

LETTERS

Name your neighbourhood

I was interested to learn that 100 years ago a competition was run to name Westdale.

The process had changed by the 1960s. That's when neighbourhood planning became a thing. Many neighbourhoods didn't have names, and so planners had to invent quite a few. On July 26, 1969, an article in *The Spectator* reported that 43 hearings had been held to show neighbourhood plans to local residents. Gary Smith, the reporter, commented that "few Hamiltonians know which of the city's 109 'neighbourhoods' they live in".

I wonder how many know today!

Richard Harris, Hamilton

Guitar clubs for all

Fabulous story about Dan Fewings' guitar club. These are the kind of stories we need today, in hopes that this type of mentorship becomes contagious and communities everywhere support and encourage them. Music is a saviour for many people, especially children. If only every school could have this type of music program. It's non-judgmental, is not competitive and can provide friendship and accomplishment. Thank you to Dan Fewings, Joe Archer and Tony Duclos.

Janet Dwyer, Hamilton

Two important issues

Thank you *Spectator* for addressing two important issues: First, "A stealthy slide to a new health reality." The pandemic obviously put us in this dangerous place. The Canada Health Act is what Tommy Douglas worked so hard on to ensure Canadians had access to care and were not bankrupted. The other article, March 2, was "Citizenship events are worth keeping." Taking an oath of allegiance before a citizenship judge brings new Canadians together as newly recognized Canadians. If it is speeding up this process surely we can produce more judges to perform this duty that gives our new Canadians a feeling of belonging, rather than oath swearing on a laptop.

Jane Evans, Hamilton

Police board and family

How is it that an experienced, second-term councillor did not feel it was necessary to recuse himself from police board compensation discussions when she has a son on the payroll? Three "advisory" notices later, exposed by a colleague, and now she decides to "follow the rules."

There are two problems here, as I see it. The first: Mrs. Paul's failure to declare a conflict of interest knowing full well, and with warnings, that she should. The second: councillors with family members in police service should not be permitted to be members of the police board, despite a history to the contrary.

Kudos to the integrity commissioner for the reprimand. And to Coun. Cameron Kroetsch for his considered approach. But going forward, let us please see a change in policy.

Robin McGinlay, Dundas

Mic drop on gun deaths

Since the beginning of 2023, there have been 130 mass shootings in the U.S. Enough said — this letter needs no more. If I was holding a microphone, I would drop it on the ground and walk away...

Rusty Escott, Dumville

Spend on nurses, not bosses

A story in the March 25 edition reported the top 10 white-collar wage earners at St. Joseph's Healthcare and Hamilton Health Sciences collectively took home more than \$5 million in 2022.

Some of the job descriptions seem very similar. What do these paper-and-pen pushers all do? Have they saved any lives lately?

The average starting salary for nurses graduating out of college is \$46,000. My math shows the \$5,368,899 figure would cover the hiring of 116 new nurses, who are urgently needed.

Let that debate be at the top of the agenda of the next meeting of the hospital boards.

Denis Gibbons, Burlington

Israel has legitimacy

Regarding "Letter was anti-Muslim" (March 30): A visit to CJPM's webpage will tell readers everything they must know about the bias of CJPM against Israel and against any kind of peaceful resolution, settlement or dialogue.

I am convinced by their long history that the Palestinian Authority, Hamas and the CJPME will not settle for anything less than control over Israel and another Arab state from "from the river to the sea." Notice how none of the attackers ever stress the legitimacy of the State of Israel which had been reaffirmed by world powers at the San Remo Conference held April 1920?

Gary Gerofsky, Hamilton



JOHN RENNON THE HAMILTON SPECTATOR FILE PHOTO

Eugene Ellman discusses how measures in the federal budget could benefit companies like Dofasco as they transition to a green future.

Steel industry supports federal clean energy moves

EUGENE ELLMAN

Canada's steel industry welcomed this week's federal budget incentives for clean energy measures which should also help to bolster the economy in Hamilton.

The sector "is pleased to see this budget significantly expand the climate tool kit to support heavy industry's competitiveness as Canada moves toward a net-zero economy," said Catherine Cobden, CEO of the Canadian Steel Producers Association.

One of the most important themes in the budget — the need to build a national net-zero electricity system by 2035 — is an important policy goal for heavy industries like steel and cement which will become increasingly dependent on large supplies of emission-free energy. The clean energy transition is also a key feature of the city of Hamilton's manufacturing strategy.

Canada's electricity system is already more than 80 per cent emission-free due to the country's large hydro, nuclear and renewable generation. But Canada will need to at least double its power capacity by 2050 to meet added demands for electric vehicles, home heating and manufacturing. With so much additional demand, there are fears utilities like Ontario Power Generation will simply crank up their gas-fired plants, hugely ramping up CO2 emissions.

This poses a problem for Hamilton since steel, the heart of the manufacturing industry in the city,

is in the process of switching to electricity-heavy production.

With federal and provincial aid, ArcelorMittal Dofasco plans to switch from CO2-intensive blast furnace technology to lower-emission natural gas and electric arc furnace production by 2028, which is expected to place huge additional demand on Ontario's electricity grid.

The new natural gas furnace can also be powered with hydrogen once an ample, clean hydrogen supply becomes available. But that would also massively increase the need for renewable power in Ontario since low-CO2 hydrogen requires large volumes of electricity for its production.

