

FRONT PORCH PERSPECTIVE: Summer Musings 2015

By Stephen Somerville

Before this column returns to the local themes of people, politics and public affairs, below are some unconnected, stream-of-conscious and (most likely) incoherent musings and observations regarding the early part of the fall season in Aurora. First, I wish the federal election had not been called until Labour Day. Not many Canadian are engaged at this point anyway! Additionally, with the nightly national news showing of Nigel Wright on the witness stand, and other witnesses set to appear from the office of the PMO at the Mike Duffy trial, I wonder if the Conservatives wished they had postponed calling the election. Second, on nine different occasions over the last six years I have written columns about customer service in Aurora. The column that I wrote almost a year ago to this day was to simply describe a local, positive buying experience that made me happy and exceeded my expectations.

I have a good friend who now lives in Plano, Texas. I am the godfather to his son. I always send his son a present at Christmas and for his birthday in early August. I invariably go to the local Mastermind store because I like their selection, the service is great, the pricing seems reasonable and they do free wrapping. After searching around for potential toys for me, I found a couple of items for Spenser. The lady behind the cashier then asked if these gifts were for a couple of children and I said ?No, just one.? The staff then began to wrap the gifts for me. I then took a chance and asked if they had a box to put the presents in. Most times when I ask this question - without them even looking - I am politely told that they do not. In this case, the lady said that she was not certain if they had one, but she would go out back and look. A minute later she came back with an appropriately sized box. She then put the wrapped presented into the box, put some wrapping paper (that she had turned inside out) around the box to make it look better and then proceeded to encase the box in lots of transparent tape so all that I needed to do now was put an address on the package and pay for postage. This ladies' effort saved me a bunch of time, effort and maybe a couple of dollars.

The follow up to this column was that I was in the store in early August again looking for a present for my god son. The owner, (whose name escapes me), saw me looking around and came over and asked if I was Stephen Somerville. Puzzled, I said ?Yes.? She introduced herself and said thank you for the column. I said ?No, thank you for the great service that I receive here.? Remember, a happy customer means a customer that will be coming back. Lastly, my eleven year old son plays house league soccer in Aurora and absolutely loves it. Since he likes playing soccer so much, I am also happy to have something over him when he is not behaving (sorry about that Dr. Spock!) ? you know what I mean: ?Ryan, eat ALL your vegetables or you won't be playing soccer tonight.? Seeing the progress from the start of the season to now for all his teammates is quite amazing. This weekend the Aurora Soccer Association has a season ending event for the house league teams. My son's team will play two soccer games. In past years this has always been an enjoyable weekend because of fine weather and lots of fans to support the players. I hope the past repeats itself this weekend! Enjoy the rest of your summer everyone as your scribe takes a short break from this column.

Stephen can be contacted at stephengsomerville@yahoo.com