



## Home Court Advantage

By Wayne and Tamara

My husband and I were married this weekend in Las Vegas. At the wedding dinner my mother-in-law leaned across the table and started cutting my husband's steak! I was mortified. The next day we met my parents and his parents in the lobby bar for a soda before we headed for the airport. My mother-in-law pulled out a velvet bag and tossed it to my husband. It was a bracelet for him. I should mention I bought him a nice watch for a wedding gift, and he showed it off the previous day, our wedding day.

When we returned home, my sister and I had a brief argument the way sisters do. But when I turned around my mother-in-law was making fun of me to my sister. I stormed out, calmed down a bit, and then told my sister how much she had hurt me. She told me my mother-in-law said she should give me the "Boy Scout salute" and held up her middle finger.

I let my mother-in-law know unequivocally I knew what she said and so did her son. She gave us the cold shoulder and this continues 48 hours later. My husband keeps saying "she'll come around," "just wait and see," and "that's just the way my mom is." I would never let my mom treat my husband like that. I'd call her out on it and tell her it was unacceptable.

### Rachel

Rachel, you could try to put your personality on a back shelf and accommodate your mother-in-law, or you could have a knock-down, drag-out fight with her for possession of her little boy. The first course is not likely to work because when real change comes, it comes from within not from without. The second course may work, but it poses an opportunity and a danger. Your mother-in-law has known your husband longer than you have, and she is part of the development of his psyche. On the other hand, since it appears he married a woman like his mother, he might yield to the stronger woman.

The danger is that you will start resenting him for not being a real man in your life. Sons who want to be treated like men don't let their mother treat them like a 2-year-old, while sons who like being treated like boys do. It will be no fun playing strict parent to your husband and being the third wheel in your own marriage will exhaust you.

The final possibility, of course, is your husband is so laid-back he doesn't care what his mother does. What is missing here is the pre-story. How much did you know before the wedding? If you didn't realize until the wedding dinner what you tied yourself to, a divorce attorney can ensure that what happened in Vegas will stay in Vegas.

Wayne & Tamara

## Between Friends

I just found out my girlfriend is pregnant from a text message while watching a movie with my wife. I don't know what I'm going to do. Please help me do the right thing. And yes, the girlfriend knows about my wife. They are friends.

### Gus

Gus, what is the right thing? Your girlfriend gets to take her friend's husband by using a baby? Two women should fight over a man neither one can trust? Your wife should remain with a man who cheats on her?

Once the time for doing the right thing passed, it became a matter of trying to patch up the wrongs. Two wrongs will never make a right, and it's too late for you to be a stand-up guy. These two women have shared more than any two friends should ever share.

Arrange a calm sit-down with all parties, and let each person decide what is right for them. Get this done now because each day you sit on the problem is another deception.

Wayne & Tamara



## Goals or Memories - The Importance of Stepping Outside the Comfort Zone

By Camryn Bland  
Youth Columnist

Every day, we are faced with opportunities for new experiences and exciting risks. Our daily routines constantly present chances to change through small decisions, yet we rarely choose to take them. Too often, we follow the path which is easy and convenient instead of one that offers excitement and growth. What feels like the safe option can instead lead to stunted potential and missed moments, all because of fear and a need for comfort.

Risks and opportunities come with unknown consequences, which can feel impossible to ignore. It makes sense why we often refuse unusual experiences, as they are so separate from our ordinary. So, we stay close to the normal which we know, instead of the rewards or consequences which are unknown. The unusual uncertainty can turn into fear, which can lead to inaction and stagnation. Too often, we sit and think about the prospect until it passes by us before we can make a final decision.

The most obvious cause of this loss of opportunities is the fear of failure. Whether the experience be social, educational, or related to employment, nothing is guaranteed. A new friendship may not last, you might not make the school team, or might not receive the promotion. The possibility of disappointment prevents us from trying in the first place. Sometimes we may even fear acceptance, worrying it may not meet our expectations, or could lead to regret later.

Additionally, it can be easy to get caught up in the opinions of others when faced with new options. We are not only afraid of our own disappointment, but also that of people around us. We fear judgment, criticism, and misunderstanding from people who may not value the experience as much as we do. When outside opinions begin to overshadow our own, our personal goals can quickly become blurred and forgotten.

We rarely recognize these motivations for decline at the moment. Instead, we create alternative reasons to decline opportunities, such as a busy schedule, lack of background knowledge, or not wanting to do it alone. We constantly find excuses for ourselves. We don't want to do it alone, we're too busy, or we don't have the skills.

Although these excuses may feel valid, we use them as a shield to prevent us from dealing with the bigger issues, such as our fear or stagnation.

These day-to-day choices of comfort and complacency may feel small in the moment, but they add up to a life filled with goals instead of memories. We get stuck worrying about failure, and forget to ask what happens if we succeed. What first seems like a leap of anxiety can instead be an avenue for memories, growth, and adventure. Through this success, new friends can be made, new skills learned, or further opportunities unlocked. The only thing preventing this from happening is fear, which must be pushed aside in pursuit of development.

