

COMMENTARY

When we can't afford to say no

If you have no map to your future, you will find no dreams, never really own success and life will just happen to you without your control.

If you've followed me you know clearly that I have some major issues with the Mayor and Town Council of Hudson. Some of you may therefore be surprised that I am solidly in their corner constructively helping them to push forward the sewage system and drinking-water network upgrades.

These projects are long overdue and absolutely critical for Hudson's future. They must go forward without further delay. This is a critical issue, it's the right thing for Hudson and I intend to help Council succeed in any way possible.

We finally have available grants covering about two-thirds of the cost of these projects. This is definitely a giant pile of our own federal and provincial tax dollars coming back to improve our Town. To the knowledge of Mayor Corker, no town has ever rejected a loan by-law where a grant for sewage treatment was approved. The citizens of Hudson would be absolutely stupid to be the first to vote down such a project.

As has been explained several times in the *Hudson/St. Lazare Gazette*, Hudson



The Weekly Itch
Peter Ratcliffe

would wind up being forced by its neighbours and the provincial environment ministry to complete the sewer project anyway, and in the very near future. If we vote down the borrowing bylaw, Hudson's ratepayers would bear the entire cost without grants and it would cost **THREE TIMES AS MUCH**.

Successive municipal administrations have worked long and hard to get this project finally approved, so we can't afford to be petty or have this fail. The future cost of rejecting this grant is just way too high.

The borrowing bylaws will include upgrades to our water system, which I am advised will be a separate bylaw from sewage. Water is something that every taxpayer shares in equally and should have equal access to, so we'll all pay equally to

make this system work properly into the future.

The sewage issue threatens to be divided into "connected" and "not connected" camps. Logically, those connected will have to pay the largest share of the Net (after grants) cost of the sewage infrastructure, including the treatment plant and the cost of connecting the most critical areas covered by this grant.

There are many reasons I can think of that the Not Connected will be asked to bear some percentage of these costs, Council will provide more reasons, I'm sure.

I think the first major reason is that it will make possible the opportunity to expand and improve the Town of Hudson, adding value and reducing future costs for everyone.

We will finally be able to proceed with a new medical centre, the continuing-care seniors' residence and — if approved for Hudson — a new regional palliative care centre. The proposed Sandy Beach and Whitlock condo housing projects, while less crucial to Hudson's future, will also be financially feasible.

Being able to finally build these and future projects will significantly expand the

tax base of Hudson and help to reduce future tax increases to all property owners, not just to The Connected.

Part of the cost of the sewage infrastructure to be shared by every ratepayer in the municipality are the repairs to many of the Town's main arteries. I may not ever drive down your street, but I help pay for paving it, which is why all taxpayers should shoulder the cost of whatever percentage of the project pays for the road surfaces.

The Town will hold a first information meeting on Tuesday, Nov. 21. Please attend this meeting with an open mind and a clear view of the bigger picture for all of Hudson and its residents. An old saying that I like is: 'We have two eyes and two ears so we can look and listen twice as much as we talk'. Show up, listen up and allow the Town to clearly present the whole picture. Then take the time to really understand it before taking a position.

We'll never make everyone completely happy, we'll all have to pay something more to get much more. I'm sure you'll agree that we simply can't afford to mess up this critical decision by allowing short-term personal agendas to prevail over our shared long-term interests.

Please email me any of your own ideas or questions to sewers@weekly-itche.com

We're laughing

On Saturday night, I attended my first ever over-the-top, fake-veil-wearing, limo-navigated, downtown-scene bachelorette party: my own. On our way downtown, my mother (yes, you read that right, she was there) congratulated me on managing to be engaged nearly a year without transforming into a Bridezilla. For me, this was a tremendous complement. Bridezilla, in case you're unfamiliar with the term, would not be a compliment. Rather, an indication that you'd been the worst kind of pain for a very long time.

Her comment got me thinking. Now that I've experienced being engaged, and I'm just days away from experiencing my own wedding, what would I tell someone just starting this whole process? It's simple. Start laughing.

This doesn't mean I haven't worried about a single thing since this all began. This doesn't mean I haven't done my fair share of crying for absolutely no reason at all. But if you mix in as much laughing as you can, the worrying and the crying won't really matter much. And when you get to the point I'm at now, with nothing much left to plan or do, it will be the laughing that you'll remember most.

I laughed when my mother fell out of our reception site. Well, to be fair, I laughed after we guaranteed that she really was okay (it was one of her really bad falls). One minute I was all "I can't believe I get to have my wedding here!" The next minute she was all "I can't



Amanda "Frank" Olliver

believe I fell off yet another front step of another building!" Still, eventually, we laughed.

I laughed when my mother spent days trying to call Vince, an integral player in the wedding day planning. After days with no response, she was all "I can't believe I can't find this man anywhere!" Then the phone rang and it was Vince. Not the Vince she was thinking of, but rather, Vince the limo guy. Who was all "I'm glad to hear your ideas for the ceremony and reception, but usually I just do the driving part." Who knew you could dial the wrong number so many times and actually hit on someone with the same name? So we laughed.

I laughed when the tailor let me dig through all of the drawers in his shop and his warehouse, too, in search of a certain colour handkerchief I was absolutely certain he had. Which he did, thank you very much, and he laughed, too. I laughed when the nice people at the hairdresser's let me direct Kenny's pre-wedding haircut

on Saturday while a gallery of very nice local ladies cheered me on and tossed out suggestions and compliments. This last part might sound a little bit Bridezilla, I admit. But it's more funny than awful, so it's going on the laugh list, too!

I have laughed with Kenny. I have laughed with

my parents. I have laughed with every single vendor we have met with and I have often laughed all by myself when I'm thinking about everything funny that's happened. If you hear me laughing next week it will probably sound more like a nervous giggle than a hearty chuckle. But I can guarantee you I'll be laughing just the same. If I can laugh half as much in the next 50 years as I have in the last 11 months, then my marriage will already have been everything I hoped for.

sudoku

				5	6			
6			8					
5	8		2			6		4
					9			
2	9		4					1
7	6			1				
	3		1	9		7		
1			3		5	9	4	
			7	4				5

HOW TO PLAY:

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3 x 3 box contains the numbers 1 through 9 only once.

Each 3 x 3 box is outlined with a darker line. You already have a few numbers to get you started. Remember: **you must not repeat the numbers 1 through 9 in the same line, column or 3 x 3 box.**

See answer Pg. 39