

# Orangeville Citizen

Owned in the Community it serves!

ALAN M. CLARIDGE Publisher  
THOMAS M. CLARIDGE Editor

10 First Street, ORANGEVILLE, Ontario L9W 2C4  
E-mail: mail@citizen.on.ca Web Page: http://www.citizen.on.ca



Claridge

Community Newspapers Ltd.

THOMAS M. CLARIDGE  
President

ALAN M. CLARIDGE  
General Manager

CONTRIBUTING EDITOR  
William Bothwell

STAFF REPORTERS  
Dan Pelton

SPORTS  
Mike Maloney

PRODUCTION MANAGER  
Stacie Duck

BUSINESS OFFICE,  
CIRCULATION  
Sandra Jovic

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING  
Carolyn Dennis

ADVERTISING MANAGER  
Vanessa Claridge

DISPLAY ADVERTISING  
Rosemarie Elsdon  
Kathey Stanton

PRODUCTION  
Fran Cunningham  
Francine John

Thursday, February 4, 2010  
Subscription Rate: \$48.30 per year (\$46.00 plus GST) in advance

Member of: Ontario Community Newspaper Association  
Canadian Community Newspaper Association  
Ontario Press Council, 80 Gould St., Toronto  
M5B 1E9 (416) 340-1981

Printed by McLaren Press, 1 Langford Drive., Gravenhurst, ON  
PIP 1R1 (705) 687-6691

All original editorial and advertising material  
produced by the Orangeville Citizen remains the property of  
Claridge Community Newspapers Ltd. and may not be  
reproduced without written permission.

Telephone: (519) 941-2230 Fax: (519) 941-9361  
E-mail: mail@citizen.on.ca



The humblest Citizen of all the land, when clad in armour of a righteous cause,  
is stronger than all the hosts of Error. - WILLIAM JENNINGS BRYAN

## Two democracies on widely divergent paths

THEY SHARE A CONTINENT, a similar heritage and a common language, and both see themselves as democratic. Yet they currently are on divergent paths.

In Canada, we have a parliamentary system and a minority government elected by a minority of voters, which hypothetically would have to compromise with opposition parties, yet in reality has governed successfully for four years as if it had majority support in both the House of Commons and the electorate. Its indirectly elected prime minister has exercised power some see as virtually dictatorial.

In the United States, meanwhile, we see a presidential democracy in which the incumbent won office with the support of a large majority of voters, and "control" of both houses of Congress, yet has been unable to accomplish hardly anything of what he set out to do. Although immensely popular in Canada and just about everywhere else, both he and his popularity are seemingly in a free-fall.

Ironically, while the two political systems were both designed to have "checks and balances," ours seems today to have none and those in the U.S. have proven capable of emasculating the presidency.

Although it has never been codified in Canada, both countries supposedly have checks and balances among the governments' administrations, the legislatures and the judiciaries. But today the reality is that even a minority government in Canada can pretty much do as its leader pleases, even to the point of silencing Parliament for months at a time through use of the tool of prorogation when it will serve to benefit the prime minister's party.

There surely is little doubt that Prime Minister Stephen Harper's appointment

of another five party faithful to our Senate has given him far more power over the legislative branch of government than President Barack Obama enjoyed in theirs, even before the Democrats' devastating loss in the Massachusetts special election to fill the seat left vacant by the death of Sen. Ted Kennedy.

As we see it, the thus-far untold story about the failings of the Obama administration is the growing potency of lobbies in general, and the insurance and pharmaceutical lobbies in particular, aided and abetted by the five Republican party faithful who masquerade as judges on the U.S. Supreme Court.

That court has now allowed the same powerful lobbies that have made most Americans dread ever having universal, publicly run health insurance to spend whatever they like to let the Republicans regain control of Congress and leave President Obama virtually powerless.

That scenario would be almost impossible to imagine ever happening here.

For one thing, we have a virtually "colourless" Supreme Court of Canada, where the judges have seldom, if ever, been politically active, the court doesn't routinely divide ideologically and Chief Justice Beverley McLachlin was appointed to the court in 1989 by a Conservative government and elevated to chief justice in 2000 by a Liberal regime.

But far more important, we have something that's sadly missing in the U.S.: party discipline.

Even the immense personal popularity Mr. Obama enjoyed in his first months in office was not accompanied by an ability to discipline the Democrats who rode into office on his

coattails.

