

## Kudos for quarry decision

Finally! The neighbors in Birdland have finally won the battle against a quarry, blasting, rock crushing, dust, noise, trucks and nuisances that we took on more than 40 years ago. All of us who live near Spring Street certainly hope that the city doesn't let any more illegal uses take place next door. Thank you, Zoning Board of Appeals. You did your job well.

*Josephine Peterson  
Westbrook*

## Easy to play the victim

After receiving a mass-mailed letter from Ron Usher over the weekend, I felt compelled to

respond. It's easy for anyone to cast himself as a victim. Pike Industries has clearly worked it into an art form, and the mailing and full page Portland Press Herald ad clearly represents the latest attempt. The reality, however, is quite different, and the real victims are neighboring residents and bordering employers.

Every point in the letter is debatable, and it twists around the facts to make Pike look like the one being victimized. It attempts to paint neighboring businesses, and by default, neighboring residents as the villains who are rising up to crush Pike (pardon the pun). While I could highlight every bullet point and argue its merits, I am hoping others will take their pens and address specifics.

After reading the letter several times, two broader issues

emerged for me. The first is that the letter talks about fairness, yet does not mention once – not once – the residents of the surrounding areas and how they would be affected. How is it fair that some residents have been around longer than Pike, and would have to endure its adverse effects? Residents pay taxes as well.

Secondly, while he is free to take sides, I am extremely disappointed in Ron Usher's choice to become a mouthpiece for Pike. I voted for Ron years ago, and at that time as a state representative he was supposed to represent all the people of Westbrook in an objective way. Clearly he has cast aside this philosophy. I think Mr. Usher would be whistling a different tune if a quarry landed in his backyard, and his house was shimmying and shaking during the blasts.

Mr. Usher's letter reeks of false victimization and deception, when it is Pike that continues to violate a key decision about blasting that was decided more than 40 years ago. I hear the audible whining of "all we want is this," or "all we want is that," as if it's something very small that Pike is requesting. They are, in reality, asking us to change our way of life in the area, with disruptive blasting, noise, truck traffic, and air pollution becoming common occurrences, and homeowners and businesses being squeezed out.

It reminds me of when I was a child, and I saw a new expensive toy on TV that I didn't need, but wanted badly. I will echo my mother's standard response:

"We can't afford it."

*Terry Sprague  
Westbrook*