

**SIMCOE-YORK  
PRINTING &  
PUBLISHING  
LIMITED**

**Publisher of the  
King Township  
Sentinel  
Business Office**

25 Queen St. N.  
Bolton ON L7E 1C1  
(shared with  
Caledon Citizen)  
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Within 65 km except towns with  
letter carriers – \$37.50 + G.S.T.  
Beyond 65 km and towns with  
letter carriers – \$54.00 + G.S.T.  
Single copies 94¢ + G.S.T.  
or \$1.00 (includes G.S.T.)  
Published every Wednesday  
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Sentinel 2007

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**Bill's  
Bulletin  
Board**

By Bill Rea

Some years ago, between the closing of the Garden of Eden and my birth, some smart person came up with the idea of a vacation.

That meant that a person employed in some form of servitude in exchange for money was expected to cease labours for a specified period, usually in weekly increments. The idea was to give that human beast of burden the chance to focus energies and attention of other matters, mainly of a recreational nature, and usually some distance from the routine domicile. The employers who signed the cheques were supposed to get a rested and relaxed servant in return, every ready to attack his or her duties with a new-found sense of vigour.

And usually, things work that way, at least as far as normal people are concerned.

But when it comes to abnormal people like myself, well vacation time can be one major, stressfully-relaxing fidgeting session. Is any of this making

sense?

As some of you may know, I spent most of last week on vacation, putting in almost a full day on the job last Friday (Aug. 10), then hustling home to finish loading the car and collect my wife, then rushing back to the office to do more work. I'll bet this still doesn't make any sense.

But finally, we were on our way, heading in the general direction of Muskoka, arriving at our destination before afternoon had officially switched to evening. Time to start relaxing.

Of course it all depends on what each of us considers relaxation. As my wife frequently observes (usually in a tone of lamentation), I seem most relaxed when I'm working. Thus I was able to get her up early this past Friday (Aug. 17) to sniff some of the fresh Muskokan air shortly after 5 a.m. so we could load the car and be off by 6, so I could be in the office (traffic permitting) by 9. Okay, that scheduling didn't quite work out as planned. We

were were a little behind our time, not getting away until about 6:30, so it was a little after 9 before I made it to the office. Are you still trying to make sense of this?

"Ants toil while grasshoppers sing and play," someone once said in the movies, and I must be one of the ants.

Even while I'm on vacation, I keep thinking of work. I even called the office twice while I was away on my cell phone from Muskoka to make sure things were in order.

"Pardon me if I have to hang up in a hurry," I said on both occasions. "Beth'll kill me if she catches me making this call."

And for those of you who might be ready to accuse me of keeping things from my beloved, I fessed up to both calls within an hour of them being made.

Besides, we took and made a whole mess of family-related calls while we were away, which is not supposed to be customary on vacation.

True, Beth made the usual call to her mother upon our arrival, assuring her we made it okay. Then we got a call from Beth's brother, who was bringing his wife and kids up for a couple of days, to apprise us of their travel progress. My sister-in-law brought her cell phone with her, and it went off with a certain amount of frequency. My

brother was also on his way to spend a couple of days by the lake, and he called a couple of times too.

Add to that mix the fact that we had TV and radio. A radio report of a barn fire in Caledon prompted some concern, since the general location given on the air included the area of Beth's brother's dairy farm. That prompted another call, made with some sense of urgency, to make sure all was in order with my in-laws and the family operation. It was.

So we were never really out of touch with the rest of the world we were supposed to be getting away from. My daily trips to the local IGA for the Toronto newspapers didn't help much, either.

But despite my bad habit of fretting over the work that I'm not doing while on vacation, we did get a lot of stuff done.

My brother gave me one of those remote-controlled airplanes for Christmas last year, and my four-year-old nephew assisted me in my efforts to get it aloft. The result was a badly cut finger (mine), a great deal of egg on my face and the suspicion that my nephew was making some rather pithy observations about his uncle to another little kid, who's family was staying in the same establishment. I plan to re-read the manual.

