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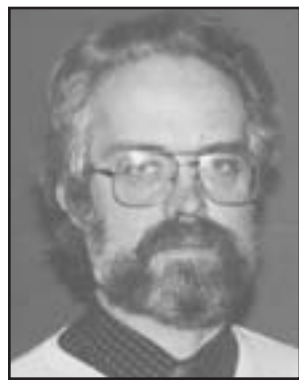
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**Bill's  
Bulletin  
Board**

By Bill Rea

I have spent most of my life being thought of as a conformist.

To a certain extent, I guess that's an accurate assessment.

Many of the things I have done over the years have been simply because they were expected of me, and I believe my trying to meet some of these expectations have been to my detriment.

For example, I went to university right after high school, when waiting a couple of years to do a bit more growing up and spending some time in a sort of real world of work probably would have done me a lot more good. My parents, and my father in particular, had frequently voiced the opinion that people who made such decisions had basically thrown away a certain number of years. But reflecting back, I think such a move would have saved several years. Between university and journalism school, I compiled five years of post-secondary education, with two

years of waiting tables shoved in between. Spending those two years out of high school beating my head against the whims of dumbo bosses who ran the hotel for which I worked would have probably reduced the number of post-secondary years I required.

Being a conformist in that case, I think, did me a disservice. Ah, the wise things we deduce some 30 years after the fact.

There have been a lot of things I conformed to, and I couldn't begin to explain why. I'm not sure I would understand the explanations even if I could offer them.

I was a little kid, watching with curiosity in early 1964 when the Beatles started making their big splash. I was just starting school at the time, and I remember my kindergarten teacher telling us the Beatles were bad. My folks weren't too enthused with them either. But most kids I knew, including my older brother, thought they were the greatest thing around,

with notable exemption; namely my good self. It was a number of years before I actually started enjoying their music, and a couple more until I would actually admit it, to anyone, including myself.

For that matter, I never really took to popular music. My parents listened to CFRB, with its "middle-of-the-road" music in those days, and so did I, even on the clock radio in my bedroom. I still listen to it, even though it long ago stopped playing music. This choice in radio stations is made much to the combined amusement and consternation of my brother.

As I stated, I don't know why I'm the way I am (and my wife has given up asking me for an explanation). Part of it is a lack of confrontational instinct in my being. For most of my life, I have been inclined to follow the path of least resistance in the interests of avoiding conflict.

And before anyone asks, I am at a loss to understand how a guy like that ended up in an occupation like this, reveling at being a thorn in the sides of so many people. Sometimes, we just get lucky.

But that's not to say there isn't a rebel lurking somewhere beneath my brilliant and manly exterior. It's not your proverbial rebel without a cause. It's more a rebel without an issue.

It was in school where I discovered my rebel tendencies, but alas, it was at the same institution where they were repressed.

It was in Grade 3 that my revolutionary instincts were in full flower. There were a bunch of high-spirited kids who got into a lot of trouble, but also seemed to be having a lot of fun. And in the process, these guys also tended to earn detentions for the whole class.

Eight-year-old kids are often quick when it comes to picking up on such things, so I decided if I was going to do time after school, no matter how well I behaved, I might as well have a couple of laughs along the way. I resolved to try and be one of the wild bunch. The experience was educational, if nothing else, and there was a brief period of my formative years when I actually felt like a member of the "in" crowd. But the truth is you have to

have a knack to be a rebel, and my antics left me several levels below the achievement of George Carlin of Class Clown fame. I learned how to do a couple of really annoying things, like cracking my bubble gum, make strange noises from the back of my throat, etc. I even learned how to belch, a talent which I still possess and which earned me my one and only forced march to the principal's office. I had

the misfortune of having a teacher in Grade 3 who looked a little like Mary Tyler Moore and acted a lot like Frank Sutton of Gomer Pyle, U.S.M.C. fame. It was hard to have fun in those circumstances, but I tried.

Alas, my disruptive phase was short-lived. The next year, all the high-spirited, fun-loving crowd were assigned to one class, while I was dumped into a somewhat lower-key, more academic group, with a teacher who was just far too traditional to make acting up fun. Being a conformist, I hated being the odd-man out, so I behaved myself, and my rebellious youth died an early death. As I reflect back, that Grade 4 teacher was a lot better than I was willing to give her credit for being at the time, but the fact is I had a lot more fun in Grade 3.

But there was still a bit of rebellious nature, despite the conformity.

There was one teacher who had a strict rule against the use of any short forms or abbreviations. I resisted, and had to stay after school a number of days bringing my work into conformity with her silly standards. I think of this dame often, especially at work, when my writing requires the use of a short form.

I almost wish she were around to correct me sometimes. Then she'd find out just how much of a conformist I really am — not!

**Editorial**

**This council can work together,  
councillors and public willing**

*"We must all put the interests of our community first, keeping in mind that our goal is always to enhance the quality of life for those who live and work in our township. This is our mission."*

*Mayor Margaret Black*

In keeping with a theme of cooperation and a desire to work together, which has floated through the local political scene since last month's municipal election, the duly elected mayor of King Township and six duly elected councillors were formally installed into office Monday night.

There has been an almost universal pledge for everyone to work together, and we can only hope that everyone is sincere in these pronouncements.

But we are realistic enough to know that might not be easy. On the other

hand, if these seven worthy local residents were looking for something easy to do, it's unlikely they would have sought elected office.

As we have stated before in this very space, we don't expect any elected official to abandon the positions that he or she put forth in their successful election bids. That would be a disservice to their individual constituents. But these are adults, with the obligations to act accordingly for the greater good of King Township.

That means they are expected to show respect for their colleagues at the council table, and keep showing it, even when the policies some of them promote are repelling to the others.

At the risk of appearing like we're over-working a couple of cliches, these seven people are going to

have to master the art of sticking to their guns while burying their hatchets.

We're not sure yet on how they're going to accomplish that. On the other hand, that solution is theirs to find. It's one of the things the residents of King are paying them to do.

But no one should get the idea that they should just leave everything to the politicians. True, they have considerable responsibilities, but so do the people who elected them. They are obligated to keep themselves in touch with the broader picture in King, and not to expect their councillors to blindly fight the bad fight.

Here is an important fact that everyone must keep in mind: All seven of the people installed in office Monday night care passionately for the good and well-

being of their community. True, some of them differ on what needs to be done for the community, and some of them have different priorities than others. But what we unquestionably have is seven people whose hearts are firmly anchored in the right place. All we need is for everyone in King Township to come to that realization, and things can progress in these parts.

We realize there are some who won't be willing to accept that fact, and in most cases their reasoning defies logic. In a lot of these cases, years have been devoted to building up animosities, and there are folks in this world who don't abandon such feelings, no matter how poorly they're established, without a fight. To such people, we humbly suggest that they pull their heads out of the sand,

unplug their ears, open their eyes and embrace reality.

"Tonight, as we begin another term of office, I look forward to a spirit of cooperation and harmony, as we all work together," Black stated in her inaugural address Monday night. "And I extend my hand in friendship and in the spirit of cooperation and harmony."

This is not the first time Black has held out a proverbial olive branch to her foes, and she has done it yet again, backed by a fresh and solid mandate from the electorate. And the people who will join her at the council table have indicated a desire to cooperate too.

A lot depends on their ability to pull this off. But the electorate (that means you) have a role to play.

Are the politicians up to the task?  
Are you?