

## Kudos to you too Caledon Citizens

by Sheralyn Roman

Last week we wrote an article thanking our local politicians for all that they do. It generated some feedback (thanks J. Grogan et al) and initiated another conversation about who else in our community needs to be thanked. The crux of the feedback: that while politicians get paid for their community work, the single mom who drove home from work, arranged daycare and then attended a community meeting to voice her concerns deserved just as much thanks for her efforts. So too did the many other folks who came out to meetings, the journalists who cover meetings and town employees who help set up the facilities where meetings take place. Yes, I agree that each deserves thanks for helping to ensure democracy works but I stand by my original 'Kudos.' Politicians might get paid but they don't get paid nearly enough in terms of what they give back to the community. The column I wrote was not just about MJJJ Developments Asphalt Plant, but about all that we require of our local Councilors and Mayor. That said - the feedback did make me think about whom else we should be thanking.

There's a good chance I'd miss someone if I tried to list every community group, service organization or Town committee staffed by community members (ie: the Heritage Board or the Library Board) so instead, what I want to say today is 'Kudos to you too Caledon Citizens.' Our community is absolutely brimming over with civic-minded citizens who give back in a myriad of ways - very often behind the scenes, with no expectation (or desire) for thanks. We must all be grateful that they do.

These are the folks who drive home from work, arrange daycare and then attend a meeting of the local soccer club to help organize a season full of exercise and fun for little ones. The hockey and baseball and lacrosse parents who organize leagues, arrange referees, coach and who are team managers (a daunting task to be sure!) These are the 'retired' seniors who donate their time and energy and driving skills to deliver Meals on Wheels or accompany a fellow senior to an important appointment. These are the folks who donate their time and talents to support the work of The Exchange, or the people who sit on Boards of Directors to help support, guide and share their expertise, helping non-profits succeed. The people who need our thanks include Rotarians, and Lions, Kinsmen and Optimists - groups who do good works both here and around the world. Organizers of Special Olympics Caledon must be thanked. Faith based volunteers must be thanked. All the local residents groups that support and speak out on behalf of their local neighbourhoods must be thanked as well as those who support conservation efforts, helping to keep Caledon beautiful. There are so many citizens who donate so much time, energy, labour and goodwill that I'm confident, were this paid labour, it would amount to a dollar figure in the millions. Communities can't really call themselves 'community' without the existence of volunteers and so again, thanks to the citizen who reminded me, that Caledon citizens need to be thanked!

Next time you are out and about in our community and interact in some way with a sports group, a community service, a special event hosted by a service club and which is supporting Caledon - say thank you. Thank you to the people who donate their time and energy and talent to making Caledon the beautiful, vibrant and caring community it is. Kudos to you too Caledon Citizens!