

Talk Of The Town

Is There an 'Old Boys Club' Acting Against Altmann?

By Ben Embiricos
Stouffville Free Press

Even where political candidates manage to keep a campaign civilized for the most part, some supporters can get carried away. In the run up to the fall election there was trash talking by a few supporters, most of it unfounded rumour or one sided mischaracterizations.

But with the election having long disappeared into the rear view mirror it may seem surprising that Mayor Justin Altmann has complained that there is an old boys' club which, out of a case of 'sour grapes', is trying to get in the way of his doing his job. Can this be right?

On July 20th, following an application by local residents Ian Hilton and Tom Winters, the mayor faced a hearing to determine whether his electoral finances should be audited based on alleged inaccuracies. The application was dismissed unanimously on the basis that it contained only "speculation". The unsuccessful applicants, it should be noted, were both male and well, not young, at least.

Mayor Altmann stated that the application was evidence of this old boy's club.

At the same time a few credible sources have suggested that one or two council members are perhaps reluctant to work with the mayor as co-operatively as they might. There is also much negativity in some of the coffee shop chatter.

Personally I don't think there is any

one 'old boys' club' acting in a Da Vinci Code-like conspiracy to discredit the mayor. But there are some remnants of two very disappointed groups of supporters and an overlapping bunch that can't get past the mayor's age.

The mayor celebrated his thirty third birthday at the end of July. At his age, if he were a professional athlete he would be a "veteran". But he is in municipal politics so instead he is a "kid". Such are the sometimes strange social norms we live by. I will confess here that Altmann's relatively tender age was a concern for me at the election last fall. The people spoke pretty clearly though and he beat out council veterans Phil Bannon and Stouffville's own Richard Bartley.

There is no doubt that people who are successful at a young age can be slightly irritating to many of us, myself included. But this is just envy isn't it? By becoming mayor, Altmann has achieved something big. What's more he has had success in politics - a field which is traditionally the preserve of the middle aged and older. I think that this may explain some of the mud slinging.

At the election Altmann's chief rivals both enjoyed a firm but somewhat distinct support base. Mr Bannon had served the longer time on council and whether you agreed with his policies or not, he was undoubtedly a hard worker. His supporters would have felt that this was his time. Mr Bartley's supporters may have believed perhaps that because he was the most "Stouffville" of the candidates, he deserved to win. Richard grew

up here and was widely believed to be former mayor Emmerson's chosen successor which would have added to this sense of "destiny".

When I met with the mayor shortly before the audit application hearing, he was perhaps understandably preoccupied. He told me he was "not against the process... just disappointed in the individuals" whom he said had not done their research before filing their complaint. The mayor told me "they could have asked, everything is there (in the records), nothing sneaky or defiant."

Any resident is of course entitled to file an audit application but the accompanying somewhat dramatic language alleging among other things the "fraudulent" use of a barn suggests that there may have been a slight loss of perspective here. "Fraud" is a strong word to throw about.

I will say the mayor has clearly been innovative, perhaps even "ballsy" in the way he has run both his businesses and his political campaigns. Having got to know him better though I think that some of that creativity may be a positive that he can bring to the mayoral office. Doing things differently though can also irritate people even when perhaps it shouldn't.

I don't know whether all of this completely explains any problems in working relationships on council, the strong words in the audit application and the coffee shop griping. But if it plays a part I hope we can get past it.

Altmann won. Respect the voters' decision and move on.




What Happens in Vegas ...



Debbie Collins (left) and Nadine Lafay (right) share Stouffville's recent happenings with their new friend Carrie, a hostess at the Paris Resort casino in Las Vegas, during a recent visit.

ANNOUNCEMENT:
TONY NARDELLI
OF EDEN SALON & SPA - IS NOW WORKING AT
MASTER HAIR SALON & SPA
AT SUCCESS... IN STOUFFVILLE'S EAST END.



31 YEARS OF EXPERIENCE IN STOUFFVILLE

I LOOK FORWARD TO TAKING CARE OF YOUR HAIR NEEDS!
- Tony Nardelli

MASTER HAIR SALON & SPA
6601 MAIN STREET STOUFFVILLE • 905-640-3089
CALL OR TEXT TONY AT 289-231-4986

OUR EMAIL ADDRESS HAS CHANGED

The Stouffville Free Press email address has been changed.

Please note that as of July 15 all emails sent to the

Free Press should be sent to this address:

stouffvillefreepress@bell.net



Whitchurch-Stouffville's Online Directory and Tourism Guide





Reesor's

It's Sweet Corn Season!

Bring in this coupon & receive
3 Free Cobs of Delicious Sweet Corn*

Offer good only at:

Reesor's Market & Bakery

5758 Main St., Stouffville • 905-640-2270

Mon.-Fri. 9-7, Sat. 9-6

*Offer good until Aug. 31, 2015

GROWING
& MAKING
GOOD FOOD

reesors.ca



for all your eye care needs

Stouffville optometry

DID YOU KNOW...

Every year we give back a portion of our revenue to support local arts and athletic organizations and charities promoting human health and the environment.

new patients welcome
evening appointments
contact lenses
fashion eyewear
lab on premises
state of the art technology



Accepting new
and transferring
patients

6085 Main Street
905.642.3937

Dr C. Genin ~ Dr M. McDowell ~ Dr M. de Jesus