

Caledon Citizen

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Editorial

Thumbs up to those who pick up the litter, Thumbs down to the slobs who drop the litter

We can't help being impressed by both those who organize community clean-ups and those who actually devote a couple of free hours to actually donning gloves and vests, and bend their backs to pick up the trash from the sides of roads, parks, parking lots and any place else where this garbage accumulates.

So yes, on behalf of the community, we offer our thanks to the people who are trying to get the litter off the ground and into areas where it belongs.

And let us all think harsh thoughts about the slobs who are responsible for the mess in the first place.

We don't mean to come off sounding holier than thou on this. Few among us could honestly say we have never littered. True, for the most part, we try to avoid leaving our garbage lying out in the open where all can see it, but we all make mistakes. We all drop things from time to time. Or we might toss something toward a trash bin, and in our haste fail to notice that we missed. In our daily lives, filled with certain amounts of stress and preoccupation, we might just forget the basic rules and drop some garbage that we shouldn't.

But even granting the benefit of the doubt to some litterbugs, that can't completely explain all the garbage on the streets, in the parks, and at all the places where people hang around.

Maybe they just don't care, or they're too lazy to pick up after themselves, or they figure someone else will do the job for them.

And the problem seems to be getting worse.

Teams of volunteers were out picking up trash at a couple of locations in King Township Saturday. Workers commented the litter volume seemed to be a lot higher than in previous years.

Could the harsh winter we've just put behind us have something to do with that, or are we dealing with the fact there are more inconsiderate people out there making bigger messes than before?

It's heartening to know there are people out there willing to pitch in and pick up. But it is also, alas, a sad reality that we have to depend on these people, because those really responsible for the problem are doing basically little to solve it. They leave the mess for someone else.

Disgraceful!

In Caledon, there are a couple of events coming up for those interested in really being part of the solution.

The Downtown Bolton Business Improvement Area is organizing a clean-up this Sunday (April 27) from 10:30 a.m. until 12:30 p.m. People will be gathering at Prudential Select Real Estate at 23 Mill St.

The Humber River Shakespeare Co. is sponsoring a Community Park Clean-Up to help make the spaces in which they perform (and others play) green and beautiful, also Sunday, from 9 a.m. until noon at Dick's Dam Park on Glasgow Road in Bolton.

The Peel 4H Conservation Club, in partnership with the Town of Caledon, Caledon Chamber of Commerce and Tim Hortons, is holding a community clean-up day in Palgrave, from 9:30 a.m. until noon.

Tim Hortons, the Chamber and the Town are also getting together to host a corporate and business challenge May 9 and a community clean-up day May 10.

The reality is officially organized and sanctioned clean-up events aren't really needed. Just look around. Due to all the litter bugs, there's a lot to be picked up, and it's not hard to find.

And please accept our thanks in advance.



It's income tax time, again

We read a lot these days about stress, and I think we have all been enduring our fair share of that, if not more than our share.

For me, on top of the demands of work, I had Christmas to worry about, and then the effects of a harsh winter, and car problems, and troubles with my teeth, and a few other little things to drive me up a wall.

But I'm happy to report that I have put many of these issues behind me, allowing me to focus on other stressors.

It's income tax time! Have I ruined your day yet?

I have been fully aware that the deadline for getting the tax returns completed and off to the powers who run this land was creeping up, yet other things kept getting in my way. But I couldn't let anything, even the demands of work, keep me from the fun-filled experience of trying to figure through a T1 General.

I can certainly understand how the process would frustrate some people. I was discussing my concerns that I had not started working on my tax with a guy a couple of weeks ago, and he was taken aback that I do my taxes myself. I can see why some people would prefer to spend some money and get a professional to do the job for them. When one considers things like T3s, T4s, T5s, etc. that are involved with a T1 General, I think we can all excuse people for getting "T"ed off with the whole process (I should be ashamed of myself for that pun, but I'm not).

The process can have cer-



Bill Rea

tain unexpected benefits too. For example, it was the trouble I encountered last year trying to read the forms that convinced me I might need reading glasses (I have since acquired them).

Despite the stress involved, I've always enjoyed fooling around with and crunching numbers. Some people like to doodle when they are bored. I'm more inclined to do numeric exercises that would mean nothing to anyone else but me. Don't ask me why? That is the way it is.

So fussing my way through the intricacies of a tax form is not that great a torture. For me, the problem is finding the time to do that. "I had to work," gets me out of a lot of obligations elsewhere, like at home. But I don't think the Canada Revenue Agency would be too sympathetic.

For several years, I was fortunate enough to have my mother coach me when doing my taxes. She spent the last several years of her working life as a payroll clerk for a company of chartered accountants, so she knew her tax procedures.

She once got sore as hell with me when I wrote in a column that she could lecture the minister of finance (Paul Martin in those days) on tax law.

It was also my mother who introduced me to the idea of buying computer programs every year to help with the income tax. She used to stand over my shoulder (to my great annoyance) as I worked at the keyboard, frequently reaching across to correct mistakes that I may or may not have made. Our nerves would have been sufficiently worn that we weren't speaking to each other at the end of the exercise, but I usually came away with a job well-done under my arm.

Since my mother is no longer alive, I sort of have to fend for myself with the tax form, but if I do say so myself, I think I've gotten rather good at it.

And I still use the computer program, but I have learned the hard way not to rely on it exclusively.

I received another lesson along those lines last week.

I had to work just about every night, but realizing the magic deadline was fast approaching, I figured I had better start making headway. So I worked on my income tax until midnight over a couple of nights after I got home.

I started by entering the numbers on my various forms into the computer, and when that was done, I jumped to the bottom to get a sneak preview of the bad news. What I received was a

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