

## No automatic injustice being done

Prominent U.S. businessman and author Bernard Bailey once quipped that, "When they discover the center of the universe, a lot of people will be disappointed to discover they are not it." Brenda Martin may be one of them.

Martin, 51, you may recall, is the Canadian currently being held in jail in Mexico, having been arrested in February 2006 and charged with money laundering and participating in a criminal conspiracy connected to an investment scam which involved her former boss, Alyn Waage.

Waage, who employed Martin as his cook for 10 months but fired her in 2001, is serving 10 years in a U.S. prison for robbing investors of almost \$60 million. Martin claims she knew nothing of his illegal activities and Waage himself swore out an affidavit saying it is true; she was not part of it. But Mexican authorities, apparently, aren't convinced.

And here's where it starts to get tiresome.

For all this correspondent knows, Martin may be the reincarnation of Mother Teresa. What's more, if any one of us were languishing in a Mexican jail - or any jail for that matter - we wouldn't be happy either. But there comes a point - at least for me - where the constant carping and the serial whining about your plight changes from legitimate concerns to an annoying sense of absolute entitlement.

Let's look at the reality here. The main reason her case has dragged on for two years is because she has complicated it, turning it into a constitutional matter before the Mexican courts. That takes time there just as it would here. And while there is much screaming in Ottawa - where the Liberals, wouldn't you know, are trying to blame the Government for Martin's plight - the fact is that a two-year wait for a trial is not unusual in Canada either. Indeed, two years is considered rather swift in legal circles, particularly when it involves serious and/or complicated matters.

Yet we as Canadians, or at least many of us - along with most of the media - have recently adopted the position that if a Canadian is in jail outside the country there's automatically an injustice being done - to the Canadian. Apparently Canadians are all innocent as the driven snow and now foreign country really has a right to exercise their justice system against us. And, when they do, we tend to paint them as corrupt Third World despots.

There's something else going on her too. The partisan nature of Martin's own bleatings to the media.

When former Liberal prime minister Paul Martin dropped by to see her on a visit to Mexico, she waxed eloquently about how wonderful that was. But Martin, being out of politics, really doesn't have much power to help her case.

Yet when two Tory MPs - including a minister - visited her a while later, this after she'd been openly complaining that the Government was ignoring her plight, she dissed them, accusing them of being only interested in a "photo op." And Monday's Toronto Star had yet another tale of woe from Martin. It seems that Tory Helena Guergis, secretary of state for foreign affairs, was in Mexico on Jan. 29 and 30 and - dare we say it - didn't go to visit our unhappy prisoner. "She (Guergis) went to a cocktail party with some Canadians, sat and had horse di'oeuvres and drank Perrier water while I am in here languishing," Martin complained.

According to government officials, Guergis also raised Martin's case with Mexican authorities, a far wiser move than heading over to the prison and being accused of staging a photo op, don't you think?

Fact is, Prime Minister Stephen Harper agrees that progress in the case has been "unacceptably slow" - although, as we've said, not slow by Canadian standards - and adds that "Canadian officials at all levels - up to and including the cabinet - have intervened on this decision with their Mexican counterparts or Canadian officials have been in contact with Ms Martin."

Harper says there have been a total of more than 100 such contacts over the past two years between Canadian representatives, Ms. Martin and Mexican officials but that said, "we have to remember we are talking about another sovereign country and we are talking about a judicial process..."

Exactly. Consider what most Canadians would say if we had a Mexican national in jail charged with a serious crime and the president of Mexico demanded we release him with dispatch and without a trial.

It works both ways. And just as being Canadian doesn't automatically make somebody guilty, it doesn't make them automatically innocent either. That's why they have trials.

What a concept, eh?



**National Affairs**

**Claire Hoy**

## I've finished my taxes, sort of

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very nice surprise. The machine was trying to tell me I was due for a substantial refund, and I hadn't even started factoring in my deductions, like for RRSP (I always make that investment) and the car expenses I can claim because I do so much driving in my job.

As I worked on a hard copy of my return, using what the computer was telling me as a guide, I found it had a funny (and inaccurate) way of calculating income. I can operate a

pocket calculator with the best of them, and I knew my figures were correct. The computer was trying to overstate my income by a significant amount.

At first, it looked like initial good news was going to be even better, but life wouldn't be life without a couple of disappointments.

The start of the program asked me my marital status, where I dutifully entered "Married." Then it wanted to know my spouse's income, and since I didn't know it, I just left that part blank. Big mistake.

Since I put no income figure down for my wife, the computer program evidently assumed Beth has no job or income, and that I was supporting her (generally, the only support I offer her comes in the form of comedy relief), thus making me eligible for all sorts of nifty deductions; like on the order of a couple of thousand dollars worth of extra deductions.

When I discounted those deductions (with a heavy heart) the figure at the bottom line was much more realistic, and much less satis-

fying.

