

OPINION

Bylaw bedlam

Is there any point in having bylaws if the Town can't enforce them?

Moot question, especially since the latest report from the Town's building department shows there are 559 outstanding complaints to be investigated.

Ward 1 Councillor Norm Elliott suggested Halton Hills should look at the possibility of hiring more staff to enforce the Town's bylaws. Elliott, along with his two ward colleagues, experienced plenty of heat recently over the length of time it took to deal with bylaw infractions in their jurisdiction.

"Obviously our staff can't cope with this thing," Elliott reportedly told Council at a recent meeting. He noted that a whole list of infractions was wiped off the books last year to bring outstanding complaints to a more reasonable level.

So if you wonder why your complaint about an infraction was never addressed, it could have been one of those wiped out in the list. Sad.

Henry Tse, director of Building, Zoning and Enforcement Services, acknowledges some of the complaints are minor irritations, disputes between neighbours, when it was suggested they be broken down to major and minor. However, he also told councillors that his staff can only attend health and safety issues. There just isn't time for anything else.

Tse told Council that one bylaw officer handles about 200 cases a year. But to catch up on the backlog it would take two and a half more staff a year just to catch up on the backlog of complaints.

Hire more staff? Whoa! said Town Administrator Ray King. Where's the money coming from? Remember, he told Council, the Province is cutting back hundreds of thousands of dollars in transfer payments to Halton Hills. Don't look at bylaw enforcement in isolation, he urged, but balanced with basic services such as plowing snow and fighting fires.

Sage advice from the administrator. But surely the Town should have the staff to enforce its own bylaws. If the minor complaints can't be enforced, you can bet it will lead, or has already done so, to disregard for the major concerns.

We believe Councillor Elliott's suggestion should be looked at seriously, not swept under the rug, because it will get worse as the town grows. Some method must be devised to find the money to fund enforcement as well as balancing the basic services.

Fiddling with the CBC

First it was the railways, now it is the CBC – the two national ties that help bind this huge country together – being dismantled in the name of economic reality.

This writer holds no brief for the CBC, whose often left-leaning policies fly in the mood of neo-conservatism that dominates politics these days.

But the savage cuts in grants threaten to cut the heart right out of the broadcasting giant.

Obviously, there is fat in the organization that could be trimmed to make it more cost efficient.

But it seems the government wants to throw the baby out with the bath water with the latest announced round of cuts.

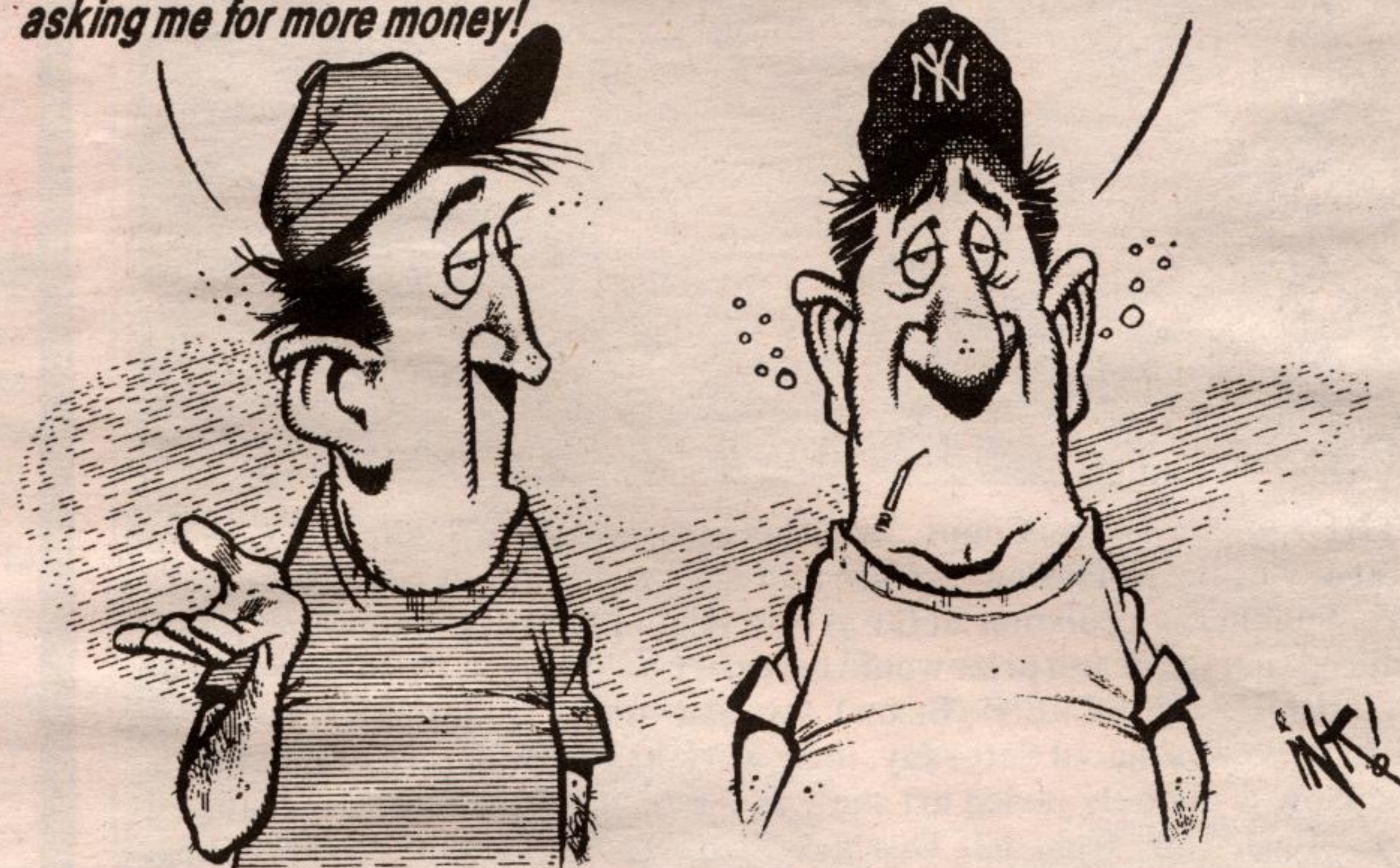
Is our financial picture really so bleak that we have to fiddle with our national institutions? Here's one who doesn't believe it.

