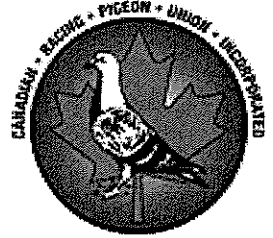


The Canadian Racing Pigeon Union Inc.



June 11, 2013

To: Mayor Maurizio Bevilacqua
Deputy Mayor and Regional Councillor Gino Rosati
Regional Councillor Michael Di Biase
Regional Councillor Deb Schulte
Ward 1 Councillor Marilyn Iafrate
Ward 2 Councillor Tony Carella
Ward 3 Councillor Rosanna DeFrancesca
Ward 5 Councillor Sandra Yeung Racco
Ward 6 Councillor Allan Shefman

Vaughan City Hall
2141 Major Mackenzie Drive
Vaughan, ON
L6A 1T1

c 2
Communication
cw: June 18/13
Item: 24

Re: City of Vaughan – Racing Pigeon Bylaw Review

By way of introduction, my name is Steve Walsh and 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 the City of Vaughan there are three racing pigeon clubs, the Pine Valley RPC, the Far North RPC and the York Region RPC.

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 Vaughan. I have met with your Legal Counsel, Christopher G. Bendick and the Supervisor of Animal Services, Susan Kelly and had direct input into the Staff Report they have prepared for Council. We fully support the approach of annual loft registration fees.

This matter comes before Council on Tuesday June 18th. We ask that you support the report filed by "staff" to govern the sport of racing pigeons in the City of Vaughan.

Respectfully,

Steve Walsh
Secretary
Canadian Racing Pigeon Union

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

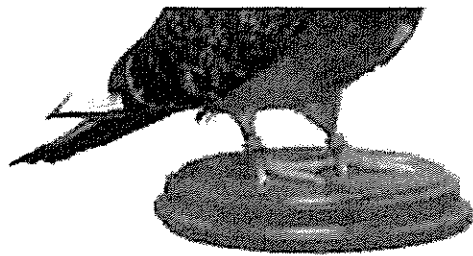
Delivered twelve official messages under fire. On October 2, 1918, this bird accompanied a re-enforced battalion of the 77th Division consisting of six companies of the 306th Infantry, one company of the 307th Infantry, and two machine gun companies of the 305th Infantry, commanded by Major Charles S. 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.



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.



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 Surge" Harry Lucas holding the famous G.I. Joe