The job, however, is almost completed. As I write this (Saturday afternoon), I still have a few more calculations to make, then prepare a final copy of my return and put it in the mail. I know I could do it on-line, but I'm too old-fashioned for that.

But then, I'll have more work to do. Beth has asked me to enter her figures on the computer and see what I come up with.

Like I said before, I usually support her with comedy relief. Boy, is she in for a laugh!

## Our Readers Write

### Where will we get our aggregate?

I am writing in response to the Caledon Citizen editorial of April 17, "Natural water flows must be protected, but we need aggregate too."

The editorial took a very even-handed look at the issue and the final question it posed was an important one: "... aggregate is needed. And where is that aggregate to be obtained?" As a society we must decide from where we will get aggregate, and we must also decide from where we will not get aggregate.

We must develop better strategies for recycling aggregate products. How much of Ontario's current aggregate production is being exported? We agree that aggregate is a necessity and so we must fulfill

Ontario's need before allowing mining companies to export. If we can afford to export, then surely no new pits are needed. If we do find that new aggregate is necessary, then any new pits should be located in areas that are already zoned for industrial use, and are close to established haul routes by way of rail, ship or highway.

We must not get our aggregate from sites that could compromise the last remaining fringe of natural areas and rural land within easy reach of the GTA. As Ontario's urban population increases, these areas become ever more precious as a respite from the pressures of modern life, as an educational resource and as a natural and agricultural heritage. We must not get

our aggregate from sites that could compromise ground water, wetlands or cold-water streams and rivers. In areas where the water table resides within fractured limestone bedrock, the ground water patterns are complex and any mining operation is risky.

In Caledon, the proposed Rockfort Quarry site, within Aggregate Resource Area 9-A, fits neatly into the category of areas from where we should not get aggregate. It sits within a beautiful rural area that is rich in history. It borders the Niagara Escarpment, a priceless and fragile natural heritage that has been preserved for generations and has been named a UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve. The area is within easy reach of urban

centres and offers many opportunities for education, scientific study and recreation. Rockfort is not on any established major haul routes. The Rockfort site has fractured limestone bedrock, and through it flows some of the purest and most abundant ground water in Ontario. If a large-scale pit is allowed in this area, there is no proven technology to stop ground water from flowing into the pit and becoming contaminated, and causing water loss to surrounding wells, wetlands and streams.

Ontario needs aggregate, and we also need to preserve our water and our natural heritage. The choices we make now will be felt for generations.

Jim Reid,  
Caledon

### Thanks from seniors' centre

The Caledon Senior Centre offers its sincere thanks to our Bolton business community, members and friends who participated and contributed to our grand fund-raising draw.

A non-profit, self supporting active seniors' centre relies on dedicated members, volunteers and public support.

Winners of our grand draw held April 4 have been notified. We congratulate them and the many who sold and purchased tickets. We are all winners.

Our Bolton business participants were Allegro Fine Foods, Alternative Calling, Alterna Credit Union, Ankers Meats, Angry Tomato, Auto Block, Bolton Electric, Bolton Glass, BIT Jewellers, Dr. Bodak-Nutzati, Beach Comber, Black Bull, Bolton Florist, Caledon East IGA, Chez Thrift, Christine's Flowers, Canada Tire, Christ Church, Caledon Citizen,

Community Services, Dairy Queen, Caledon Enterprise, Excell Cleaners, Ken-James Dick, Garden Foods, Dr. Howarth, Harvey's, King Nursing Home, Music 21,

OPP Bolton, LCBO, Prudential, Royal Bank, Re-use Store, Rexall, Royal LePage, Toby Jug, True Blue Lodge, Wall-Mart, Wendy at Cavalier and Zehrs.

Many thanks and see you next year, I hope.

Lloyd Bittle,  
Director of Publicity  
and Promotion  
Caledon Senior Centre

### Mayor urges everyone to think and act green

April 22 was Earth Day; the largest, most celebrated environmental event worldwide.

According to Earth Day Canada ([www.earthday.ca](http://www.earthday.ca)), more than six million Canadians join 500 million people in over 180 countries

in staging events and projects to address local environmental issues. Furthermore, nearly every school child in Canada takes part in an Earth Day activity. As the Greenest Municipality in Ontario, I thought that I would take

this opportunity to provide you with 10 ways to celebrate Earth Day.

1. Recycle your household batteries: Caledon has a unique household battery recycling program, where citizens can drop off household batteries at the following participating retailers — The Source and Canadian Tire in Bolton, Berneys Pro Hardware in Caledon East, the Palgrave Postal Outlet and the Alton Gas Bar. For more information, visit [www.citizensforacleancaledon.org](http://www.citizensforacleancaledon.org)

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### Mayor's Report

By Marolyn Morrison