

Politician and umpire

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Being a baseball umpire is similar to being a politician, says Peel Board of Education trustee Fawn Currey, who is both.

Umps may have bottles and abuse tossed at them, but politicians also receive their share of insults and complaints, too.

The job of an umpire and trustee, says Currey, is to listen to both sides carefully and make a decision — whether or not that decision is popular with the fans or taxpayers.

"I love ball and I love umpiring, but the abuse that is dished out is incredible," says Currey, who played ball with a ladies' softball league for several years until her duties as a trustee made playing impossible.

Now, she is one of dozens of volunteer umpires who man home-plate and sit in judgement

of the play — much to the chagrin of over-protective and overly competitive parents.

"Politicians also take a lot of abuse and hostility over decisions that taxpayers don't like," she said.

It is not unusual for a Mississauga politician to get a verbal ear-full from a disgruntled democrat anymore than it is not unusual for Mississauga's umpires to be cursed or hit by irate fans.

Despite the similarities, Currey says umpiring has the edge over the rewards of being a school board trustee.

"At least at the end of a ball game you know the participants have had fun and accomplished something," she explains. "And in ball there is a clearcut winner and loser."