

As a strong gust of wind blew away the bride's head-dress, the groom remarked: "I know Mom's here in spirit and is now wearing Jenny's veil."

Seven white doves of peace were released into a bright blue sky.

But the positive influence of the marriage will live on, in Whitchurch-Stouffville and across York Region.

A mobile washroom trailer, recommended by Markham Fair past-president Diane Ward and supported by town volunteer Wilf Morley and special education teacher David Bunn, has been embraced by Justin and Jenny as a much-anticipated project. The announcement was convincingly applauded by the crowd and already financially championed by the community.

Jim Thomas is a Stouffville resident who has written for area newspapers for more than 65 years.