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# Accepting the new norm

## Comment

by Michelle Minnoch

There are two words on most peoples lips of late, and no, I am not speaking about Stanley Cup, beer garden, or Grey's Anatomy (it was the best I could come up with at 7am).

Of course, I am speaking about Climate Change, or Global Warming, whatever term tickles your fancy.

For one hour in Winnipeg, the CBC documented the number of cars that went through a Tim Hortons drive-thru between seven and eight in the morning; prime coffee drive-thru time. With over 100 cars going through to get their morning java in just one hour, some startling information was revealed.

Over 77 Lbs. of emissions were released in the air. Just at this one drive thru. For one hour.

There is an old tale that it is better for your car and the environment if you sit and wait in an idling vehicle at a drive-thru - better then if you turned off and restarted your engine.

According to this clip, if you have to spend more than 10 to 15 seconds in a drive thru, it is better for your engine and the environment if you simply park, shut off your vehicle, get off your butt, and go inside to get your coffee (or whatever you are stopping for).

The birthplace of Tim Hortons, Hamilton, Ontario has considered this information and their

council may be making some important decisions about new businesses opening up in the area.

The idea at hand? No more drive-thrus. If a new fast food chain, coffee shop, bank, etc. opens up in the area, and it is passed into law, there will be no more new stores that offer convenience in this world-a-flutter, that makes things fast and easy for us. Our world is now taylor-made convenient for the average customer.

We have all heard that little steps will make a big difference; changing all your household lightbulbs will help tremendously not only for the environment but for your pocketbook in the long run - you should start now anyways, as the older ones will be phased out in a few years.

Although little things, individual actions, do help, moves like the possible one facing Hamilton is a little more dramatic. Life changing? Maybe. The way of the future? Not

sure.

We all have to make adjustments, that is for sure. Whether we will accept these changes without a fight is another thing.

Just think - if you had a choice to park your car and run in for a coffee, or could idle in a drive-thru for five or more minutes, what would you do? We have all done the latter, and quite frankly, I think we are used to it and accept it.

The question is, will we eventually have to accept the fact that turning off our vehicles and getting off our butts for a beverage or food should be the normal? We probably should.

Everyone keeps talking about the changes that have to be made. The sooner we start, the better off the environment will be.

Hey, we need a planet. A functioning, safe, non toxic planet to live on. As the saying goes, change for the better!

Who knows, if we make and accept these changes now, it will be a great story to tell future generations. As we are sitting in coffee shops and restaurants. Not spouting emissions. Enjoying a double double. Remembering the good old days when you sat in your car for five to ten minutes for a drink or bite to eat.

Sad, isn't it?

## Writing competition seeking more arena seats

Dear editor,

I recently had the pleasure of offering a writing competition for the children of Innisfil, giving them a chance to win their name on an Arena Seat in Innisfil's new Recreation Complex. I personally sponsored 7 seats to give to these children and asked four other people from the community to help me judge the stories because I knew that it would be a challenge to select only 7 winners from the entries. However, I never expected the outpouring of emotion, pride and respect from all the children who entered. Their parents, siblings & families should be very proud of these children. I know that the four judges from the community I asked to help me select the winners agonized with me how to select 7 children only.

Some of these letters made us

cry, others smile and others made you feel excited to see the anticipation of the opening of recreation complex through the eyes of a child. What was surprising is that 75% of these children did not want the seat for themselves they wanted it to honour someone else. The response was so good, and there are so many well deserving children who wrote in.

We need more sponsors to fulfill their requests to have an opportunity to name a seat for someone they love. I am putting out a community plea for more residents and/or businesses to help me grant the wishes of these children by sponsoring a seat for each of them.

I need businesses who are interested in fostering community pride in the children of today or 62 more residents to come forward to donate just \$300 each to sponsor a

seat for a child from our community ~ their stories will touch your life for years to come. You will get an income tax donation for your pledge, but the children will receive the hope they need to believe in themselves & to go after their dreams.

I know there are many readers out there who are able to help – maybe you haven't thought of sponsoring a seat because you weren't interested in personal recognition, but please reach out to sponsor one now to fulfill the wish of a child.

We never know how one little act of kindness can have a ripple affect on others. Winston Churchill said, "We make a living by what we do, but we make a life by what we give". Call the Rec Centre Campaign Office at 436-6145 and ask to sponsor a seat for one of

Donna's kids.

Many thanks to Bill Hubbard from the Legion, Susan Baues of the Cookstown Library, Michelle Minnoch & the Innisfil Scope and Kate MacDonald for agreeing to sign on for the difficult task of judging the entries. Special thanks to the local schools for their assistance and St. Francis of Assisi Grade 8 Class.

Mostly I want to Thank ALL the children who entered – never give up on your dreams. I am so proud of each & every one of you!

Donna Orsatti

The winners of this Writing Campaign will be notified shortly and their letters posted in the Innisfil Scope.

A copy of all the entries will be compiled into a keepsake book & on display in the Innisfil Recreation Complex.

## Peter Van Loan: tour guide extraordinaire

Dear editor,

Re: Family Visit to Ottawa

My wife and I have had a wonderful experience in visiting our nation's capital a few weeks ago.

We truly enjoyed the great museums in Ottawa. They demonstrate the richness in our heritage as Canadians, whether it is the diversity of our native people's, the sacrifices in the past century's wars and present conflicts in Afghanistan or the significant contributions Canadians have made in the fields of aviation, medicine or science. The city was clean and a few tulips were out. The tulips also stand as witnesses to our country's role in this world. Every year Holland sends thousands of bulbs to

Ottawa in recognition for the sacrifice of our military personnel in that country's liberation at the end of WWII.

However, the highlight of this trip was to visit Parliament during Question Period, and the personal tour given by the Honourable Peter Van Loan, our local MP. We telephoned his office in Ottawa a few days before and his secretary arranged for passes to Question Period. She also met us at the reception area and guided us through the security checks.

We were so impressed with the kindness shown to us. Mr. Van Loan personally gave us a tour, spending a good hour out of his busy schedule. He took us into his office after Question Period for a warm and friendly

discussion. Following this we toured the Lobby room adjacent to the House of Commons and the parliamentary library.

Next, Mr. Van Loan brought us to the Senate room. The Senators had just finished their "Question Period". Two senators came over to meet us. They then took my wife and I onto the floor of the Senate for some pictures. We have a picture of my wife sitting in the Speaker of the House's chair with the Deputy Leader of the Senate standing beside us.

What a great experience and what a great country. The whole time in the parliament that day was exceptional and a life experience.

Out of all this, we more fully appreciate that our

system of government is truly for the people as we were treated with openness, friendliness and importance.

It is recommended to anyone visiting Ottawa to contact your local MP for tickets to Question Period. If

you are as fortunate as we were you may also have some time with your MP.

In closing, we extend thanks again to Peter Van Loan and his secretary Darlene.

John and Darlene Irwin

### Munros paying for \$30 ticket

Dear Mr. Burley,

We read with interest your letter to the Innisfil Scope regarding the parking ticket received by your friends from Toronto and are enclosing a cheque in the amount of \$30.00 which we hope you will pass on to them to compensate for the inconvenience of being ticketed while attending our annual Tent Sale.

We thought about deducting it from the \$1000.00 we raised at our barbeque for the Innisfil Recreation Centre but then that would be too petty. They still get their \$1000.00.

Next year, we will create a roadway into the field behind the tents for additional parking in order to keep the by-law officers away. See you then and we look forward to your friends return.

Sincerely, The Munros