In a parliamentary system of government, a election promise of health-care reform by a party leader who then formed a government would have been quickly converted into a government bill that would be submitted and passed fairly quickly, particularly if the winning party had a majority of seats, and almost as quickly if it garnered the support of an opposition party. The last thing you'd expect is the chaos that ensued in Washington, with Congress and the Senate debating for months before passing radically different pieces of proposed legislation, neither of which is likely to become law unless the House Democrats are willing to accept the Senate bill as better than nothing.

Contrast that with the situation here, where Mr. Harper has a neutral judiciary, a compliant Senate and a Commons in which none of the three opposition parties is pushing for an election!

As for the power to prorogue, it clearly should be both codified and qualified. A Prorogation Act ought to recognize the supremacy of Parliament by permitting the governor-general to order prorogation only with the prior consent of the Commons, except when it is for the purpose of a general election.

Such a statute should also make it possible for committees to continue their work, including work on bills the government planned to re-introduce at the new parliamentary session.

We think such legislation ought to be introduced as a private member's bill and enjoy all-party support, if only because such changes would be merely symbolic when a government enjoys a majority in the Commons and Mr. Harper would see his personal support as defusing the issue, once and for all.



## A most welcome decision

NO MATTER WHERE ONE stands on future development of Dufferin County's rail corridor, there is reason to rejoice in the Ontario Court of Appeal ruling that local taxpayers should not be disenfranchised when their municipality has a pecuniary interest in an issue before an upper tier government.

The three judges were correct when they pointed out that lower-tier municipalities frequently have such interests — even to the point of their positions on upper-tier budgets.

They did acknowledge that the rail issue is an unusual situation inasmuch as the municipality with the greatest pecuniary interest has the largest number of votes by virtue of the Dufferin County Act, which sets out the voting formula on the basis of population.

But it is worth noting that the court did not

award costs of the appeal to either party on the basis of the broader public interest. An implication might be that to have disallowed the appeal would have been to create chaos throughout all upper-tier governments in the province.

On the rail issue itself, there is no certainty that the prospective buyer will proceed with the purchase, even if county council indicates its willingness to sell.

Our understanding is that Highland Companies was to complete its due diligence by this year, but part of that would be the price the county will be asking for the corridor.

There has been no public information concerning the evaluation of the property. Indeed, the entire issue has been dormant pending the outcome of the appeal.

## CITIZEN MAILBOX

### More letters regarding play cancellation

I am very concerned with a series of events that happened at Centre Dufferin District High School this past week.

In early fall I was approached to help with the wardrobe for a musical and of course was more than happy to help as I have done for three other productions. The script was reviewed, adjusted for the students, one student had been working on the choreography since June, a teacher had rewritten parts of the script and another one had rewritten the music so the school band could handle it. Auditions were held and the lead actors chosen before Christmas and

rehearsals were well underway. The chorus was chosen in January and staff and community members were on board to make the musical, Dirty Rotten Scoundrels a success. Students were volunteering to help sew or work on props, lighting and sound. The cheque had been written and sent for the rights to the script and the full scripts received. I know that something of this magnitude would have gone through administration at some point in time.

On Friday the administration at CDDHS pulled a black cloud over the school when they cancelled the musical the last school day before exams.

### Bottled water like smoking?

Wouldn't the world be a better place if drinking water from a plastic bottle was as socially unacceptable as is smoking today?

How much less landfill would we need if we just drank from a reusable bottle? I'm not saying to stop drinking water, just be conscious of the consequences of our actions. Cities recycle around 3,600 tonnes of the one-use bottles each year. Towns would recycle less, but of those bottles, 30% are water bottles or 1,000 tons! There are 65,000 water bottles in a ton or 65 million bottles a year. But just how many bottles are tossed in with the regular garbage because there is no recycling available in stores, companies and even on the street? It is estimated that 35% of all water bottles, land in garbage bins, which land in landfill! Do the math! We are dumping more plastic bottles in landfill sites than we are recycling!

Why do we persist in drinking bottled water? Maude Barlow of the Council of Canadians and the senior adviser on water to the president of the UN general assembly, accuses, the industry of building distrust in tap water.

The bottlers point to Walkerton! Yet, in the last decade Ontario has legislated into affect some of the strongest legislation to protect water in the world!

