

Trash reveals reckless behaviour

It is spring 2017 and time for my survey of the drinking and driving situation in King Township, and in particular my neighbourhood.

A road-side clean up of beer and liquor empties from the ditch along Weston Road, north of the 16th Sideroad to Burrows Road. The results are in and drinking and driving is up, based on the data.

When I wrote this paper the past two years, I said I had done the collection and shared the results to help stop a potential tragedy on our roads related to drunk driving. However, sadly in 2016 we witnessed a significant tragedy of this type just a few miles south of us on Kirby Road.

I said in 2015 I did not want a child to be the cover photo for one of these terrible losses, but now we have three of them in the Neville-Lakes. This tragedy occurred in late September 2015 and was well publicized, but it does not seem to have resulted in any real reduction of drinking and driving ? based on my collecting and recent police reports. This tragedy, like many others, is just a distant memory and one of concern to only a few as time passes, ?it won't be me? is the attitude on both sides.

This year the survey along only 500 metres of Weston Road returned 129 beer/beverage cans and bottles and 24 hard liquor bottles. This is a 30% increase in the cans and over 100% increase in the hard liquor counts over the past two years ? a troubling statistic.

Stronger enforcement may be the best tool for change. Increased police monitoring in areas with high levels of alcohol related litter could produce more arrests. People in King depend on their cars to get to work and family. If drivers knew that increased monitoring and enforcement could place a real threat on impaired drivers on our roads there would be a change.

Another traffic related issue in our area and elsewhere is speeding. Most drivers' attitude on that is if I did not get caught it was ok to speed. To deter this situation I have allowed the YRP to use our driveway as a point to monitor the traffic on Weston and catch the speeders. But they are not there all the time and the speeding and drinking and driving continues. We need a change in attitudes and acceptance of the responsibility of being accountable to your neighbours for your actions.

From the evidence I have collected on Weston and seen in ditches throughout our region, many drivers hold an attitude that there is ?no? significant risk of being caught, and so continue this reckless and selfish behavior of drinking and driving.

I hope continued reminders to the drivers to stop this endangerment of others and its consequences will reduce and stop the needless tragedies. As we know, these are not accidents but bad decisions with ?terrible ?consequences? for many.

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