Beth and I were also able to get in some golf (badly played), touring

(Muskoka is a big place), a lot of swimming, a respectable amount of reading, a reprehensible amount of indulgence in food and drink and an appropriate amount of just doing nothing. I'll bet this is starting to make sense.

I think Beth has come to terms with the fact that I am never able to completely put work on the back burner, but the dear lady does recognize effort when she sees it. She even complimented me, stating I was more relaxed this year than I was on vacation last year. That was a little strange, because I thought I had done a pretty fair job of chilling out last year, but who am I to turn down praise.

Now I'll bet a lot of you are waiting for me to write something about how good it is to get back to work. Not!

I arrived at work a little late Friday morning, and was promptly told the e-mail and Internet connections in the office were down. Most of the day's efforts were devoted to trying to correct that, with me spending part of my time crawling under desks to check various connections in an unholy mess of wires.

I think I need a vacation, except I know what I'd probably do with the time off if I got it.

Does this make any sense? Where is it written that this is supposed to make sense?

**Editorial**

**Cabinet shuffle seems more cosmetic than anything else**

York — Simcoe MP Peter Van Loan was quite right last week when he pointed out that Prime Minister Stephen Harper has made few changes to his cabinet since being called upon to form the government early in 2006.

There have been a few minor adjustments, such as in November, when Michael Chong resigned, requiring Harper to find a new Intergovernmental Affairs and Sports Minister in a hurry (Van Loan should remember that, since he's the one who got the nod). Just a couple weeks later, Harper did a bit of re-arranging, the result seeing Van Loan move to his current position of Government House Leader and Minister for Democratic Reform.

So after more than a year and a half, we can agree that a significant adjustment to the government's front benches might have been in order.

But the reality is not a lot

has changed.

The main feature was Gordon O'Connor being dropped from the Defence portfolio, to be replaced by Peter MacKay. With Canadian forces on the ground in a military operation in Afghanistan, and the casualty count continuing to rise, perhaps that file required a person of a different profile. Certainly, Van Loan thinks so.

But we still have to wonder if the other changes announced really amount to a whole lot. O'Connor has been moved to the post of Minister of Revenue. We'd be willing to bet few are the people out there who can name the person he replaced in that office (the answer is Carol Skelton).

There was also talk that Jim Flaherty might be moved out of the high-profile Finance portfolio. That's another position that might be suited to a different type of person, but it we have to agree it would have been

hard for Harper to replace him, no matter what people may think about the way the economy is being run. There are a lot of seniors out there upset at the taxing of income trusts, and a rapidly aging senior population represents a block of votes that no politician can afford to ignore. But for Harper to

**Letter to the Editor**

**Bev Berger and dog guide assisted by 'Good Samaritan'**

Saturday morning, I was on the homeward bound leg of an extended walk with Jasper, my dog guide.

We were walking north on the east side of Highway 27 in Nobleton. This is a regular route for us and with the addition of the new traffic light at Wilsen Street, our crossings have become quite comfortable.

This morning however there was a glitch. We approached the pole with the button controlling the light change, and as I bent

have replaced Flaherty might have been seen as an admission of error, or that the government might be taking the wrong economic path.

We suspect Harper is not a man who would be willing to publicly admit he goofed, and we also sympathize that such acknowledgement is

to pat and praise Jasper for identifying the correct pole, I heard a female voice addressing me from her vehicle idling on the highway. She called my name and told me that the lights at the intersection were not functioning properly. She quickly continued to tell me that in spite of the malfunction, the traffic was stopping for me anyway!

Now, I owe many thanks to this Good Samaritan for providing me with direct and concise information that

not likely to be heard from the head of a minority government.

If last week's cabinet shuffle indicates anything, we think it's that Harper wants to stay on the path he has selected.

And since he is the Prime Minister, it is his call to make.

obviously would impact my safety.

I also owe thanks to the unheard and of course unseen motorists who simply paid attention.

I have to say that the awareness education that is being provided by numerous agencies, and our own King Township Accessibility Advisory Committee is truly beneficial! I have just experienced "awareness in action!"

Bev Berger and Jasper, Nobleton