As we will back that bottle of water, and 3 in 10 households in Canada do so, we are burdening our cities with the high cost of coming up to the Provincial water standards. We are fortifying a 50 billion dollar a year industry, when in fact our tap water is held up to higher standards than this industry.

If we turned on the tap and filled a reusable bottle, we would be supporting us!

That 10 dollars it would cost a month to drink tap water, would go to lowering the debt load of our municipal or city water department! In turn we could see our taxes reduced because they would not have to budget in the extra costs of supplementing lost revenue, from us drinking bottled water.

Our vanishing water supply in southern Ontario could be slowed, if only we used reusable bottles. The industry's drain on our water supply costs them nothing except for the \$750 to \$3000 permit that they get easily from the Ministry of Environment. Water bottles are a thriving pure for profit industry. While the rural areas and farms their systematically drain water from, suffer the consequences of their actions and in turn the cities, as farms fail and food prices go up.

On March 11th 2010 the Polaris Institute, Canada Federation of Students and Sierra Youth Coalition are introducing Canada's first Bottled Water Free Day. They want to take action and mobilize Canadians on campuses and the general public to take action to ban the bottle and reclaim public water.

Such courage should be supported for this first Bottle Free Day! If you want more information visit www.bottledwaterfreeday.ca. I salute them for their insight and courage.

It will not be easy, but these young people should be supported. They are stepping up to the plate to save our water, could we do less?

Sharon Yovanoff  
Researcher  
ROSSCORE

Students in the cast were in tears and even some who had nothing to do with the musical were asking why and stunned. The principal and vice principal told the cast at lunch time on Friday and then walked away, back to their offices to leave the staff to deal with the grief of the students who felt they had just experienced a death in the school. I attended the meeting for the staff and school volunteers working on the musical after school and the atmosphere was worse than a funeral home.

I am upset and appalled that the administration: -did this to the student's right before exams,

-did not show enough interest to read the script which there were copies of before they agreed to purchase the rights to the musical wasting money from other musicals or before auditions were held

-did not stop the musical in the fall before the students were hurt, and before teachers and students put so much work into it (One student gave up three

Mr. Tilson,  
You seem to be under the impression that the demonstrators were mostly "Liberals". I was there and for your information it was a non partisan group of concerned citizens from all parties including the Greens and New Democrats as well as the Liberals.

The ages also varied from teens to seniors and they came from all corners of your constituency. When you next speak with your leader please tell him from us that we are all aware of his embarrassing stance on the environment, his attacks on women's rights, his pandering to the religious right, denying there was a deficit and saddling us with a huge one, the Cadman affair, income trusts, shifts in Middle East policy, with accusations of anti-Semitism directed at humanitarian organizations, stonewalling on the torture of Afghan detainees and elimination of the long-gun registry and on and on we could go.

Oh yes and please know that your Constituents do care about the Afghan torture issue - very much so.

We also want to see justice for Omar Khadr. Why are you so worried about bringing him home to Canada to stand trial?

We aren't going to stand idly by anymore, this proroguing is the last straw.

Pat Flaxman  
Caledon

dancing jobs to do the choreography for this high school musical)

-did not trust their staff enough and believe they could make the musical an age appropriate musical. (Grease which was done three years ago is rated PG as is Dirty Rotten Scoundrels)

I feel that the administration of CDDHS is inflicting their morals on the staff and students and not seeing the musical for what it is and that is a comical farce. Or are they just on a power trip out to hurt the students and staff they should be caring about?

I am questioning when I look at the mission statement for CDDHS:

"CDDHS has a proud tradition of academic excellence and extra-curricular success. We believe students, staff, parents and the whole community are all partners, responsible for student learning at CDDHS. As a team, our commitment, flexibility and mutual respect ensures success for all students. Our goal is to create a welcoming safe and friendly environment where all students develop a pathway that leads to future success." and the vision for CDDHS if some of the points were overlooked

• together, all partners should work as a team based on commitment, flexibility and mutual respect.

• an inviting, safe, orderly school environment created by all partners is essential for success.

• to be the best we can be as individuals and as partners, we also value: fairness and respect among partners; tolerance and open communication; positive participation in social experiences and school spirit.

So much disappointment, shattering of school spirit and the emotional spirit of our young people could have been avoided if Ms Wilson and Mr. Hamilton had made their decision months earlier. I feel it will be a long time before we will see a musical at Centre Dufferin District High School. I felt like we should have been lowering the flag on Friday when I saw the hurt on the faces of the staff and students. As one student asked me after school, "How are we to study for our exams now?"