Under the new budget, the government seeks to address these and other power supply problems through an electricity credit program. It will spend \$25.7 billion for a 15 per cent credit on clean electricity projects over a decade. The credits will help defray costs for wind, solar and hydro projects, gas-fired generation with abated emissions, nuclear projects, batteries, pumped storage and power grid equipment.

It will be available to private companies and non-taxable entities such as Crown corporations, public utilities and Indigenous-owned companies. Offering it to Crown corporations is an important feature of the program since electricity in most provinces is provided through provincially-owned power utilities.

Indigenous-owned corporations

are also expected to play an important role as they commit part of their large land tracts for electricity generation and storage. The Oneida Energy storage project, 40 kilometres south of Hamilton, is a good example of what can be done. When operational in 2025 it will be Canada's largest power storage project at 250 megawatts.

The clean electricity credit will end in 2034, which is in line with the federal government's commitment to create an emission-free national grid by 2035.

In addition to the clean electricity credit, the budget also includes a 15 to 40 per cent tax credit to build hydrogen production plants. This could encourage OPG and private power companies to build hydrogen capacity in Ontario, which would be a key enabler of ArcelorMittal Dofasco's transition to hydrogen and the creation of a potential hydrogen hub in Hamilton.

The cost of doubling the electricity grid by 2050 will be enormous. In Ontario alone, it's estimated at \$400 billion. So even at \$26 billion over 10 years across Canada, the federal clean electricity program is not nearly enough to pay for this expansion.

But together with other incentives, the government is betting that it can spark private companies and provincial utilities to invest in this transition, which will also help to safeguard Hamilton's economic future.

EUGENE ELLMAN WRITES ON SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS AND FINANCE. HE LIVES IN HAMILTON.

An old story in modern languages



THOMAS FROESE
OPINION

*We are stardust, we are golden
We are caught in the devil's bargain
And we've got to get ourselves
Back to the garden*

— Lyrics from "Woodstock" by Joni Mitchell

It's April Fools' Day so let's talk about fools. And hippies.

A fool is someone who can't reason. The dictionary tells us. A fool is a simpleton. An idiot. We understand the idioms and usage. He made a fool of me. She played the fool. A fool and his money are easily parted.

We know also what a hippie is. I recently watched a movie about hippies called "Jesus Revolution." It stars Kelsey Grammer, of "Cheers" and "Frasier" renown. When speaking in an interview about his role, Grammer teared up. As good art does, this movie touches the spirit. And we need this. The pandemic, for one, has reminded us.

So this indie film is worthwhile. It's grossed about \$50 million. A true story, it explores the Jesus movement that came alongside the hippie movement of the 1960s and 1970s. It's named after a Time magazine cover story, "The Jesus Revolution," which appeared in June

1971, the so-called Summer of Love. Timothy Leary, a self-styled prophet of psychedelics like LSD, told a generation of youth to "turn on, tune in and drop out" to chase what turned out to be false promises of a false utopia. The Jesus movement said, "People, you're chasing all the right things in all the wrong places. Want to blow your mind with something really revolutionary? Meet Jesus."

Mocked as "Jesus Freaks," these youth wore the moniker without shame, even when scorned by established churches. "You don't belong here, hippie." So these youth went elsewhere, including to someone like Chuck Smith, a pastor, played by Grammer in the movie, who invited them into different spaces.

And while flower children gathered in, say, San Francisco's Haight-Ashbury district to explore drugs, free love and rock and roll — with accompanying bad trips, STDs, and poor living conditions — Jesus people arrived to help with solutions. Elsewhere, like in Pirates Cove, Calif., new followers were baptized in the ocean. People noticed.

Entering Holy Week, leading to Easter, it's good, then, to notice how a 2,000-year-old story has continued to speak to the generations. Interestingly, Jesus, who'd likely been cancelled by one crowd or another in our own time, was as anti-establishment as any hippie could imagine.

His followers never get things

completely right. But Jesus had no interest in pandering to anyone's politics or power structures or self-seeking ways. His power was different, one of compassion and love. He taught with authority. When broken people came to him, he healed them. Brokenness, really, was his specialty.

He died horribly, in shame, without friends, money, or reputation, himself now broken for others' healing. Yet his dying wounds remained full of grace: "Father, forgive them, because they don't know what they're doing." Then, the various historic accounts of Jesus' resurrection.

Is it all foolish? In a way. Because this is how God loves the world. With foolish abandon. It's why the Easter narrative, in any era, is both discomfiting and compelling. Even someone like Paul, the apostle, a highly-trained scholar who persecuted Jesus' early followers, later called himself "a fool for Christ."

Jim Elliot, who worked with Indigenous Huaorani in Ecuador, said it this way: "He is no fool who gives up what he cannot keep, to gain what he cannot lose."

Like Paul, he was eventually martyred for his faith. Life magazine reported that story. Decades later, the docudrama "Beyond the Gates of Splendor" completed it more fully, showing how the blood of martyrs can be the seed of new life.

Which is all to say that there are fools, and then there are fools. In the end, we're all fools for something. Even spiritual neglect and indifference. Which can also kill you.

It's something to think about on a spring day in April. Or any other day.

FIND THOMAS FROESE AT THOMASFROESE.COM.



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