

A missing child is never a closed case

Thirty years ago this summer, Toronto lost its innocence when an eight-year-old girl named Nicole was abducted from her Etobicoke apartment building. Children didn't walk to school alone anymore. Parents looked to strangers with suspicion and filled their kids' heads with dire consequences if they dare roamed carefree.

The inaugural Nicole's Run took place recently, to mark the anniversary of Nicole Morin's long-unsolved missing child case. Though a tragic story itself, the event focused on the positive, offering an opportunity to fundraise for the Canadian Centre for Child Protection (CCCP) and a chance to keep Nicole's case— and those of other missing children— top of mind in the hopes of generating new leads.

After 30 years, police insist hope still exists for answers. Shaun Narine, 22 Division's superintendent, told Metroland Media, "as with any missing child, you never stop looking."

The case remains open and police have been working non-stop since, trying to find some evidence that would help them solve the mystery. Tips are always welcome, no matter how seemingly insignificant or— perhaps by now, after all these years— fuzzy on detail they may be.

Nicole's Run also serves as a reminder that children shouldn't be afraid, but instead should be taught to be vigilant about their own safety. Society is a much different place, it's true, but so long as children and parents are educated, innocence need not be sacrificed.

CCCP's website www.missingkids.ca offers tips on child safety and points out that the traditional advice "don't talk to strangers" is outdated and ineffective in reducing a child's risk of abduction and victimization. It's only in the rarest cases that children are abducted by strangers, and more often, child abductions are committed by people who are known to the child. Visit the site to learn more, including how to protect your child against offenders lurking on the internet.

Teaching your children these safety tips in a fun way can make the difference between a child who fears the world, and one who stands confidently before it. Practice 'what-if' scenarios and get your child's friends involved.

In honour of Nicole, her family and those families that continue to grieve the loss of their missing children, be proactive in protecting yours.

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Letters to the editor

It's time for new thinking

This letter was sent to MP Michael Chong and MPP Ted Arnott and filed with The IFP for publication.

Recently *The Georgetown Independent & Free Press* printed an article on the future expansion of Trafalgar Road, particularly in regard to the portion between Maple Ave/ and Hwy. 7. It included possible options for the provision of railway overpasses, one just north of Maple Ave. and a second a short distance north at Lindsay Ct. In order not to disrupt the rail traffic, in each instance, the overpasses for the expanded Trafalgar Rd. would need to be diverted either to the east or to the west of the current road position.

When I read the article, I thought to myself that the options were very limited in that: the Maple Ave. crossing, choosing to bend the road to the west would impact the newly created Trafalgar Sports Park and diverting to the east re the Lindsay Ct. crossing, would impact several homes off both Berton Blvd. and Lindsay Ct. In this instance, diverting the road to the west

would not have as severe an impact. Also, from what I can see per the map of the area, diverting of the Maple Ave. overpass to the east is complicated by a stream that eventually feeds Silver Creek.

Thus, choosing either east or west regarding the southern crossing is problematic. I thought nothing more of it until this afternoon when a little out-of-the-box thinking occurred to me.

My wife is a resident of the Bennett Health Care Centre, an extension of the Georgetown Hospital. This afternoon I was sitting with her in the patio/garden area letting her enjoy a fine day outside and perhaps have some of her Alzheimer agitation soothed by some music from my Ipad. The railway line (the one which crosses Trafalgar at Maple Ave.) runs right along side the patio, separated by probably no more than 50 feet. The noise of passing trains is totally deafening and they pass frequently. I am sure the railway line was there in place before either the hospital or the Bennett Centre, but still it seems to me an absurd situation. Considering all of the railway derailling instances that have occurred in recent years, it may also be a disaster in waiting. That got me thinking of how the situation could be alleviated by

an optional solution to the diverting of the Trafalgar Rd. overpasses. Why have two costly overpasses and two diversions to a straight road a short distance apart if one could satisfy?

The CN railroad track passes through Georgetown and then only splits into two routes at Carruthers Rd., just west of Main St. At that point it continues westward to Acton, causing the necessity for the crossing of Trafalgar at Lindsay Ct. The branch line at Carruthers Rd. turns south toward Milton and crosses Trafalgar just north of Maple Ave.

What if it did not branch at Carruthers Rd., but instead, not until it was on the west side of Trafalgar and beyond where it would impact either the Trafalgar Sports Park or the two new cemeteries? That would eliminate the need for the second overpass just north of Maple Ave. The problem of course is that the expanded Trafalgar Rd. no longer impacts only Halton Region and Halton Hills but requires a commitment of the change by CN.

Hence I have addressed this letter to our MP and MPP as well copying the *Independent & Free Press*.

Bob Shepherd,
Georgetown