

5.3(c)

From: Steve and Linda Walsh
Sent: January 16, 2012 8:27 PM
To: Office of the Mayor
Cc: clerk@hamilton.ca
Subject: Responsible Animal Ownership By-Law

Attn: Your Worship
Mayor Bob Bratina

Re: Responsible Animal Ownership By-Law

Dear Sir:

Earlier today I communicated with your office and filed a "Notice of Objection" by way of a letter written to you with respect to the Responsible Animal Ownership By-Law which is scheduled to come before Council on Wednesday January 25, 2012.

Since then, I have obtained a copy of the newspaper ad which the City of Hamilton posted in the Hamilton Spectator and local community newspapers on November 3rd (attached).

When you read this ad, you will agree that this ad very clearly states: *Some examples of what will remain the same include: Regulating "sort pigeons";*

As explained, in today's earlier correspondence, that is not what has occurred. The new by-law prohibits new members joining the sport if they reside in "residential" or "commercial" area's.

Our request remains the same, that this by-law be sent back to committee and be amended to allow responsible individuals to join the pigeon racing sport.

Please share this email with all city councilors.

Respectfully,

Steve Walsh
Secretary
Canadian Racing Pigeon Union

The Canadian Racing Pigeon Union Inc.



January 14, 2012

The City Clerk
71 Main Street West
First Floor,
Hamilton, ON
L8P 4Y5

Attn: Your Worship
Mayor Bob Bratina

**Re: Responsible Animal Ownership PED09303 (c) (City Wide)
Outstanding Business Item**

Dear Sir:

By way of introduction I am a member of the Board of Directors of the Canadian Racing Pigeon Union (CRPU). We are a national organization that represents the interests of the pigeon racing sport in Canada. We report to an International Organization, the Federation Colombophile International (FCI) which sets the rules/standards for the sport of racing pigeons worldwide.

In Canada, the CRPU and local clubs work with all levels of government to promote the sport of pigeon racing. To race pigeons in Canada, you must be a member of a local club and the CRPU. Every pigeon is registered with the CRPU. In your municipality there are two clubs, the Flamboro Racing Pigeon Club and the Hamilton Central Racing Pigeon Club. Thirty-four members of these two clubs reside in the City of Hamilton. These members shop local to buy the best of feed for their birds and loft supplies as needed in the sport of pigeon racing. Their registered flocks, lofts and electronic equipment are worth thousands of dollars to their owners. The Hamilton Central Club has a beautiful club house located at 414 Highland Road East in Hamilton contributing annually to the municipal tax base for the City of Hamilton.

A week ago, one of your citizens contacted the CRPU on behalf of the two Hamilton area clubs asking that the CRPU help the City of Hamilton with their new "Responsible Animal Ownership" by-law. Ironically, the title of your by-law relates directly to our sport for we promote "responsible racing pigeon ownership" but there is a problem. The proposed by-law prohibits a new racing pigeon enthusiast from joining our sport if they reside in areas of the city zoned "residential" or "commercial".

The 34 members currently residing in residential areas will be allowed to keep their racing pigeons under a grandfathering clause but the "prohibition intent" of the by-law

causes us concern. It does not allow existing members to trade homes, it restricts existing CRPU members wishing to re-locate to the City of Hamilton, it prohibits new members and it impedes our goals of working with youth, blocking them from joining this exciting sport. Pigeon racing is a fascinating, educational hobby which the entire family can participate in and enjoy. Our racing pigeons are viewed as family pets, and just as new dog ownership is not prohibited by animal by-laws, nor should the ownership of racing pigeons be prohibited.

Racing pigeons is one of the oldest sports known to man. Their history can be traced back well over five thousand years. They are direct descendents of the rock dove (Columbia Livia) one of the world's oldest domesticated birds. They are not the feral pigeons you may relate to, those flying around your city. Those are not our pigeons.

