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The kids are alright, generally

Comment

by Chris Simon

What happened to Helen Leaver should never have taken place.

Last week, The Scope ran a letter from Leaver, an Alcona resident, regarding her trip from Toronto. The 84-year-old Leaver got off a GO Transit bus at the Innisfil Beach Road and Yonge Street intersection in the middle of a blizzard Nov. 26. She doesn't drive, and was forced to call for a taxi to get home. After calling for the taxi from an outdoor pay phone, Leaver went inside a nearby gasoline station and asked permission to wait in the warmth until the taxi arrived. She was refused, and told to wait outside.

Leaver waited outdoors for 20 minutes, until the taxi arrived.

The Scope has since received several written and oral responses to Leaver's letter, and residents are clearly outraged. But sadly, most of the outrage is directed not towards the isolated act of one individual, but to the degradation and slipping of morals among today's youth. It's a common argument made by older generations, who have a fond but somewhat skewed view of history.

Sure there are inconsiderate young people today, but every generation has had its trouble, ranging from social upheaval and racial segregation to popular wars and genocide. Humans have a terrible way of being cruel to each other, and Leaver's case was just another in a long history of incidents. It's an isolated occurrence, but one that keep being repeated by people of every age.

Personally, this 25-year-old journalist has

found difficulty being taken seriously by some colleagues and sources since entering the industry five years ago. I've been insulted and physically assaulted by older people while on the job. Often, I wonder whether I'd be treated differently if there was some grey in my beard.

And away from journalism, I see people being rude to others every single day.

But for every case of rudeness and injustice, there are several more of kindness, caring and compassion. As a reporter, you also see these things regularly.

Over the last few months, The Scope has run features on several people from the younger generation who are doing good things for society. Innisdale Secondary School student Jeff Howard has been volunteering for environmental organizations for several years, and has made a serious commitment towards the clean-up of Lake Simcoe. He has spent more time volunteering over the last few years than what many adults have in a lifetime.

Nantyr Shores Secondary School student Laura Batten and several of her peers opened up their homes recently, to host Japanese teenagers for one week. They learned about the Japanese culture, and became dear and trusted friends with students who were far from their homes.

While working as an education reporter for another newspaper, this editor has witnessed other students earning notable achievements. Last spring, over 75 secondary school students from across the region were recognized for their outstanding scholastic and extra curricular achievements, during the Simcoe County District School Board's annual excellence awards.

Several Barrie North Collegiate students have been annually recognized for their achievements at Skills Canada competitions, while Elmvale District High School students have been dignified and fair in their consistent attempts to receive a new secondary school building. Those Elmvale students have never once become upset or disorderly while patiently waiting to address school board officials. They've all realized they won't be the ones to benefit from a new school, but are working instead for the next generation of colleagues. Sometimes, adults needs to show the same restraint when faced with adversity.

Others don't always attract the high profile spotlight, but remain gentle and caring regardless. Whether it be the simple shake of a hand after a hard fought sports match, or distribution of candy during one of the many Santa Claus parades that take place throughout the region, most kids and teenagers are considerate and friendly.

Respect for a fellow human being should be at the core of any person's understanding of the world, regardless of age. But until we all hold that ideal dear, Leaver's case will likely be repeated.

Town needs to rethink development charge policy

Letters From Our Readers

I could not believe what I was reading in Chris Simon's comment (Dec. 5). I have practised real estate law in Innisfil for close to 34 years and can quite easily say that Simon has missed the point when he says "It's unlikely that many homebuyers are going to back out of a purchase simply because development charges

increase by about \$20,000."

Take it from someone who has been there that any increase in price, that has not been budgeted for, causes severe problems to those who have scraped and saved to get their deposit together only to find that they then have to face legal fees, disbursements and the Provincial Land Transfer Tax. In many cases, deals collapse because of \$1,000, let alone \$20,000.

The problem arises in the new home construction

industry. A buyer enters into the agreement of purchase and sale long before the house is even started and sometimes waits years for the house to be built, a fact which is not always the fault of the builder. Contained in the fine print of the agreement is a clause which provides that any increase in development charges may be passed on to the unsuspecting buyer. This unsuspecting buyer has already arranged a mortgage and budgeted for the

downpayment and (hopefully) the closing costs and has no room for an additional \$20,000. The mortgage lender will not likely come up with any more money, the builder, naturally, passes it on, and so who pays? The buyer, if that is possible.

I think that it is safe to say that close to 100 per cent of those buyers will have to walk away from their deals possibly losing their deposits and facing a legal bill for the work already completed by

their lawyer.

Hopefully, our town council will provide some relief to this new home buyer and not destroy their dreams, even if there has to be an increase in the development charges. This could, for example, come in the form of grandfathering all existing agreements of purchase so that the builder does not have to pay any increase for those houses already sold.

George Gibson,
Innisfil

Everyone is affected by growth

Letters From Our Readers

The new home/construction industry is often seen as negative to towns and residents; that unfortunately don't want growth to come to "their" town.

The very fact that growth is inevitable and people need homes to live in seems to be irrelevant. It also seems to be irrelevant that the people that live in their town often work in the construction or related industry.

The actual construction of new homes is very complex and is an expensive endeavor.

The act of buying a home is probably one of the most expensive investments individuals, couples and families will ever make in their life. The process of buying a home is complicated and often overwhelming for first time buyers and the differences between builders, products and locations is just as difficult.

The "doom and gloom" of it all - the cost of building a new home in Innisfil is increasing.

The developers are not arguing that they have to pay more for development. Yes, that's right! The developers are not disputing an increase. It's about the details.

Would you think it's right to charge more to someone after they have agreed on a price?

How about increasing the price by over \$20,000?

Thinking that customers can afford this is absurd.

Did anyone research what this would do to a young family on a tight budget?

Builders and developers can't take such a large

increase of cost without preparing for it.

So is it fair that a young family who bought a home thinking they would love to live in Innisfil, who think Innisfil would be a great place to call home - should have to find out a year after they have purchased that they have to pay a substantial amount more?

They would be furious that there was no discussion how to implement a large increase like this and possibly grandfather in the increase.

Everyone is effected by such a bylaw.

Towns do often increase

development fees, but they often research and discuss them with builders before implementation.

Many people have views from different standpoints, some might be affected in a small way and others large, but make no mistake, everyone is affected by a hasty implementation.

The target of a new development fee that might be needed is going to fall on the shoulders of builders, trades, developers, sales staff, marketing, media and customers (your future neighbours).

Douglas Trumble,
Pratt Hansen Group