Sure, get rid of the deadwood, the endless bureaucracy and restore balanced programming, but leave us with a CBC that has the resources to attract viewers and listeners.

We desperately need it in the face of private broadcasting which has, in many cases, turned into computerized music boxes.

*I can't figure out my teenager...
He moans and complains about living at home
and about how much we embarrass him, but then
he's got the nerve to turn around and to keep
asking me for more money!*

*Who's your kid
think he is...
Lucien Bouchard?*



Your LETTERS

Terrific participation!

To the Editor,
I would like to congratulate and thank all the participants who braved the inclement weather to participate in the Terry Fox Run. We very much appreciate the support we received from the many individuals who gave pledges. We would like to thank the many businesses and individuals who supported the Terry Fox Run this year.

Contributing to the random draw were the following businesses – Baskets 'n' Balloons, Chateau Restaurant, Connoisseur's Court, Fletcher's Family Shoe Store, Georgetown BJA, Georgeview Restaurant, Home Hardware, House of Buddha, Irma's Dollar Plus, J.V. Clothing, Molsons, Office Magic, Oxbow Books, Royal Pizza, The Final Touch, and Yong's Restaurant.

We would like to thank the Georgetown Terminal Warehouse and The Goodlet Co. for their financial donations to the Terry Fox Run.

Our participants and especially ourselves would like to thank the Georgetown Fruit Market, Echo Springs Water Co., McDonald's, and Neilson's for the refreshments and thanks to Kids Can Do and The Delrex Smoke Shop for the balloons that brightened up a dismal day.

loons that brightened up a dismal day.

The Terry Fox Committee would also like to thank Molsons for the key chains, Pizza Hut, McDonald's, Taco Bell, and Cakes of Elegance for their coupons.

Thanks to the Gordon Alcott Arena, Beaver Lumber and the Georgetown Marketplace for advertising the run on their marquees. Special thanks to the Georgetown Marketplace for allowing us to use their facilities.

Special thanks to Mayor Serjeanston and Adam Green, a member of the Terry Fox team, for starting the race. Thank you Councillor John Day for attending and thank you Bob Bairstow for all your help.

I would personally like to thank all of the above and all the other volunteers, and especially my committee, for all the help and support given to The Terry Fox Run this year when we had such little time to prepare for it. It just goes to show that it can be done!

A special thank you from me to Jon Hurst, the Acton organizer who was my mentor and guardian angel during my first years as organizer. I would have been lost without you Jon.

We hope to have an even better Terry Fox Run next year – just imagine, we will have a whole year for planning instead of less than two weeks. We are already thinking of new ideas for the 1997 Terry Fox Run.

*Bonnie Covert, organizer
Terry Fox Run, Georgetown*

Time to become part of the solution

To the Editor,
This letter is in response to the letter from *Name Withheld* (Sept. 18, *Gemini*, *The Right To Work*) who seems to know a lot about the youth of Georgetown who they see skateboarding around town.

I am the father of one of these kids (or as you point out, young adults) and happen to feel that they do have a right to skateboard and that it is up to adults to provide a safe place for them to do so.

As you so kindly pointed out, we provide swimming pools, parks, ball diamonds, soccer fields, etc. for other kids (young adults) to play safely.

Maybe it is about time we became part of the solution and not the problem.

Oh, and by-the-way, some of these kids (young adults) including my 15-year-old son have part-time jobs.

See you at the meeting on Oct. 2 at Holy Cross School.

*Peter Hayes,
Sargent Road*

THE GEMINI

Publisher & Editor
Paul Nolan

Advertising Manager
Rick Butler

Office Manager
Linda Hayes

Editorial Staff
Kyle Goodlet
Jamie Harrison
Frances Niblock
Joanne Stevenson

Advertising Staff
Lynne Buscher
Trish Henry
Elaine Petkoff

Production Staff
Kim Konarzycki

Distribution Manager
Marie Shadbolt

Regular Contributors
Eve Martin
Steve Martin
Mike O'Leary

THE GEORGETOWN GEMINI is published weekly on Wednesdays by Wicklow Hills Publishing Co. Inc. Mailing address: P.O. Box 145, Georgetown, Ont., L7G 4T1. Phone: (905) 877-1113. Fax: (519) 853-5040. Georgetown administrative office: Personal Secretarial Services, Unit 47, 360 Guelph St., L7G 4B5. Reproduction without permission is prohibited. Ideas expressed herein are those of the author only.

AD SALES: Publisher is responsible for errors in advertisements to extent of cost of that portion of the space occupied by erroneous item.

PHONE THE GEM:
(905)877-1113

FAX THE GEM:
(519)853-5040