Although I often find myself worrying about the "what-ifs" of new opportunities, I still choose to try them. I have applied for jobs, drama productions, and extracurricular activities even when they felt like unrealistic longshots. Many of those longshots helped shape who I am today, showing the importance of taking a leap of faith.

Even when an opportunity does not turn out exactly as expected, or when we fall short, there are still valuable lessons to learn. When I first applied to my school's Student Administration Council, I was not accepted. Instead of letting that disappointment stop me, I used the experience as motivation and a lesson in collaboration, communication, and leadership. The following year, I applied again and was accepted. Today, I serve as the council's vice president, all because I decided to take a chance on that first interview years ago.

The only way to learn, grow, and develop is by leaving our comfort zones and trying something new. One day, I know I will be looking back and reflecting on my past, and I know what I hope to see; a life full of memories, not goals. One where I joined countless clubs, applied for countless jobs, and met countless people. A life lives not in fear and comfort, but in meaningful risks and irreplaceable growth.



## Municipal Interests - As Simple as ABC

A Candid Conversation  
By Theresa Grant  
Real Estate Columnist

One of the most interesting things about municipal politics is how simple it is to become a candidate, and how difficult it is to actually win.

The basic requirements to run for municipal council are surprisingly straightforward. A candidate must be 18 years old, be a Canadian citizen, and either live in the municipality or own or lease property in the municipality in which they choose to run.

In many ways the system is designed this way on purpose. The local government is meant to be accessible to ordinary everyday citizens who care about their community and are ready to step forward and serve.

While the qualifications to run may be simple, earning the confidence of the voters is another matter altogether. Running a successful campaign requires time, energy, and a genuine connection to the community. People want to know who you are, what you stand for and perhaps most importantly, if you truly understand the issues that matter to them in their neighbourhood.

Municipal politics is often less about political ideology and more about practical leadership. Voters tend to look for candidates who are visible in the community, approachable and willing to listen. They look for someone who understands the day-to-day concerns of the residents, whether that involves roads and infrastructure, responsible growth and development, property taxes, or simply maintaining the services that make the community function well.

Name recognition can also play a role. Candidates who have already been involved in community organizations, volunteer work, local business or neighbourhood initiatives often begin with an advantage because people know them and trust their commitment to the community.

Running for council also requires a willingness to put yourself out there. Campaigns involve meeting residents, attending community events, knocking on doors, answering questions and sometimes facing criticism. It takes a significant investment of time and energy, often for many months leading up to election day.

At the end of the day, voters are not simply choosing a name on the ballot. They are choosing someone they believe will represent their interests and make thoughtful decisions on behalf of the entire community. Municipal government is the closest level of government at the people, and the choices made at the council table can shape the future of a city for many years to come.



## Most Canadians

By Bruno Scanga  
Financial Columnist

Most Canadians want to pass their life savings on to their heirs. The assets remaining once retirement needs are met will be distributed more effectively if there is a properly prepared will detailing the deceased's wishes.

Many people mistakenly believe that this issue is far in the future. Preparation of a valid will and its related estate planning considerations should be the cornerstone of a proper estate plan. Whenever there is a change in circumstances, the will should be reviewed and updated as needed.

Despite good intentions, far too many people die without having a valid will. The will is a legal document that details the process for distributing the deceased's assets in an orderly and tax-efficient manner. More importantly, the will documents the way the individual intended to have their estate administered.

There are two main purposes of making a will.

The first is to document the intentions of the person making the will (testator) as to their choice of beneficiaries, the recipients of their assets.

The second purpose is to appoint the executor, whose role it is to make sure the creditors of the deceased are paid and to disperse the remaining assets according to the terms of the will. Anyone who has a spouse or children, obligations from a prior relationship, or is simply concerned about how their property will be distributed after their death should make a will.

Although there are do-it-yourself will kit and software packages readily available, using the services of a legal advisor is highly recommended.

What you may think is a simple estate may actually have complexities that cannot be properly addressed without legal help.

If someone dies without a will (intestate), it may require going to court before the assets can be distributed.

Without a will, personal property will be distributed according to the laws of the province in which the testator lived when they died.

Real estate will be dealt with based on the intestacy rules of the province in which the property is located.

Guardians for minor children will be appointed by the courts.

Special-needs family members may not receive the same priority by the courts as the testator might wish.

Without a will, the court will appoint someone to take care of your estate.

The time taken by the court to appoint an administrator will cause a delay that can trigger cash flow problems for your family.

Remember, until an appointment is made, no one has the legal authority to touch your estate. Dying intestate can also result in needless taxation and other fees leaving less for your beneficiaries.

Have a Proper Will – because it's the right thing to do!

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