Attached are brief biographies of three famous racing pigeons, please read them. Other facts you may not know are:

- The stock markets of the world used racing pigeons until 1966 to get the news of the days trading from one city to another.
- Today racing pigeons are used in humanitarian efforts to fly blood out of the deepest jungles in Africa to be tested for the aids virus.
- That Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II along side her love for horses and corgi dogs races pigeons from the Royal Lofts at Sandringham.
- That racing pigeons have been known to fly 700 miles in a single day.
- That many major world armies still retain their racing pigeon flocks.

The CRPU wants to work with the City of Hamilton to help you get your new by-law right, the first time. Attached is a recent by-law that the Town of Ajax passed that works for us. We understand you cannot allow a large unsightly loft with hundreds of pigeons on a postage size residential lot but there are ways to control that, through minimum distance set backs, building code and property standard by-laws. Rest assured, should any problems occur with one of our members, the local club and the CRPU will do our utmost to police the situation and resolve the problem immediately, ensuring the by-law is followed exactly.

Your Responsible Animal Ownership by-law is scheduled to go to Council on Wednesday, January 25, 2012 without input from the CRPU. We ask that you send it back to committee so they can meet with representatives of the two clubs in Hamilton and the CRPU to develop a by-law that works for the City of Hamilton and protects the sport of racing pigeons in Canada.

Respectfully,

S. Beadlow on behalf of:

Steve Walsh
Secretary
Canadian Racing Pigeon Union

1. KEEPING OF PIGEONS IN AJAX ONTARIO

4.1

Every owner of a domestic pigeon in the Town shall;

- a) keep no more than eighty (80) pigeons at any time;
- b) be a member of a recognized pigeon club which is affiliated with a national organization;
- c) ensure each pigeon wear a metal or plastic leg band that shall identify the owner of the bird, and shall register these numbers with a recognized pigeon club which is affiliated with a national organization;
- d) ensure all pigeons are not kept in, upon, or under any building used for human habitation;
- e) keep all pigeons in a bird enclosure of sufficient size to house all birds; which shall provide a minimum space of 1.0 square metre of loft space for every 10 birds, and shall be constructed as to prevent escape of pigeons;
- f) ensure the bird enclosure is located no less than seven (7) metres from any dwelling, shop or apartment building, and no less than three (3) metres from any adjoining property line;
- g) ensure the pigeons do not stray, perch, roost, nest or rest upon any premises other than on premises of the owner;
- h) keep the pigeons in a building, structure, loft, pen, coop or run which is maintained by regular painting or permanent siding;
- i) lime wash, paint or disinfect the inside walls and ceilings of all buildings, structures, lofts, pens, coops and runs used for the keeping of pigeons other than outside runs enclosed solely with wire, at least four times per calendar year;
- j) remove and dispose of in a sanitary manner, at least twice each week, all pigeon droppings and refuse within or adjacent to all buildings, structures, lofts, pens, coops and runs used for the keeping of pigeons, it being understood that this requirement shall not apply when below freezing temperatures prevent waste removal and disposal;
- k) store all pigeon feed in rodent-proof containers;
- l) keep all equipment associated with the keeping of pigeons under cover; and

- m) keep the pigeons enclosed at all times, except to allow a maximum of two daily, two hour, flight periods during which no more than fifty percent of the total number of pigeons being kept shall be permitted to be at large during any particular flight period, it being understood that this restriction shall not apply to members of a racing pigeon club when the members are participating in a bona fide flight conducted by the club.



“Cher Ami”

