

# OPINION

## Fair's fair

The headline in last week's edition— *Council OKs pay hike for next term council*— likely raised the hackles of many Halton Hills taxpayers.

How could council approve a staff report recommending a pay raise for the next council (2014-2018) that would see the mayor's salary jump from \$58,000 a year to \$73,000 and a councillor's salary rise to \$29,995 from \$24,714?

On top of that, benefit coverage for all members of council will be extended until retirement and they will also be provided full OMERS benefits, starting in January.

As well, the mayor's car allowance will be increased to \$495/month in January, and further increased to \$661/month starting Dec. 1, 2014.

Councillors will also receive an allocation of \$3,000 for newsletters, courses, seminars etc.

However, it's important to read the story behind the headline.

A consultant was responsible for surveying council salaries of several area municipalities (Milton, Newmarket, Clarington, Caledon, Waterloo and Aurora) and found Halton Hills officials were paid the **least**. That is not fair.

A full review of council salaries has not been done since 2004— nine years ago— so it's fair to say such a review was overdue.

Councillors could legitimately make the argument theirs is a thankless job: they are on call 24/7 to answer constituents' concerns, act on their behalf, attend functions and develop strategies and plans for the Town, but that is not the point here. They chose this job and could just as easily lose it when the next election rolls around.

This is a nothing more than a question of fairness and what is fair is that our **next** council members will be paid the **average** salary of the councillors from those nearby communities listed above.

### WEB POLL RESULTS

(Go to [www.theifp.ca](http://www.theifp.ca))

How much will you spend on Christmas gifts this year?

- About the same as last year (51%)
- Less than last year (38%)
- More than last year (11%)

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## Nelson Mandela 1918 - 2013



## Letters to the editor

### Reader unimpressed with council pay hike

Dear editor,  
Once again, after reading only the headline (*Council OKs pay hike*, Dec. 5 IFP), I am not impressed with politicians.

We citizens are constantly being asked to tighten our belts, accept tax increases, donate to a multitude of charities, etc. Local councillors voted themselves a pay hike. Go figure.

Why does the mayor need a raise of \$14,931 per year? Some folks don't even make that in 12 months of hard work. Why a car allowance of \$495, not to mention the new allowance: \$661-plus mileage! I could probably finance a Ferrari for that amount of money! Why, as an afterthought, do they receive one third-tax free?

Councillor Jane Fogal, however, takes the cake when she says, "I don't think we should be undervalued for the job we do here."

Are these folks so distanced from

reality that they don't realize a lot of people are under-valued for the work they do? I know I am.

Finally, I would just like to point out that what they're doing is important and should be compensated accordingly. But they are playing with taxpayers' hard-earned cash.

Hans Tunney  
Acton

### Soccer program scores

Dear editor,  
I would like to thank the Georgetown Soccer Club and their wonderful staff, Herminia and Lori at the Georgetown Market Place, all the volunteers and entire community for the continued support.

Chance to Play has been successful in the past three years in collecting gently used soccer uniforms and equipment through a partnership with Georgetown Soccer Club. Each year, we have been able to co-ordinate a donation drop off on Closing Day in September with wonderful success and response from the soccer community. This year is no exception; we were able to have two soccer collections. The donations are much needed

for children and youth in developing countries and across Canada in providing opportunities to play a sport that is loved by children and youth.

The smiles and excitement of the children seeing the soccer equipment makes the program a success. Please visit [www.chancetoplay.ca](http://www.chancetoplay.ca) for additional details.

Chance to Play continues to look for opportunities to deliver soccer donations to communities in developing countries and Canada by partnering with individual or groups from churches and schools that are traveling overseas.

Please contact Anita Bergsma at 416-270-9127 or [anita.n.bergsma@gmail.com](mailto:anita.n.bergsma@gmail.com)

Anita Bergsma, founder  
Chance to Play

### Letters policy

Letters must include the author's name, address and daytime phone number. Anonymous letters will not be published. Letters should not exceed 150 words and may be edited for content and/or length. Publication is not guaranteed.

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