

Opinion

MUSKOKA MOSAIC

Introducing Sam Quan

BY PAULA BOON

Sam Quan describes himself as a homebody, and the long-time Panolam employee is glad his home is in Huntsville.

Growing up as the eldest son of a Chinese family in Saigon, Vietnam, Quan heard gunshots as part of his everyday life. "But we were young and didn't know much about the war," he says.

Over the years, living standards went down. "Even if you had money, there was nothing to buy," he says of his teenage years. "I thought, 'Maybe there's a life somewhere else we can try.'"

Quan and his parents watched the exodus from Vietnam begin. "Many people became so-called 'boat people,'" he says, describing how groups would jam into small fishing boats under cover of night and attempt to escape. The success rate was about sixty per cent, he guesses. "It was a gamble. Some people drowned."

Officials patrolling the waters required a certain amount of money per person to look the other way. "It cost a lot," Quan says with a shrug, "but what kind of value can you put on freedom?"

Luckily, Quan's father had worked for a French commercial ship carrying shipments from Vietnam to Malaysia. He was asked to navigate one of the fishing boats, and his payment was free passage for his wife and children.

After Quan's family reached Malaysia, they stayed in a refugee camp for 18 months before hearing that they had

been accepted by Canadian immigration. He was 18 at the time.

In May of 1980, the six children and their parents flew to Montreal, where they were told they were going to Huntsville. They asked where that was. "Oh, about 30 minutes outside of Toronto," someone said. Because they had some close friends going to Toronto, they were relieved that they would be able to keep in contact.

Several Huntsville churches had worked together to sponsor the family. When the Quans arrived in Toronto, three women awaited them, one of whom was a Chinese-speaking pharmacist who lived in Huntsville at the time. "That was good, because I only had a tiny bit of training in English from school," Quan says. "She helped us establish ourselves a bit."

As they drove further from Toronto, the Quans became more worried about where they were going. "Then we reached Barrie and saw a few high-rises and thought, 'Oh, this must be it,'" he recalls. "But we kept on driving."

Despite their initial shock at the size of the town and its distance from the city, Quan says, people were very friendly and the family quickly established a life here. They rented and later bought a house on West Road, where he still lives.

Quan completed grades 12 and 13 at Huntsville High



School and then went to McMaster University, graduating with a B.Sc. in statistics. He worked in Hamilton and Mississauga for a while, but when the opportunity arose to work at Domtar (now Panolam), he took it. That was almost 20 years ago.

At first he worked on the production line, then transferred to a lab for product testing. Finally, he moved into production planning, which he still does. "We expedite production by putting all the orders on a schedule to do it in an efficient manner," he says.

In 1990 he married May, the sister of a classmate from Vietnam who he'd reconnected with while in Toronto. They have three children, Cassandra, Nathan and Amanda, who are in Grade 12, 10 and 8 respectively. "My biggest focus is my family, making sure they're safe and healthy," he says.

Aside from spending time with his family, Quan occasionally gets together with friends to play a bit of poker. "I'm in a stable life," he says. "I'm waiting for my kids to grow up, grow their own set of wings, and then we'll see what happens."

He notes that many of his siblings have had the opportunity to leave Huntsville, but only one has done so. "I live in this beautiful town," says Quan. "Why would I want to go elsewhere?"

LETTERS

Two groups deliver meals

Re: Mayor's on board with Meals on Wheels program, Huntsville Forester article, March 25.

This article may have generated some confusion in the minds of the public.

This community is blessed with two organizations that provide much-needed meals to seniors and others, allowing them to remain in their own homes for as long as possible. Unfortunately, they both have variations of the same name and therein lies the possible confusion.

The article focused on the Muskoka Seniors' Meals on Wheel Program, which provides frozen meals to its recipients on a weekly basis. As well, they provide transportation services, luncheons that allow seniors to meet and socialize, and other services.

The other organization is called Meals on Wheels Huntsville and is the one I have been privileged to be a part of since it was established 36 years ago. It is comprised of a group of 71 volunteers who in the last year alone delivered 5,529 hot meals to its clients five days a week all year long, including holidays.

Like Deb Smith of Muskoka Seniors, we agree that there is much satisfaction in delivering hot, nutritious meals to our clients to help them remain healthy and in their own homes for as long as possible.

Thank you for the opportunity to inform your readers of these two dedicated organizations.

Doris Monahan
Chair, Meals on Wheels Huntsville

Water, water everywhere

Attention all Huntsville residents: apparently town water is unsafe for drinking. While in the Huntsville Place Mall this past Saturday with four young children I requested a glass of water from a proprietor in the food court. I was informed that the water was no good, the taste was awful and that she sold bottled water.

I am thankful the staff at Tim Horton's must have superior technology and filtration

systems and were able to happily comply with my request.

Is it even legal to refuse water? I was perfectly willing to pay for a cup. What about the impact to our landfill, not to mention in our economic times spending unnecessary hard-earned funds?

Lesley Hurley
Port Sydney

Protest assessment increases

MPAC is wrong to increase property assessments while we are in a recession.

Mr. McGuinty has even said so and could freeze assessments with the stroke of his pen. So, men and women of Ontario, don't give up. Write that short letter to Queen's Park. Mr. McGuinty: you know MPAC is wrong to raise assessments in Ontario. You've said so.

Do what is right for your people in Ontario. B.C. did freeze assessments. Write to Mr. McGuinty, Queen's Park, Toronto, Ontario M7A 1A1. A stamp is needed.

Let's pour letters into Queen's Park before the end of March.

Betty Routliffe
Sarnia

HPS: a school to be proud of

To principal Sharon Stahls and the staff of Huntsville Public School, we say thank you for teaching your students more than the three Rs.