NURP, 615, Black Check Cock

WAR RECORD

of a racing pigeon owned by
UNITED STATES ARMY

Recipient of
HALL OF FAME AWARD
for meritorious service during
WORLD WAR I

Delivered twelve official messages under fire. On October 2, 1918, this bird accompanied a re-enforced battalion of the 77th Division consisting of six companies of the 306th Infantry, one company of the 307th Infantry, and two machine gun companies of the 305th Infantry, commanded by Major Charles S. Whittlesey. This unit reached its objective late in the afternoon of that day, consolidating its position during the night of October 2-3. On the morning of October 3, it was discovered that units on both flanks had failed to maintain contact, leaving the battalion exposed to enemy counter attacks. Strong counter attacks during October 3rd, completely isolated the battalion from its supporting troops; repeated efforts to regain contact were unsuccessful. On October 5, the battalion; its strength greatly reduced by casualties, without food, water or ammunition, was in a hopeless situation. The commander himself wounded, decided to make a final effort to avoid surrender by establishing communication with the Division. One pigeon, “Cher Ami” remained; at 2:35 P.M. he was liberated, bearing a message giving the location of the battalion, followed by a desperate appeal for help. Twenty-five minutes later, “Cher Ami” little more than a blood stained fluff of feathers dropped on the roof of the loft at Rampont, one leg was shot away and a hole torn through the breastbone by the same bullet. But the message holder still hung to the torn ligaments of the shattered leg. A few hours later the 194 survivors of the “Lost Battalion” were safe behind the American lines - but “Cher Ami” had made his last flight. “Cher Ami” died in Fort Monmouth, New Jersey on June 13, 1919.

Smithsonian Institution, Washington D.C.



“G.I. JOE”

“G.I. JOE” is the most outstanding military pigeon in history and is credited with saving the lives of at least 1000 British allies during World War II.

The British 56th Brigade was scheduled to attack the city of Colvi Vecchia, Italy, at 10 a.m., October 18, 1943. The U.S. Air Support Command was scheduled to bomb the city to soften the entrance for the British Brigade. The Germans retreated leaving only a small rear guard and as a result the British troops entered the city with little resistance and occupied it ahead of schedule.

All attempts to cancel the bombings of the city, made by radio and other means of communication, had failed. Little “G.I. JOE” was released with the important message to cancel the bombing. He flew 20 miles back to the U.S. Air Support Command base in 20 minutes and arrived just as our planes were warming up to take off. If he had arrived a few minutes later, it might have been a different story.

Gen. Mark Clark, Commanding the U.S. Fifth Army, estimated that “G.I. JOE” saved the lives of at least 1000 of our British allies.

In November 1946, “G.I. JOE” was shipped from Fort Monmouth, N.J. to London, England, where he was cited and awarded the Dickin Medal for gallantry by the Lord Mayor of London. “G.I. JOE” is the only bird or animal in the United States to receive this high award.

“G.I. JOE,” a dark checker pied white flight cock, was hatched March 24, 1943, at the Pigeon Section in Algiers, Algeria, North Africa. Later he was taken to the Tunisian front, then to Bizerte, and from there to the Italian front. After World War II, “G.I. JOE” was housed in the Churchill Loft, U.S. Army’s “Hall of Fame” at Ft. Monmouth, N.J., along with 24 other pigeon heroes.

In March of 1957, the remaining pigeon heroes were placed with different zoological gardens throughout the U.S.A. “G.I. JOE” was placed with the Detroit Zoological Gardens where he died June 3, 1961, at the age of 18. “G.I. JOE” was returned, mounted, and placed in the Historical Center, Meyer Hall, at Fort Monmouth, N.J.

Otto Meyer, U.S. Army (Ret’d.)
(Former Commander of the U.S. Army Pigeon Service)



“Old Nerge” Harry Lucas holding the famous G.I. Joe

Commando



Commando was a pigeon used in service with the British Armed Forces during the Second World War to carry crucial intelligence. The pigeon carried out more than ninety missions during the war, and received the Dickin Medal (the animal equivalent of the Victoria Cross) for three particularly notable missions in 1942. The

medal was later sold at an auction for £9,200. Commando, a red chequer bird, was bred in Haywards Heath, Sussex in the United Kingdom by Sid Moon. Moon was a pigeon fancier who had served with the Army Pigeon Service during the First World War. With the outbreak of the Second World War, Moon offered the service of his pigeons to the war effort in 1939. Commando was one of the pigeons taken into military service. He was noted for three particular missions carried out in 1942—one in June, another in August, and the third in September—in which he carried crucial intelligence to Britain from agents in France. This vital information included the location of German troops, industrial sites and injured British soldiers.