I only hope the students can recover from this and be successful in their exams and feel they are in a friendly and

• Please turn to page A13

## Let the old dogs lie . . .

A friend of mine came to dinner the other evening. She had been watching an old Second World War movie which left her feeling sad, but more than that, rather bitter.

She ranted about the injustice of war, how that war was fought to bring an end to wars. Yet, there has been nothing but wars ever since and the innocent are always the major victims of the fighting.

She shook her fist at the sky and demanded why God was letting all this happen. I reminded her that God gave humans free will, freedom to choose their roads and that there has been fighting and despoiling always.

There was a note on a program on the CBC, Radio 1, about the video game, released at the end of January, which is outselling every other game by far and is a war game, Call to Duty - World at War. It is about fighting in a war, specifically WWII. All around the whole world, this is the most popular new video game. Apparently, the violence is considerable and is considerably graphic.

Other really popular video games are about wars in space, wars in mediaeval times, killing dragons and monsters, killing aliens, killing scary animals, killing.

Murder is against the law. Killing is forbidden by the 10 Commandments. Every religion, creed, national legislation, school rules - forbids killing, as being a bad, immoral, criminal thing to do.

Yet the best, most loved, most played video games in the world are the ones about killing.

In the Cameroons, what was once a very beautiful jungle country in the centre of Africa - I have not been there for a long time, so I don't know what it is like now - the censorship on movies was against violence not sex. In other words, kids could go to a movie with sex in it but not one with violence. I really enjoyed my stay in the Cameroons, but I wonder if they too now allow this pestilence of excessively violent video games into their children's play stations or computers.

Barack Obama stood before the world, accepting his Nobel Peace Prize while assuring the world, not that he would do all within his power to bring peace, to dismantle the structure of war (although he theorizes about dismantling nuclear weapons - and don't we wish it were only possible), but that war is unavoidable. With a Nobel Peace Prize in his hands.

War is not only unavoidable, it must be completely stopped. This is the second decade of the 21st Century. When, oh when, do we grow up as a species? When do we finally address the fundamental cause of war, which is greed? Nothing noble, nothing to do with God or patriotism or making the world free. It is all about greed for wealth and for power.

Let me be clear: soldiers go to war for noble, patriotic, altruistic reasons. They lay their lives on the line and they do not do so for the sake of the few accumulating wealth. They go because they have

been persuaded that they have to go.

Soldiers are heroes, but this does not make war acceptable. Those same fine young men and women could very well be spending their lives with their families in other, less life threatening occupations.

When the Berlin Wall came down, the Cold War ended and, for a very brief time, we all thought there was the possibility of peace, true peace, with the only battles taking place amongst the diplomats.

However, the United States economy, a cornerstone of which is based on the sale of armaments, cannot afford peace.

The structure of the U.S. economy relies on there being wars someplace, all the time. And sure enough, not long after the fall of the wall, there was the first Gulf War, lead by the Americans. And the dream of peace ended.

As the drive to keep the majority of the world's population in destitution continues, as the gulf between the tiny minority of obscenely wealthy people and those chained by poverty widens, so too does the heat of resentment and hate intensify.

Terrorism justifies itself to those with nothing to lose. And our leaders make a show of struggling among themselves with their own sticky determination not to change anything. They meet in one city and another; they confer; they designate studies; but they do not do anything.

They do not make a difference to any of the fundamentals: greed and poverty. It is the same problem with climate change. Shifting to green industries, making a real difference to how economies are run and how the world is fuelled can never happen until the real issue is addressed: greed.

But what if young people suddenly woke up to this? What if they suddenly realised what is actually happening to their world and to them? What if they suddenly began to insist on change, on peace, on "going green" and finding other ways to make airplanes fly?

The Old Dogs could never let that happen. So, what do they do? They see to it that even WWII is still relevant, that being part of that long nightmare is desirable. It is the most wide spread Machiavellian manipulation of youth in our history. This is not even the promotion of war as something noble, etc. It is the promotion of war, using the full weight of technology, to present the horrors in glowing gore, from a totally unrealistic place of safety.

Where is the force of youth that will bury these Old Dogs with their formulae of suffering and degradation and swing the governance of the world in a new direction of common sense and fairness? A world where greed would be a crime.