It was very visible at the school assembly we attended on March 12 that you are unified in not only encouraging your students to do their very best academically, but also in rewarding them for being kind, honest and respectful.

How pleasant it was to see 200 to 300 students listening intently to Mrs. Auckland's choir of 15 boys and girls. The songs, all memorized and sung with clarity and expression, just made our day.

Thanks again for being a school that we can be proud of.

Mary Lou Hisey
Huntsville

Reinstate trapping and hunting of wolves, coyotes and bears

The ministry of natural resources closed the trapping and hunting of coyotes and wolves in the townships around Algonquin provincial park. This decision was based on a study done in Algonquin Park by J.B. Theberge. Mr. Theberge stressed that the wolves in Algonquin park had a distinct DNA and that they were being hunted and trapped to the point of being endangered.

This study has been described by MNR's biologists to be not only flawed but misleading. The ministry of natural resources completed their own wolf study in 2008 and found that the wolf population is not only stable but increasing.

The population of coyotes has been growing as well. The DNA study done on both of these animals prove that coyotes and wolves are interbreeding. Now there are wolves and coyotes showing up in people's back yards eating the family pets. They also seem to be losing their fear of humans.

I've been a coyote and wolf hunter for years. This picture is of a female wolf close to 70 lbs. This animal, along with a male wolf approx. 80 lbs., were shot in the Novar area last week. They had killed and eaten a fawn in one sitting. The deer was killed on the lawn of a local resident and was within yards of his garage and his dog kennel. With the fresh snow on the ground that morning we tracked the wolves with the hounds and shot both of them. That is eight animals from the same area this year. We have always harvested animals from this area in years past, but the last few years there has been more animals that ever. Now with a season and a limit of two animals per hunter (wolves and coyotes) in central and northern Ontario the population of both animals is spiraling out of control.

Last winter the group I coyote hunt with in southern Ontario harvested 92 animals in the same area we have hunted for years. We have hunted in this area since the early '70s and it seems that the population of coyotes is increasing every year. The complaints from the farmers about coyotes and wolves killing their live stock have increased by three hundred per cent.

This cost to the taxpayer this year alone was over \$2 million. With the interbreeding of these animals the coyotes can weigh in excess of 60 lbs. now. In the '70s a big coyote was 45 lbs. Last winter we supplied the MNR with DNA samples from almost all of the animals we harvested. We were told that the DNA from these animals were the same DNA as the wolves up here and across the province and that they had proven that the wolves in Algonquin Park had absolutely no distinct DNA and that there are no endangered wolf species in Ontario at this time. In fact, the wolf population is at or even over the maximum that we should have for the range in Ontario.

This is the same as the cancellation of the spring bear hunt where misleading information was given to the minister and the decision was made on very bad science and before all the facts were looked at properly and look what happened to the bear population: it is spiraling out of control costing the taxpayer millions of dollars every year to take care of nuisance bears, not to mention the danger to campers and people working in the woods and parks in Ontario. The Ministry of Natural Resources should immediately reinstate trapping and hunting in all Ontario.

Ron Stinson
Huntsville

Criticism of funding unfounded

In his most recent letter, Mendelson Joe takes aim at my announcement of \$25 million for the National Trails System's upgrade and expansion.

His criticisms are inaccurate and without merit. In fact, the National Trails System is not just about snowmobiles and ATVs. Indeed, my announcement made specific reference to who else will benefit: hikers, snowshoe enthusiasts, joggers, cross-country skiers and other lovers of

Canada's outdoors.

My announcement was good news for people who want to see more of our natural heritage. It helps to get our kids moving and it helps attracts tourists.

Perhaps our revitalized National Trails System would even inspire an artist like Mendelson Joe.

Tony Clement, MP
Parry Sound-Muskoka
Port Sydney

<p>MOE'S PICK OF THE WEEK 2006 CHEV EQUINOX</p> <p>3.4 L, 6 cylinder engine, auto., 49,540 km. Stk# TP9091</p> <p>\$16,995</p>	<p>2004 CHEV SILVERADO</p> <p>5.3 L, 8 cylinder engine, auto., 149,472 km. Stk# 8513</p> <p>\$11,995</p>	<p>2005 BUICK ALLURE CX</p> <p>3.98 L, 6 cylinder engine, auto., 30,646 km Stk# 9093</p> <p>\$13,995</p>	<p>2005 CHEV SILVERADO</p> <p>5.3 L, 8 cylinder engine, auto., 80,396 km. Stk# 8666</p> <p>\$15,995</p>	<p>2006 BUICK ALLURE CXL</p> <p>3.8 L, 6 cylinder engine, auto., 47,562 km. Stk# 9187-A</p> <p>WARRANTY \$16,995</p>
	<p>2006 GMC SIERRA CREW CAB</p> <p>5.3 L, 8 cylinder engine, auto., 77,702 km. Stk# TP0867</p> <p>WARRANTY \$20,995</p>	<p>2007 PONTIAC VIBE</p> <p>1.8 L, 4 cylinder engine, 12,000 km. Stk# CP-7690-A</p> <p>WARRANTY \$15,995</p>	<p>2007 BUICK ALLURE CX</p> <p>3.8 L, 6 cylinder engine, auto., 30,376 km. Stk# 9137-A KM</p> <p>\$16,995</p>	<p>2008 CHEV IMPALA</p> <p>3.8 L, 6 cylinder engine, auto., 29,702 km. Stk# TP8649</p> <p>WARRANTY \$17,995</p>

SHORT DRIVE . . . LONG ON SAVINGS